

**THE IMPORTANCE OF DRESS IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP:  
SOME MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

by

**JOSEPH KIZITO**

submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of

**MASTER OF THEOLOGY**

in the subject

**MISSIOLOGY**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**SUPERVISOR: Dr M M KARECKI**

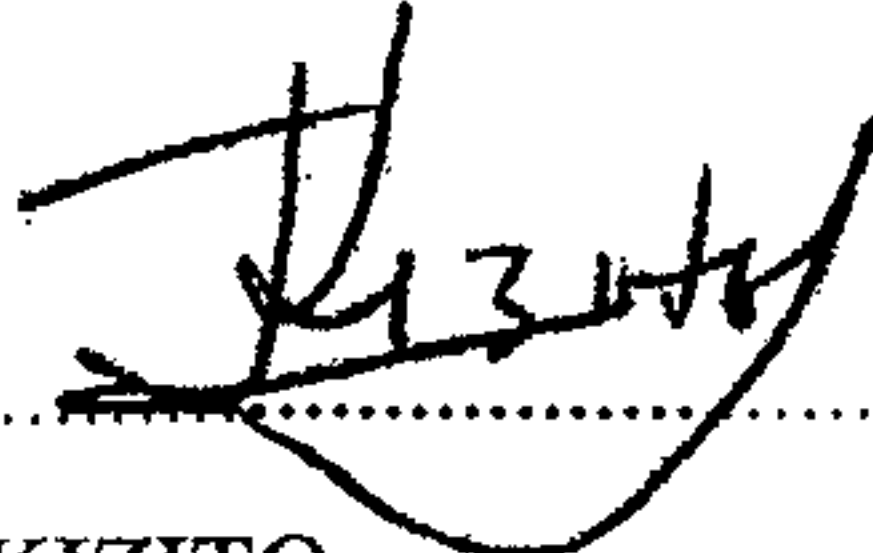
**JUNE 2002**

\*\*\*\*\*

"I declare that

**THE IMPORTANCE OF DRESS IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP: SOME  
MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and  
acknowledged by means of complete references".

  
.....  
J. KIZITO

**25/06/2002**  
.....

DATE

## **SUMMARY**

Dress plays an important role in Christian worship. The aim of this study is to describe the importance of dress in the South African Christian context, particularly within the Black Christian society. Two main ideas are covered: firstly, the emphasis on the use of uniform as a factor influencing worship attendance and secondly, how a uniform affects the quality of worship.

Personal investigations into various church groups in the Eastern Cape, particularly the St Anna Sodality, have indicated that specific uniforms are an essential sign of belonging to a particular church. Dress or uniforms also serve as a reminder of people's commitment to their faith. For some groups, a uniform develops a sense of identity, security and fellowship which may have been lost through past political policies. Most importantly the relationship between worship and dress can bring a transformative assertion of the self before God and fellow human beings.

### **Key terms**

**African Independent Churches, Clothing (dress), Communication, Culture, Identity, Liturgy, Missiology, Manyano, Social identity, Uniform, Worship**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Most Revd F. Lobinger, Bishop of Aliwal Diocese, for his financial help and for the deep interest he has taken in my studies, also to the priests, sisters and laity of the Diocese, in particular the members of Mhlanga Parish, for their support. I am deeply indebted to the ministers, leaders and members of several Mainline and Indigenous Churches, including different groups within the churches, who willingly co-operated and shared freely in discussions and interviews.

Dr M. Karecki of the Department of Missiology at UNISA, my supervisor, has guided me with great understanding and patience; her criticism has always been positive and therefore most helpful. The library staff of UNISA have been unfailingly pleasant and ready to assist me. Special thanks to Revd Zuze Banda who took the time to instruct me on the fine points of methodology; his professional advice was vital in making my work presentable, especially with regard to the arrangement of content. I thank my family for their support, particularly my mother, C.B. Nsubuga. I am grateful also to Sr Myriam for her insight into English. Joanne Paul provided much appreciated technical assistance.

I dedicate this study to all those who work for ecumenism in the Eastern Cape.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b><i>CHAPTER ONE: The problem and purpose.....</i></b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	6
1.2 Reason for the research.....	7
1.3 What part comparison plays in my deliberations .....	9
1.4 Hypotheses of this study .....	11
1.5 The Significance of the Research .....	14
1.6 The Purpose and Objectives .....	14
1.7 Definition of terms.....	17
1.7.1. Worship.....	17
1.7.2. Sunday Worship.....	17
1.7.3. Congregation.....	17
1.7.4. Church:.....	18
1.7.5. Symbol .....	19
1.7.6. Clothing (dress): .....	19
1.7.7. Uniform.....	21
1.7.8. Gospel .....	21
1.7.9. Identity .....	22
1.7.10. Manyano .....	24
1.8 Review of Literature Related to the subject .....	24
1.9 Contributors in various times and places .....	25
1.10 Conclusion .....	28

<b>CHAPTER TWO: Methodology</b> .....	<b>30</b>
2.1 Introduction:.....	30
2.2 Methodology .....	30
2.3 Qualitative research is contextual.....	31
2.4 Methodological integration.....	32
2.5 Description of conduct in this study .....	33
2.6 My personal experience .....	33
2.7 Empirical research methodology .....	36
2.8 Interviewing, including various challenges I have encountered...	37
2.9 Observation .....	39
2.10 Limitations and problems encountered .....	44
2.11 Conclusion: .....	49
<b>CHAPTER THREE: Clothing and worship</b> .....	<b>50</b>
3.1 Introduction:.....	50
3.2 People's attitudes to Uniform in worship .....	50
3.3 Sociology of clothing.....	53
3.4 Characteristics of uniforms.....	56
3.5 Other factors that determine worship .....	60
3.6 Conclusion: .....	64
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: Using the Pastoral Circle Method</b> .....	<b>65</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	65
4.2 The Pastoral Circle Method .....	65
4.3 Insertion .....	66
4.4 Social Analysis of the Context .....	71
4.4.1 Economic Factors .....	81



4.4.2 Significance of Colours.....	83
4.5 Theological Reflection.....	88
4.6 Pastoral Planning .....	94
4.7 Conclusion .....	106
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusion .....</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>APPENDIX I .....</b>	<b>114</b>
Questionnaires for interviews .....	114
<b>APPENDIX II.....</b>	<b>115</b>
Interviews and discussions:.....	115
<b>APPENDIX III .....</b>	<b>116</b>
Photographs.....	116
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>117</b>

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>RCC</b>	Roman Catholic Church
<b>SCC</b>	Small Christian Community
<b>ZCC</b>	Zion Christian Church
<b>CNN</b>	Cable News Network



# CHAPTER ONE:

## THE PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

### 1.1 Introduction

Despite the intensive study of mission in Southern Africa, we still do not know a great deal about what influences or determines a person's preference for a certain style of worship. There are social, economic, cultural, religious and political factors involved. Clothing fits into all of these categories and, to some extent influences how the individual and the community worships. Therefore, it would seem that uniform could play an important part in worship. Clothing belongs to human behaviour, constituting a relationship between the person and his/her attitude to the Divine; one's appearance is of paramount importance.

The aim of this study is therefore to examine the pros and cons of special clothing and to decide how far clothing affects people's ideas of worship in the South African context. Because of the multi-cultural setting of this country I realise that the various cultures have to be taken into account to explain the different attitudes to clothing we have within our society as far as worship is concerned, and this factor is further affected by adherence to a particular Christian Denomination. For effective ministry today, missiology has a lot to offer to the understanding of Church. We are involved in the continuation of Christ's work. Missionary activity is not for our glory but for the glory of the Sender. God stands at the centre of mission. He sends, He empowers and He produces the results. The ultimate purpose for mission is to bring glory to God. Bosch's shortest definition of mission is the "total task which God has set the church for salvation of the world" (Kritzinger 1990:147). Therefore mission is about witnessing to the world, going out to meet others and getting involved in the Good News message so as to bear testimony in both words and deeds. Its tasks include eradicating what Klaus Nürnberger (1990:205-209) delineates as obstacles to true freedom:

oppression, exploitation, discrimination, misery, loss of human dignity, lack of human rights ... All these are severe deficiencies in comprehensive well-being.

As followers of Christ, we have to serve as His witnesses of the truth which today takes many different forms – preaching, loving, serving, and praying together. Nolan (1988:209) maintains:

The role of the Church is to preach the gospel. This involves considerably more than preaching sermons from the pulpit on Sunday. Evangelisation or preaching the gospel is more than just communicating a message. The purpose of a Church service is to put people in touch with the living God.

One of the means to communicate the gospel can even be the manner of dressing. By doing this one shows values and commitments. W. M. Wright (1996:7) illustrates the power of dress:

I often played dress-up with my girl friends..... We could be whomever and whatever we wanted - doctor, movie star, Indian Chief, or African explorer. To live out the values of Christianity one literally puts on Christ's identity.

## **1.2 Reason for the research**

My research is concerned with the academic arguments about the use of clothing/uniform in worship as having an effect on our pastoral work. There are gaps in the understanding of our congregation that we as pastors cannot answer as to why members like or dislike attending services. Certain issues cause people to prefer a particular church and attract members of a church to join associations such as a sodality or other movement. Nolan (1988:209) aptly remarks that "the Gospel can also be preached by means of public statements". Therefore my contribution is to raise the possibility of clothing as being one of those factors that influence our Christian identity and one which could be overlooked by pastors. Mogabgab (1996:2) maintains that "clothing often symbolises the self-image we wish to present to the world". It is not my purpose to give answers as to why many Christians at times do not attend services, even Sunday services, but instead to urge pastors to consider the possibility of how certain clothing could make people feel more at ease in a church setting. We need a deep understanding of those who are dispossessed culturally,

economically, or otherwise. They may suffer from the lack of the "right clothes" for the Sunday worship. Roach & Eicher (1979:9) observe that "dress used in ceremonial rite contributes to the creation of mood".

Brown (1995) emphasises the function of dress and ritual in the Nazareth Baptist Church of Isaiah Shembe:

The uniform of the Nazareth Baptist Church can also be considered ritual dress. Ritual or sacred dress is frequently worn in order to express opposition to the everyday often profane world.

However my attempt is to explore the role of dress generally in worship, not in a particular church. Karl Rahner (in Luzbetak 1988:109) states: "In every essence the church is as Asian and African as European; it must be at home with every way of life and every mentality". This means that the church must assume a prophetic role and be able to reform and renew itself, so that it can be what it is meant to be 'a home' for all in their local church.

My hope is that this attempt to research the effect of dress in worship may lead to further and wider research by others. Concepts can be identified, observed and measured and I believe this makes the research valid. I have been careful about making generalizations and have followed the advice of Mason (1996:24) who states, regarding qualitative research:

You will need to ensure that you are thinking about on what basis, if any, you can make general claims, and about what kinds of claims your research questions might imply.... Will your research questions be meaningfully answered if you cannot make the kinds of claims which are implied?

My findings, I believe, are empirical and so my research should therefore be meaningful to the reader.

Reliable techniques have been employed in order to sustain accuracy. Interviewing has been my main methods for generating data. Mason (1996:35) comments:



Qualitative interviewing actually can involve some techniques more commonly associated with other methods, for example, observing, generating and using documents.

This research has taken into account only ethical views; my purpose has been to find means of helping the faithful and their pastors towards meaningful worship in all its aspects. In my engagement with those people who say that they did not have the right clothes for the Sunday services I sought to help them by way of interviews which were possible because I was in a position to share with them at their level.

### **1.3 What part comparison plays in my deliberations**

I compare the use of uniform dress in Sunday services with the lack of it. I am also interested in those who see clothing as a factor in attending worship and in others who do not see it in the same way. The comparison helps me to come to a meaningful conclusion as to the part played by clothing in worship.

I have been able to include in my data sources, people who have had experience with the use of uniforms in worship. Mason, (1996:35) points out:

You may, for example see people as data sources in the sense that they are repositories of knowledge, evidence, experience or whatever, which is relevant to your research.

I use the method of direct contact and personal interviews. I am interested in people's experiences according to their different socio-economic classes and how this impacts on my topic.

Culture as an analytic tool in the context of South African practices is also taken into account. Shorter, (1998:24) comments: "Culture is an aspect of what it means to be human, and therefore a basic human right". Dress as a cultural item is seen as a vehicle in our veneration of God. Its influence is further reflected according to whether it is used in a

rural or urban area. Apartheid brought sharp divisions into the people's culture. Nolan (1988:81) explicitly condemns it:

Most whites and other privileged people have not been so successful. The system produces alienation in them too - in another way. When you treat other human beings as mere units of labour and when you treat your money, your property, your privileges and your standard of living as more important than human beings, you begin to lose touch with your own humanity. And when you can only contact other people on the basis of their skin colour, their status within the system or their possession, you have begun to treat them as objects, no matter who they are or how valuable they may be to you as objects. There is no human contact

I regard this fact as an important element in a holistic approach to the subject. The denial of human dignity to certain people in the past still requires healing. On the previous page, Nolan (1988:80) states:

*Alienation destroys ubuntu. Ubuntu is the Nguni word for the traditional African experience of humanness. It refers to that sensitivity for other human beings and that experience of oneness with all human beings that enables one to become human oneself.*

I believe that a number of African Independent Churches dress their members in uniforms as a means of redressing past inequalities, including that lack of humanity, a feeling of being lost. Holness (1997:16) suggests that among the Manyano members "a sense of identity, of being somebody in her own right, is something that Manyano membership confers. And this is symbolised, par excellence, by the uniform".

It is necessary to consider the relevance of dress to the growth of an individual's and a community's spirituality. For any community to be able to give witness the Gospel has to be local in its context. For mission, too, its task is to "incarnate the Gospel in time" (Kritzinger 1990:148). The Gospel has to be incarnated in the context of the people concerned, so mission has to see to the local needs and challenges. The proper use of clothing moves one beyond one's normal routine of daily life to comply with the more

exalted duty of praising the Lord. Ramshaw, (1996:29) makes a reference to the Old Testament:

We need clothing, suggests Genesis 3, because we are not innocent animals any longer. We have acquired a glorious and terrible knowledge of the self. We know of our failures, our sexual vulnerability, perhaps even our death, perhaps also of God. We look into one another's eyes and we see mirrored there our own needy body. So we find some fig leaves to cover ourselves up.

Clothing makes for greater sensitivity as regards both the pastor and the community members. As a priest, I perceive this attention to dress as an important support in public worship; as Ramshaw (1996:31) states: "My clothing announces me". We are able to manifest ourselves through the expression of clothing. To some degree our clothing contains us, shapes us, forms us in the eyes of those who look at us. I have discussed clothing with members of the various communities I serve and they, too, have come to the same common agreement. These people stem from different economic, social and cultural backgrounds, yet all see dress as a reflection on their whole attitude to worship. Mogabgab (1966:2) is of the opinion that

clothing often symbolizes the self-image we wish to present to the world. The style, colour, and combination of clothing items reflect the particular personal qualities we have fashioned for public consumption.

This study is undertaken in the hope that it will benefit me as a pastor, enabling me to serve my congregations better and - dare I add - that it might inspire others to continue the research so as to make a contribution to a better understanding of worship in all its aspects, a help on our journey of faith in South Africa.

#### **1.4 Hypotheses of this study**

Investigation into the effect of clothing on the manner of worship requires that certain assumptions be made so as to analyse the results. Even though I use the qualitative method, still no concrete hypotheses can be developed until the end of the study. I therefore



proposed what I considered a working hypothesis during my fieldwork and data collection phase. The hypotheses are presented here together with the underlying aims and objectives.

The questions *Why? How? To what extent?* are central to this section of the study. The chief aim is to see if there is an identifiable relationship between clothing and worship. The question here is whether being dressed in a certain visible manner makes one engage in a more meaningful act of worship.

a) It is assumed that clothing affects identity and therefore has greater influence over the individual and the congregation as a whole. Holness (1996:17) remarks: "With my own eyes I have seen a person become somebody different the moment she puts on her Manyano uniform". This is most common in the black communities and less in the white or coloured communities of the South African Churches.

The aim for me is to gain insight into the causes of this difference and how this affects their worship. Tyler (in Brown 1995:) reports:

Many individuals announced their decision to convert by asking for a shirt or a dress, in the case of women and girls. Additionally, those who decided to convert were considered to be psychologically healthy as evidenced in this remark about a female convert that she was "soon clothed and in her right mind".

b) It is assumed that, given a chance, most South African Blacks would decide for themselves to wear a uniform for the Sunday and other celebrations. The aim in this study is to discern what has influenced this choice. I therefore examine the social, economic, cultural and political causes that have led these people to behave in this manner.

c) It is assumed that apartheid contributed to the loss of identity among black people, so dress has an influence on their "new" identity. Nolan (1988:21) confesses:

The Church in South Africa is divided .....The effective dividing line for us to day is between Christians who actively or positively support the system and Christians who actively support the struggle..... It is this division that undermines, in practice, the authority of the Church as a whole.



The *aim* is to establish the extent to which dress can contribute to more meaningful worship in the Black congregation. Brown (1995:29) holds the opinion that "uniforms contributing to group identity among South African blacks" Criticisms have been expressed in the past about certain churches whose congregations dress in specific uniforms. There is now a new perception in this regard, which has to be taken into account. In my interview with Rev Kewu, a Catholic priest in Queenstown, he maintained that parishioners who wear their uniform in his church have greater participation in the services and each sodality or movement considers itself an important section of the congregation. They are part of the decision-making body without fear of being judged. Their manner of dress gives them a certain authority. On the other hand, because of their plain or shabby clothing, people are often marginalised or not recognised at all.

d) Another *assumption* is that for quite some time uniform will continue to play an important role in the way most black congregations will worship. William Jenkinson & Helene O'Sullivan (1991:43) write: "The first challenge is that of the very identity of the local Church". The challenges that Jenkinson & O'Sullivan present come after the search for identity. Suitable dress for church – as opposed to uniform - will remain an important feature in worship both as regards blacks and whites, not to the extent of causing any member to feel inferior but as a mark of respect for the Creator. All are equal in worship. John Paul II (1995) noted this lack of identity on his first trip to Africa. He said:

There is certainly maturity, a youthful maturity, a joyful, a strong maturity, the maturity of being themselves, of finding themselves in this church as in their own church, not in the church imported from elsewhere. This is their church, the church lived in an authentic African way.

My *aim* is to stress that dress is therefore a viable aspect of worship to study not only for the present but also for the future in our manner of worship.

## **1.5 The Significance of the Research**

The aim of this research is to help pastors in the mission in rural areas to be aware of the current framework from which the churches operate. Dress is seen as one of the factors affecting religious identity and therefore pertaining to worship. This study will help in the missiology field to know that God can be proclaimed in the way we dress. God is all around us. God is worshipped in the way we live and the way we worship. Nürnberger (1990:218) supports this idea by saying that

God is not "above" in the sense of being the big boss up there who legitimates the smaller bosses down below. On the contrary, he deliberately moves down into solidarity with the downtrodden. He does so not to enjoy their misery but to lead them out of their misery.

## **1.6 The Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of this study is to explain the use of clothing as one of the factors influencing church service attendance. Could the use of uniform be the answer for those congregations who feel that they cannot afford acceptable clothes for the Sunday worship? It is said in Black communities that a kind of political motive or tribal pride has fostered the use of uniforms.

By the end of this research, I hope to take a stand as to whether the clothing factor is one of the influential elements which induce people to attend church services in big numbers and to be more active in church matters and fervent in worship. I am very interested in local churches which are undergoing transformation. Marlene Epp (1990:240) stresses how "the involvement of women in a new spheres of activity was in turn one of the factors which influenced the type of dress they wore." Sooner, better than later, we, as church pastors will have to consider clothing as an important issue.

The face of South Africa has changed; new challenges have arisen in mission. Livingston (1990:4) states that "the church as missionary community lies at the very heart of his (Bosch's) missiological agenda". I intend this study to meet these challenges to some extent. The role of dress is central to my topic and I feel that it plays a part in providing a solution to the problems of worship. Luzbetak (1988:228) describes how clothing indicates the "particular roles played, for instance, in religion, the military, police, and nursing". Uniform is a contemporary issue in the Independent Churches and has taken root in some Mainline Churches, so I see it as quite relevant to missiology. For the church to become truly local in the post-apartheid era people have to find their own style of worshipping. Bosch (1991:378) says: "The church in mission is, primarily, the local church every where in the world". Therefore this study focuses on the challenges of local churches, in a local context. These new challenges in mission, for example identity and a sense of belonging, need to be addressed. This calls for evangelism that is defined by Bosch (in Kritzinger 1990:150) as

that dimension and activity of the church's mission which by word and deed, offers every person, everywhere, a valid opportunity to be directly challenged to a radical reorientation of their lives, which involves, inter alia, deliverance from slavery to the world and its power, embracing Christ as saviour and Lord, becoming a living member of his community and being incorporated into his service of reconciliation, peace and justice on earth integrated into God's purpose of placing all things under the rule of Christ.

This dissertation limits itself to Black communities, mainly in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa and more particularly in Aliwal North Catholic Diocese.

The use of clothing may be a call for mission re-evangelisation and more social responsibility. We are sent to announce the Good News and so have to look at both the spiritual and the social aspects of the message:

Important in incarnating the Gospel is to remember that in preaching the Good News we must be aware of the meanings in a culture. We must know the price tags attached to each culture item. Such price tags vary from culture to culture" (Luzbetak 1988:77).



Evangelisers should be aware of the price tag attached to clothing in the particular culture. A community in one of our parishes advised the priest to dress as a pastor when he came to visit them. As a foreigner, he was not aware until then of the value these people put on dress. Mogabgab (1996:2) supports that idea: "The purpose of this outward person is, in part, to cover our less attractive aspects. Here clothing serves primarily to protect or to conceal".

Ministers need to listen to the needs of the congregation to whom they preach on Sunday. Why do some members attend regularly and others rarely if ever come to the church into which they have been baptised? Daneel (1987:78) criticizes the majority of missionaries "For them mission meant saving souls...Church going, Bible reading, prayer and hymn singing. There were few attempts to show people that one's daily work is also a form of worship." Therefore human attributes such as dress should not be overlooked.

At the end of this research I would like to prove that clothing is one of the factors that influences attendance. This better understanding of our congregations will motivate pastors to work with their people to help those who feel that the lack of the right clothes is a hindrance to their participation in liturgy

This is a pastoral research paper on mission. Therefore I include, by means of interviews with pastors and congregates, an investigation into what motivates certain churches, especially the African Independent Churches (AICs), to wear distinguishing uniforms for their liturgies. I am also interested in why, for example, women of some Methodist communities have chosen to design a uniform for themselves. It would seem to indicate a need for a feeling of belonging.

## **1.7 Definition of terms**

In order to avoid any vagueness and to give a clear understanding of the work involved in my research, I define the main terms I have used. In some instances I elaborate on the meaning as I wish it to be interpreted.

### **1.7.1. *Worship***

This term is defined by the Second Vatican Council as "a respect for or honour to a person or thing. Divine worship is the honour by which a person recognises the excellence of God and his dependence" (O'Connell 1964:1). The aim in worship is to express interior acts of intelligence and will. These include praising, thanking and glorifying God. By our adoration we acknowledge God as our creator and greatest benefactor to whom we owe everything and to whom we will return.

### **1.7.2. *Sunday Worship***

This refers to the people's coming together in a certain place at a certain time on Sunday for active participation in communal prayer. In the Catholic Church this is the *Mass*, the celebration of Christ's death and resurrection. A more general term used by many churches is the *Liturgy*. Ciferri (1991:320) writes:

Liturgy has a special and unique place in the life of Christians in the local churches, their communities of faith. Each church gathers regularly to praise and thank God to remember and make present God's great deeds, to offer common prayer, to realise and celebrate the Kingdom of peace and justice. That action of the Christian assembly is Liturgy.

### **1.7.3. *Congregation***

Congregation denotes the people that assemble for worship. They celebrate the Liturgy as a given community at a given place, time and day. Venter (1998:3) says that the word *Congregation* has its roots in the word congregate: i.e. to come together, to assemble.

Among denominations there are different ways of deciding who does, and does not, belong to a congregation as a member of a particular local church. In some denominations you become a member when you are baptised, in others only after you have completed official membership classes such as Catechism. So instead of using the various terms for members I prefer to speak of people *who attend* as a congregation.

Pretorius, et al. (1996:93) defines congregation as: "those believers who come together in praise and worship, so that God is praised and magnified in the congregation and in the world for what he has done in the past, is doing at present and will be doing in future."

#### **1.7.4. Church:**

Pretorius et al. (1996: 83) reflect on mission in the African context they say this about the church:

To find a clear cut definition of the church in the Bible is very difficult. The Bible does not give a single portrait of the church, but confronts the reader with a variety of teachings on the church.... It portrays the church/ congregation by a larger number of images such as "people of God", "Israel of God", "chosen race", "royal priesthood", "body of Christ", "God's temple", "household of God", "fragrance", "a letter from Christ", "salt and light".

The universal Church is realised in and through local churches. When I refer to 'the Church' I will therefore mean the local churches to which my study is relevant. Luzbetak (1988:128) states that "by 'local church', Vatican II sometimes means 'diocese' and the bishop as the pastor; but it also uses the term in reference to worshipping congregations, and to culturally differentiated groupings". The local church is sometimes impossible to examine because it does not exist in a single physical form. We lose sight of the many concrete forms that 'the Church' takes - namely many churches, several denominations, millions of congregations.

In 1991 in South Africa there were an estimated 130 denominations with 29 773 congregations (Froise 1996:45), "each with its own rules, theology, decision-making



processes and leadership structures" (Venter 1998:3). When we speak of 'Church' we are expressing an ideal, a wish that the theological truth of Christian unity can find some concrete form. While the ideal should not be lost, this way of speaking tends to mystify the social realities that 'the Church' takes, which we can experience only in the form of small groups, buildings, people, denominations and so on. This is what Bosch (1991:378) calls the "Three-self formula self-government, self support, and self-propagation". The Church anyhow is a new fellowship. This fellowship which is so deeply rooted in God's gracious dealings differs qualitatively from all other human groups in society".

#### ***1.7.5. Symbol***

A symbol can have different meanings according to the context in which it is used. Luzbetak (1988:228) uses symbol to mean something which is more tangible:

Clothing, division of labour, kingship classification, wedding customs, have a particular set of meanings and values. Viewed as a symbol, they have a very particular referent or set of referents. They are viewed by the society in question as being something more than what they are themselves.

Therefore a symbol means and functions differently according to the given culture. Shorter (1998:53) defines symbolism as "the basic mode of culture education, and indeed of all human communication". It may refer to concrete or material objects, or be stored in memory as an image that evokes meaningful responses. We use symbols to define or represent our realities. Symbols help to provide cues to behaviour and to attract attention. Clothing/dress has a particular set of meanings and values. That is why clothing is viewed as a symbol in this research. Symbols are, according to Shorter (1998:53) a "species of sign, and a sign is anything which points beyond its own visible reality."

#### ***1.7.6. Clothing (dress):***

I use the term clothing to refer to tangible, material objects connected to the human body. They encompass such items as pants, skirts, tops and other related body covering. Kaiser (1990:12) writes that clothing should not be taken for granted in terms of communication:



Therefore we may regard the social, psychology of clothing as a transdiscipline - an area of knowledge that has emerged because of theories and research findings that cross traditional disciplinary boundaries.

There have been numerous theories from anthropologists and clothing scholars like Jasper and Roach-Higgins (in Kaiser 1990:15). They suggest that

human beings wore clothing to cover or conceal the private parts of the human body. One theory was derived from a Christian Biblical explanation of clothing, namely that clothes were initially worn by humans (Adam and Eve) to cover nakedness because of instinctive shame.

Modesty in dress is frequently acknowledged as an important factor in worship.

Dress can be either public or personal. Culture, social background, gender, and other factors may influence people to think differently about how they dress. Westermarck (in Kaiser 1990:15) writes that the "Tuareg males in the middle East wear a veil to cover the mouth which is perceived to be as erotic as the sexual organs". In Japan, the back of a women's neck has traditionally been considered sexually erotic. A more comprehensive study relating to clothing and behaviour was undertaken by clothing scholar Anna Creekmore (in Kaiser 1990) who studied 300 college women and found some correlation between the need for belonging and for self-esteem. Behaviour is affected by clothing when seen as a status symbol. Personal appearance is important. I am not, however, looking at everyday usage of clothing, but worship-related clothing which indicates a member's relationship to the congregation. The church is called "to act as an instrument of and witness to the reign of God." (Livingston 1990:5). This means that the church is both a kingdom church and a world church. Even if the church is set apart the reason for this is for the sake of the world.

### ***1.7.7. Uniform***

Uniform denotes a type of clothing of the same colour and the same pattern, which is clearly identifiable and worn regularly. The use of uniform can convey power, as observed by Dean et al (in Kaiser 1990:267): "In a military setting, a uniform symbolic of high rank has been found to increase the physical distance between interactants."

Here colonels will dress differently from military personnel of lesser rank. However, worn by a certain church or group of people within the church, a uniform does not distinguish among the members of the group but rather gives them equal standing and identity. For example, the Zion Christian Church (ZCC), the Methodist women's group (Manyano), the St. Anna sodality in the Roman Catholic Church mostly dress in their specific uniform even though some churches, especially the mainline Churches, do not use any particular form of dress for Sunday worship.

The purpose of wearing uniforms in most of the independent churches has not been discussed in mission at any great length. The members of these recently originated churches are seeking their own identity as Christians and/or Traditionals. Ethnic societies in South Africa have integrated healing which is done in the modern Christian forms. "The traditional healers are holistic or integral in their approach to health" (Shorter 1998:65). They desire to be known by others both in their own congregation and outside. Brown (1995:12) writes that "the robes for worship mask broad differences in social and economic status, instead emphasising rank and status bestowed by church elders". Thus the term "uniform" can mean a certificate of legitimacy. Brown speaks of the African people:

(Those) who were not Christian adopted the western dress to conform to white norms so that even if you come from the marginalised segments of society the wearing of the uniform affirms your membership.

### ***1.7.8. Gospel***

The Gospel has to be shared with others. Byrne (in Kaiser 1990:324) suggests that "we are attracted to others whom we perceive to be similar to ourselves". I have observed that

people are more likely to identify with those who appear similar to themselves - they have something in common with one another. The members of a church who use a uniform enjoy a sense of belonging and a shared identity, and they are socially at ease in one another's presence because the same type of clothing gives them a certain equality of appearance. They show concern for one another – a precept of the Gospel. A point made by Feldman (in Kaiser 1990:325) is that "individuals are more likely in some cases to help others who are dressed similarly to themselves".

### ***1.7.9. Identity***

By identity I mean the formation of group boundaries within the structures of the world-view. For one group to be able to distinguish itself from other group requires "the us versus the not-us boundary" (Schreier 1985:63). In everyday life we are caught up in the act of appearing before others, and before God. There is a desire to display our identity to others in the social context in which we live. Our lives are interwoven with those of others around us. The Church is one of the places where we need to have self-understanding. Livingston (1990:8) has remarked that "the church is always and at the same time called out of the world and sent into the world". Therefore as people are on their way in the world, the church has the central role of giving them their identity in the world. The word "identity" is not a substitute word for self; rather when one has an identity one is situated within the realm of social relations. At times the identity negotiation occurs when a wearer and a perceiver are able to come to a shared understanding of the wearer's identity through a process of give and take, interpretation and reinterpretation, using not only appearance but also verbal communication as a guide.

Davis (in Kaiser 1990:320) describes identity as "any aspect of self about which individuals can through symbolic means communicate with others". People bring with them to social situations what they are. When the faithful come to worship they bring their own marks of identity into the congregation. Identity is the right by which individuals assume a role in a given particular situation. One is able to establish what and where a person is in social terms. Morris (1996:34) remarks:



Almost everyone has some favourite old clothes that seem imbued with the power to ease them into a relaxed, carefree mood. That is because clothes are more than just covering. We dress not just for comfort, but for self-expression.

Therefore clothing is one of the symbols that makes one have the inner feeling of who he/she is. Identity is intricately linked to the social context. It is situated or shaped through situation involvement. Stone (in Kaiser 1990:322) notes that "identity is announced thorough personal appearance and then placed by observers' assessments of that appearance". The desire for identity inclines people to wear or display such religious symbols as bracelets, crosses, the star of David, on bumper stickers, T-shirts, rings.

In worship there is a deep desire to remain truly faithful to the church to which we belong. Pretorius, et al (1996:91) agree that

conversion places the convert to the Christian faith in a radically new relationship to structured society and the world at large. To a committed Christian congregation, witness inevitably implies and demands involvement and commitment.

This leads to the need to witness to the Gospel in each one's circumstances. Churches choose sign systems that express their identity. Job in 29:13 says: "I have dressed myself in righteousness like a garment; justice for me was cloak and turban" These 'garments' enhance one's identity and that of a group and bring it more into conformity with the image it has of presenting Christian values. In the Small Christian Communities of the Roman Catholic Church the members are made aware of baptism as their initial rite of passage to the Christian life and full participation in the Church. They are entitled to voice their needs, and to help one another to meet the challenges of the Gospel.

The God of the Bible does not act only on a narrow spiritual plane nor solely among the redeemed in the church He is concerned for and involved with the whole of humankind in every dimension of existence" (Livingston 1990:8).

Therefore the first challenge is that of the very identity of the local church. The church has to recognize itself in the people in which you live.

### ***1.7.10. Manyano***

This is a women's movement. This term will be used to mean all the women's movements found within the Christian churches. The word *Manyano* is a Xhosa word for "Let us pull together". The Sesotho *Kopano* originated in the Methodist church of Southern Africa. In the Roman Catholic Church these women are known as St Anna's. In almost all the Christian churches these movements are essentially a union of mothers who come together to pray, to share on Bible readings, to talk about major topics that are related to women's lives. Their meetings are local and contextual and very informal. The movements aim at giving a "female spiritual response to Christianity in the face of both male-dominated churches and traditional patriarchal culture" (Holness 1996:7). There is great mutual support within the movement. Most of their husbands work in distant towns or large cities.

Sodalities have a very important role in all Christian churches. In the various denominations these movements differ from one another but there is a common identity of mutual support and a high degree of female autonomy. There is a sense of community which helps them face the realities of life - their social needs, emotional poverty, unemployment, the teenage pregnancy of their daughters and the difficulty of nurturing sons in the absence of the father.

## **1.8 Review of Literature Related to the subject**

I have noted that there is relatively little pertinent literature produced about my subject in the physical area where I am researching the topic. References are made in various publications to the first missionaries insisting on Xhosa converts changing their traditional red garments to a Western type of clothes. Clothing did therefore play a part in worship but this was a very short-sighted policy and culturally insensitive:

Culture cannot be obliterated but culture can be controlled and used to fulfil certain goals and objectives. There is nothing sinful about using our culture to fulfil the mission of the church in Africa (Mbiti 1971:7).

The bibliography is proof of wide reading on the effect of clothing to discover how far it is a factor in mission and more precisely in worship. Mason (1996:73) writes:

Sometimes documents are used to verify or contextualize or clarify personal recollections and other forms of data derived from, for example interviewing and observation.

The literature extracts confirm my own convictions and they have helped me to address the importance of dress in worship. I have consulted authors from various parts of South Africa and other countries in Africa and beyond the continent. I have obtained essential information to support my research. The work done by previous researchers has helped me familiarise myself with the general trend of the study. I could agree with much of what has been written on the subject but from my experience in mission would question some of the assertions made. Reading various literature has enabled me to come to my own conclusions and also to realise that there has been little written on the direct relationship between dress and worship - how it could affect the attendance and the quality of worship. I am particularly interested in the import of uniform. In the words of Karen Brown, (1995:199):

The church offers many of its members a psychological home in a stressful land and the strict adherence to dress regulations ameliorated this sense of belonging. Many people spoke of their need to balance the requirements of daily life with their spiritual needs.

## **1.9 Contributors in various times and places**

Among those I studied, I was particularly interested in what Brown has written on the subject of uniform. She sees it as a way of reinforcing the beliefs of the *Ibandla AmaNazaretha* or Nazareth Baptist Church founded by Isaiah Shembe in Kwa-Zulu, Natal. She writes at length about the Independent Christian Churches which range in size from the enormous congregation of the Zion Christian Church (ZCC), which has tens of thousands of worshippers, to the smallest groups of less than a hundred, which have all developed



their individual theology, rituals and identity. Generally they “distinguish themselves from one another by the design and display of uniforms and associated regalia” (Brown 1995:2).

There is a strong correlation between Brown’s historical account and what I, have discovered in my personal research into the situation of the area of my study. She emphasises the importance of uniform to people’s faith and remarks that one cannot travel through a South African residential area without seeing at least one person wearing the outer sign of his/her faith. Uniforms have an influence on the individual and on the community. My objective is to see their relevance to worship for the individual and for the community.

Hendrickson, the editor of *Clothing and Difference* (1996), raises questions which address the issue of clothing and identity in sub-Saharan Africa. She traces the manner of dress of the Herero people according to their traditions in pre-colonial times and how this was affected with the coming of the colonists and missionaries. She focuses on the political, economic and spiritual meanings assigned to treatments of the “body’s surface”. It is important to contrast the traditional and Christian attitudes to clothing in order to discover what, if any, part clothing plays in worship.

Inus Daneel in *Quest for Belonging* (1987), too, writes about the African Independent Churches, basing his studies on liberated, post-war Zimbabwe. Because of the disruption of social structures caused by acculturation and industrialization, thousands of alienated individuals have found in the Independent Churches “homes of spiritual, mental and even material security”. These churches with their use of uniform in worship compensate for the lack of *koinonia* in the historical churches.

Gerald A. Arbuckle (1985) in his article, *Dress and Worship*, asks the reader to consider the impoverished liturgies of the culturally-dispossessed people of New Zealand called Maoris. These people lack development, a fact overlooked by the white European settlers who have ignored the needs of this minority group. The Maoris have lost their identity and hence their feeling of belonging. Many of them did convert to Christianity but gradually



stopped going to Church. Perhaps, if they had been encouraged to wear their traditional clothing or to adapt it, as they themselves considered, as suitable for attending Church services, that is maintaining a culturally-symbolic link, they might have been more motivated to continue to take an active part in the Liturgy. I have no personal experience of the Maori but I am inclined to theorise that their falling-away from Church services was in some measure due to the lack of what was for them the 'right clothing' to wear to Church.

In the editor's introduction to *Clothed with Christ*, J. Mogabgab (1996) describes the religious landscape in the United States as a spiritual geography undergoing enormous change. The terrain of Christian identity is shifting beneath our feet. The phrase "clothed in Christ" refers to the garment of Baptism which sets us on an endless search for identity as a Christian. In liturgical celebrations we "wear Christ and Christ wears us". Wright (1996:13) asserts:

Only then will we be ready to be clothed, only then transformable. But the clothing will not be our own choosing. It will be fashioned for us..... It will not hide our real selves. It will not make us utterly other. It will be clear that our holiness is not ours but God 's.

During the hours of liturgy we are transformed; we celebrate by meaningful gestures such as graceful bows and our movements are beautiful. The above sources and many other articles, pamphlets and books that I have studied have stirred my interest in the effect of clothing on worship. As already mentioned I have not found a great deal of South African literature on the subject. However, I am basing my research not only on theory but also, and more so, on direct experience which involves close and prolonged observation, interviews, discussions with other pastors and with knowledgeable older people and even the youth.

Nevertheless the findings and opinions of scholars who have preceded me in this study are very important and I could not have undertaken the study without their great help. Mason (1996:72) substantiates my conviction:

Written words, text, documents, records, visual or spatial phenomena or aspects of social organisation, shape, form and so on, are meaningful constituents of social worlds in themselves, you may see them as more

meaningful than, for example verbal utterances..... we can trace or read aspects of the social world through them.

With the exception of a few claims made by the writers quoted, I can agree with their findings. Thus the relevant literature has assisted me in several ways, giving me a firm foundation on which to build my contribution. I have done this by reviewing literature on the key theoretical and methodological perspectives in the field of dress, examining the underlying assumptions and citing examples from the Eastern Cape Christian churches. Therefore there is a link between the available literature and my research. It has enabled me to choose a suitable methodology. I have learned what has already been done and discovered what I believe to have been overlooked. The reading matter, prompted by my personal experience, has stimulated me to assert my opinion, to avoid unnecessary duplication and to fill the partial gaps and omissions which I have noticed.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

I have referred above to the use I have made of documents when I summarised the literature I consulted. "A literature study is aimed at contributing towards a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of the problem that has been identified" Fouche & De Vos (1998 :64). I have become familiar with the contents of documents and obtained an overall view of what has been written about the topic of my research. The books and articles in various journals and periodicals have enlightened me about what scholars have thought important and helped me to be more observant of what is happening in my world of mission and of how clothing has a meaning in worship in various situations. Background reading has enabled me to form my opinions and to state my findings more clearly. Fouche & De Vos (1998:66) testify to the use of documents: "Such a primary basic manual becomes a 'road map' on which the researcher can base the rest of his literature study". I used

the hermeneutic circle in which we comprehend a text by understanding the frame of reference from which it was produced, and appreciate that frame of reference by understanding the text (Mason 1996:76).

This calls for dialogue between me (the researcher) and the text so that I am able to extract what is meaningful for me in the data and so I can arrive more precisely at my own conclusions. I will now turn my attention to the methodology used in reaching my conclusions, mainly by qualitative methods.

## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **2.1 Introduction:**

As a background to the chapter, I will be dealing with the methodology of this research. This will involve in particular interviewing, observation, documents, and my personal experience. Data generation will be the method used to explain how the use of clothing and especially the uniform, helps one to become what he/she wants to be. People in worship want to feel comfortable.

To obtain the required data, I have to become a part of the group of people from whom I will be collecting the data. I have presented an intelligible understanding between the known and the unknown. Thus I became involved to determine the best data generation methodology needed to study the phenomenon of the use of clothing in worship. There is no one single data source that can give one a full knowledge of this study. One needs a variety of "sources of data, and methods of selecting and generating them" (Mason 1996:19).

#### **2.2 Methodology**

My qualitative research strategy is based on my experiences, on knowledge of the Xhosa culture and on skills that I have acquired from my studies. I have collected data from a variety of sources. A combination of interviews and observations has assisted me a great deal. Qualitative research design has its own advantages. From the above statement there is a sense that it observes within a particular context. Mason (1996:4) explains:

*In my view it is a great strength of qualitative research that it cannot be neatly pigeonholed and reduced to a simple, and prescriptive set of principles, and I think it is exciting that so many researchers from so many different traditions*



and disciplines are interested in doing research which is, in some way or another, qualitative in nature.

New insights have come about as a result of in-depth interviews, the analysis of case studies and the use of informants. I have used hypotheses in the form of informed guesses. These have offered me some possible solutions to the problem of why people feel that they do not belong to a particular community or place of worship.

### **2.3 Qualitative research is contextual**

Qualitative research "captures and discovers meaning once the researcher becomes immersed in the data" (De Vos 1998:243). I minister in what was known as a 'Homeland' during the years of apartheid, an impoverished rural area that is not stable mainly because there is insufficient local employment. Parishioners and members of other churches continually migrate to nearby towns and the bigger cities to find work and for education. Less frequently, people from other areas move into the parish and surroundings. Consequently I have had to take into account that the context of my fieldwork would keep changing to some extent. Mason (1996:41) points out that "qualitative research aims to produce rounded understandings on the basis of rich, contextual and detailed data". Qualitative research necessitates insight into the results of this phenomenon. We are seven years into the post-apartheid era, which further affects the contextual climate of my study. I have observed that the rapid adaptation to a new way of life contributes to South African Blacks' search for meaning in the gospel. Nolan (1988:29), writing of people's church adherence during the era of apartheid, noted: "We are asking about the role of God and therefore Christ and the Spirit in our present situation of crisis and conflict". Livingston (1990:16) expresses a similar idea:

The church is called to announce and embody this Good News as a reconciled and reconciling community. She is called to express, in her own life and actions, the costly salvific love of God in Christ.

One way of reaching this objective is the use of clothing. Uniformity in dress gives people a sense of belonging.

I am now quite familiar with the social reality of most of the people who comprise the Aliwal North Diocese and members of other churches in this same area of the Eastern Cape and so I have chosen a cross sectional survey. I shall concentrate on those who live in rural areas and dress in uniforms for Sunday service. I shall compare them with members of churches in which uniform is not important. I shall look at what is happening in urban areas; Eastern Cape. I shall locate a specific group and gain an insider's view. I have found this method rich and rewarding as most of the data could be attained at first hand.

#### **2.4 Methodological integration**

A methodological approach is concerned with principles of work, the collection and measurement of data, interpretation and representation. Mason (1996:5) maintains:

Any researcher should always think carefully about integrating different methods, whether or not they think they are integrating quantitative with qualitative methods, or qualitative with qualitative or quantitative with quantitative.

The method involves the study of human behaviour since worship is a human activity. An analysis of the data collected can help to answer some questions as to why people do not attend Church services. My specific purpose is to discover whether the data collected and analysed can give any insight into whether clothing is a factor in worship and if it establishes a pattern that could be adopted by other churches to improve attendance at, and the quality of, worship. Mason (1996:6) states that "qualitative research should produce social explanations to intellectual puzzles".

The use of clothing in worship can give one clues as to what a person is like in worship. Zerubavel (in Kaiser 1990:33) compares clothing to "the tip of the iceberg", the part that is visible. Just as we cannot see beneath the surface of the water hiding the lower part of the

ice layer, so we cannot see or grasp a person's faith merely by his/her external appearance. However, we can gather some information from the way the person dresses to attend a service of worship.

This cognitive perspective provides a point of view for us in mission. Karen Brown, (1995:103) presents a similar sort of argument based on the independent churches:

These robes functioned as emblems of membership in the independent Churches, while ordinary western dress performed much the same role in the mission churches.

That is why people use phrases such as 'my Sunday best' meaning their best clothing for going to church.

## **2.5 Description of conduct in this study**

A person's actual decision to dress in a particular manner is a response to a context that determines his/her choice. It is the context that defines, influences and justifies his/her actions and not the individual. The way one dresses, however, has to do with one's behaviour. Church communities have, to a certain extent, influenced clothing. There are other factors of course, such as the social setting, sex, age, education, residence, occupation, and the marital status. Kaiser (1990:298) explains how clothing leads to "enhancement of personal security at times, clothes may be used to boost morale or to make one feel more self confident"

## **2.6 My personal experience**

No one starts from scratch in carrying out any research. I have my preliminary concepts; my experiences and reflections on dress and worship and my own vision and foresight which are my point of departure. This is the start of my thinking. Personal experience can be a very reliable source of information. Karecki (1999:25) stresses that "no theology is formulated in a vacuum". One is able to identify to a greater or lesser extent with the experience of other people. I was not able to do this first hand as regards clothing but in my



capacity as a pastor I could do so on a secondary level. I am not standing outside the subject's experience. Experience means different things in different contexts. In the opinion of Maria Mies (in Kretzschmar & Van Schalkwyk 2001:138): "Experience is taking real life as the starting point, it is subjective concreteness as well as being a societal entanglement.

In the Ugandan environment in which I grew up clothing was not a major issue at the Sunday service. Where I now serve in ministry I find myself surrounded by various church communities which look on dress as an important factor in worship. Consequently I need these people's perspective and personal experience of their own local context. Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson (1990:17) present a similar argument based on the moments of insertion: "The moment of insertion locates our pastoral responses in the lived experience of individuals and communities". This proves the point made that my experience and that of others is very important. The best way for me to come to a general understanding is to apply a scientific method of research. In carrying out my research I take into account my own experience and the experience of others. Thus I can draw conclusions about the real needs of people from varying cultures, who come for Sunday worship.

In the area where I serve I see that religious and social values are communicated through clothing. One's personal beliefs as well as one's social identification with a religious group or a church are affected by the use of a uniform. I have noticed pride in a person's appearance when he/she wears a uniform. The use of a uniform aids interaction, and enables participants to align their actions on the bases of their relationships to one another. In one community of my parish the youth want a uniform for worship so that they look like the youth of other churches which use a uniform. This may speak to us in the Roman Catholic Church about our identity. In our liturgy we do need to express our external signs which should not be minimalised. It is a duty of the Church to preach that through baptism we have been clothed in Christ Jesus. Such realities are the basic point of departure for a holistic practical theology which refuses to reduce its concerns to the atomised individual or family. It is a means for people to get to know one another; they are influenced by one another's appearance. As Rodriguez (in Jenkinson, & O'Sullivan 1991:218) observes about

the people in Joao Pessoa, Brazil: "Personal relationships are important elements in our community life and accountability and sharing of experience". I have gained a profound experience of friendship as a result of sharing with my community. In interaction with other people of a different denomination I was able to see my own vocation more clearly in the way I dress for liturgy.

I have observed that some churches and church groups who do use uniforms achieve certain goals that they have set themselves. While visiting other churches I was able to see the importance of uniforms and what they symbolise when I attended ceremonies in those churches. On one occasion I was present at the funeral of a member of the Zionist Church and I witnessed what was going on at that particular service. I was interested in their use of uniform. Their white-and-blue gowns gave them a sense of identity. Brown (1995:107) describes the way the Nazareth Baptist Church uses its uniform in terms of baptism:

During this important rite of passage all those who are to join fully attend Saturday services during the appointed weekend. The next morning they go together to the local water source ..... Each person removes his or her street clothes, and dons an old white gown ( a cast off *umnazaretha*, often in poor shape). ..... Each individual is given the opportunity to privately confess their sins to an elder and pray with him. Then the individual enters the water where they undergo full immersion..... Upon returning to land each person re-dresses in street clothes which are then covered by a new *umnazaretha* symbol of full membership and their faith.

This uniform acts as a reflection of their local church. They are able to declare to others who they are. The youth of Dordrecht Catholic Church have been experimenting with the use of uniform. They have chosen a striking mixture of black and white colours. Many of them have procured this uniform and they maintain that the attendance at Sunday worship and youth activities in the parish has improved. These young people have told me, as their chaplain, that the uniform gave them a sense of self-esteem and a sense of security since there is a great lack of self confidence among the youth of that area. Creekmore & Sharma (in Kaiser 1990:301) suggest that "persons who are concerned about others may want to appear similar to those others". Among the youth there is a great need for acceptance by others. Therefore their search for God is being displayed outwardly by their uniformity of



clothing. They also believe that the use of a uniform reduces the practice of comparing oneself with others because of the clothes they wear. The youth groups of Umhlanga have taken note of what their peers in Dordrecht have achieved and they are determined to go ahead with implementing a similar strategy. I am encouraging them as I feel that this builds their sense of belonging in the mostly Xhosa setting of the parish. Now the mothers are interested and are supporting their idea. This has helped me to gain access to a dimension of the society that I am working in. This experience has been of great significant to my understanding of the political, social and economic structures that make up and shape the Xhosa cultural life.

## **2.7 Empirical research methodology**

Empirical research is not separated from the existing theories but flows from them. The empirical research examines the data scientifically. My approach is mainly based on an empirical qualitative method. Through empirical research I have been able to differentiate among the various types of dress (uniform) and how they have been adapted to the local context. For example it is very interesting to see how the followers of Shembe have incorporated the Zulu traditional dress as noted by Brown (1995: 105):

The 'isibamba' is the generic term for a belt worn by Zulu women and 'isicholo' the built-up headdress worn by married female traditionalists, altered to suit a more modern and affordable way of African life. The predominant colours are still red, black and white and some beadwork is maintained. The patterns are altered not only to suit modern technology in manufacturing but also to indicate roles in the church society.

From these perspectives of the people's cultural lives, one is able to learn how identification is a tool in social analysis. Kuper (in Brown 1995:17-18) explores the way in which both social differentiation and stratification are reflected in South African dress and material culture. He analyses how western manufactured goods have been incorporated into indigenous categories.

Miller (1992:16) considers the way we look at dress in our mission experience to be important since the Church is a "messianic assembly of God's people" as John Paul II said at his General Audience on 20 July 1991.

Any missiological study has to take place within a context which is necessary for the observation, the experience, and the necessary knowledge to be acquired. Knowledge comes as the result of the interpretation performed:

To reflect on your context is something more than simply thinking about it. It requires that the local community consider all the aspects of the context in order to discover their meaning and their interrelatedness. The local community becomes the subject of its own history as its members reflect in faith on the lived reality of their lives (Karecki 1999:11).

To acquire such the knowledge I have employed in-depth and open-ended questionnaires, informal interviews and direct observation. I have combined the former with literary sources. Data collections were carried out over the period 2000-2001. I continued my reflection on the facts and figures of my collection which have formed a prolonged process. It was refined from time to time by further observations which I made in the field of my activities in mission and everyday experience as well as by continued study.

## **2.8 Interviewing, including various challenges I have encountered**

I agree with Mason (1997:35) when she says that "people as data sources in the sense that they are repositories of knowledge, evidence, experience or whatever, which is relevant" to my research. Those who told me that they did not have the correct clothes for worship and for attending other church activities were one of my sources of information. I interviewed regular church-goers, as one of my methods for generating data. This type of interview is crucial according to Krueger (1998:316): "The most overlooked and underestimated aspect of focus-group interviewing is the selection and recruitment of the right people to participate". In my interviews I met with those who wear uniforms and others who do not and who seem not to be influenced by dress. Therefore I had to look for the right people



who would be able to contribute to my research, which Burgess (in Mason 1996:38) calls "conversation with a purpose".

I observed them, I talked to them, and I took photographs of them. I used their experiences, especially those who suffer from social stress as a result of anxiety with regard to how their appearance is accepted by others. It is important to remember that perceivers are not merely passive receivers of information. There is always some kind of interaction. Therefore people dress well because life to a great extent consists of social transactions which are affected by the way they dress. "It seems that females may not be as tolerant of other females who do not dress well, especially when those females are not as physically attractive" Kaiser (1990:273). This also pertains to members of churches. Uniform therefore plays a significant role in certain churches. Dressing alike alleviates the inequality that members could experience in church worship. Rodriguez (in Jenkinson & O'Sullivan, (1991:223-4) sees a way to help:

We will try to identify ourselves with the cause and struggle of the people by co-operating in their own organisations. We wish to be the salt and the leaven mixed in well with the endeavours of the people.

This leads to an expression of a common mood, and forms relationships with others. Since people who are concerned about others want to appear similar to those they live with. A variety of views is very helpful. Sometimes I get conflicting interpretations from individuals in the same group. I find that it is necessary to experience different situations even within a limited environment. After interviewing people, they become interested in the topic; for a long time some have been wearing distinguishing clothes and uniforms but without really knowing what those clothes/uniforms meant to them. Mason (1996:41) offers the suggestion: "You may wish to achieve depth and roundedness of understanding in these areas, rather than a broad understanding of surface patterns." My church, the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), is beginning to see the relationship between dress and worship, not only as regards the sodalities where this practice has been in vogue for a long time, but also in the church as a whole.

The main problem that I have faced in my interviews is that an interview has to generate the relevant data from the right people. I have to ask the correct questions to obtain the type of answer I need. I have to make sure that I am not interpreting the data incorrectly. As I am a native of Uganda, the Xhosa language can be a stumbling block, especially when I converse with rural people who are not aware of the difficulties a language may cause a foreigner. Mason (1996:52) calls us to "question our own assumptions". Interviewing calls for close attention to the way questions are framed and for a keen ear to grasp the nuances of meaning in the answers received. It is said that you can tell the truth only in your own language. Since my studies in the written word are all through the medium of English I occasionally have to grapple with the meaning of content. Mason (1996:52) warns that "it is very important in this context to record as fully and explicitly as you can the route by which you came to the interpretations you were making".

From the point of ethics, I had to ask for the consent of the church members and leaders and other interviewees so that they could freely and willingly take part in my research. Quite early on in this work I could feel a certain suspicion on the part of members, and even leaders of churches other than my own. I had to explain the purpose of my questions. In most instances they were only too ready to take part and to contribute what they observed and understood. Sometimes it was difficult to get all parties within the church to participate fully. For example, church leaders first had to give consent to their members to be interviewed and at times it was not easy to obtain their consent.

## **2.9 Observation**

Observation generates data. Here again I have used the qualitative-method. Mason (1996:60) stresses that the term observation

is usually used to refer to methods of generating data which involve the researcher immersing herself or himself in a research setting and systematically observing dimensions of that setting, interactions, relationships, actions, events and so on within it.



Observation calls for direct interaction. I began by deciding on my role in data generation. I have involved myself in the local context of my own church and have been able to gain access to other church denominations, both leaders and members. I am a member of the ministers' Fraternal and have made use of this association to learn from them and share with them about their understanding of the place of clothing in worship. I have seen how differently members of a community behaved before and after they obtained a uniform, and what happened when members, at times, lost the use of their uniform. Ramshaw (1996:31) offers a similar view which proves the point that I have observed: "My clothing announces me". I have observed how others in their community and outside it interpret the use of uniforms by these people. It has been an experience of non-verbal behaviour. When there is a festival or a conference attended by people from different places, who wear a common uniform, one can sense a common bond between them and ties of friendship. I have noticed that those who do not wear similar clothing cannot interact in like manner.

As a pastor in the Roman Catholic Church, I participate in the wearing of a uniform (priestly vestments similar to other Catholic pastors) for worship. The congregation expects me to be dressed for the occasion according to the tradition of the church inherited from the Bible. In Exodus 28:31-35, Yahweh spoke to Aaron and his sons giving them precise instructions about their priestly vestments.

Whether it is celebrating Holy Mass, taking part in a Baptism, attending a funeral, etc., Black people want to dress their best according to their means. They have a sense of the appropriate clothing for a birth, wedding, funeral, any specific occasion, and this includes church services. The outward disposition of people includes their appearance and therefore the clothes they wear. Ramshaw (1996:31) explains the role of clothing:

However, though we choose not to admit it even our jeans are something like, corsets; for while announcing me, my clothing to some degree contain me, shapes me, forms me for the eyes of those who look my way. I have been molded into something that people would rather see than me.

Many people I have observed or spoken with do not want to attend worship in casual dress. They go to church as guests invited by God and so have to put on the proper garments, figuratively and literally. Social experiment proves that the attitudes of people change according to the clothes they wear. If this applies to the general public, it is likely to apply to those who go to church.

Arthur (1999:37) states that “appearance is considered the external manifestation of the inner attitudes”. People learn to adjust their attitudes to dress according to the view they have about showing God due reverence in different situations of their lives. To understand what African people deem as suitable clothing in which to approach the Holy God, we have to look at their religious culture. Clothing has always been central to how Black people communicate with God in a visual, external way as well as with the internal expression of mind and heart. Langa (1999:296) explains the functional importance of the African way of prayer and worship:

Traditionally African have always been people of associations; men and women had their own regiments based on age groups. The youth in other parts of Africa also had their own regiments. Discipline and rituals which were rooted in the traditional values were lost; the 'spirit of regiment' was never lost. It was imported and translated into popular religion by Africans. Sodalities, pilgrimages, uniforms, codes of conduct, retreats, etc. are symptoms of the 'spirit of regiment' the characteristics of which can be observed in different sodalities.

I agree with Jacob Krehbiel's (in Arthur 1999:34) objection to ostentatious dress in church: “Excessive display in clothing manifests on the outside what is hidden in the heart”. Christians should dress elegantly yet simply so as not to draw attention to themselves as individuals or as a group. Uniforms should be chosen to help us communicate better with God and with one another and not to distract others in worship. Langa (1999:296) stresses how Africans

need to express their religious experience using external signs. It is a fact that external signs are employed largely in popular religion. The signs are not strictly universal; their significance can vary from culture to culture.



Uniform in worship has a religious, spiritual meaning in the African mind. Those who wear it become spiritually enriched and it is necessary to keep this in mind in interpretations of church uniforms. African clothing sometimes has a number of layers of material which need to be studied so as to discover the hidden religious meaning. Missiology is the study of the principles and means of the church's mission to the world, especially its mission to non-Christians. It includes a form of pastoral theology which is concerned with the people it wants to reach - their needs, sorrows, joys and all that affects their lives - therefore missiology must consider all of their culture, including their way of dress, especially in worship. Robinson (1990:157) pleads for mission to witness:

Regarding the Christian congregation, the call to be holy and lead a moral life should therefore correspond with the call to witness to the world.... Mission belongs to the very essence of the church, it is not possible to separate the witness of the church from the daily life of the church.

That is why the way communities dress is one of the means of witnessing to the Gospel. A simple, inexpensive uniform can be a healing, empowering factor in the lives of the poor, weak, despised, often on the periphery of society. By this active participative observation I have become in a way immersed in the lives of many adherents of traditional and Christian churches and realise ever more clearly how they are affected by external circumstances, including the manner of dress. Arthur (1999:37) writes about body constraint and clothing in the church setting. He recalls an anecdote to prove his assertion:

As Sarah explained about a friend's expulsion, 'She was ill, spiritually ill. We could all see it in her dress and her behaviour – she was just out of control'.

Within the context of African churches there is a pursuit to find a meaningful connection between life and faith. This awareness will likely seek to make use of clothing and appearance as they strive to be who they are. Nolan (1988:52) wrote:

Anyone who is not legally classified as white is treated as inferior not only by individual whites but by the white system of laws with their 'whites only' restrictions.

Because of the historical situation, our Black South African communities still feel a certain alienation which has resulted in a loss of identification with their culture, and this continues to spill over to their membership in their church and religious groups. In the poor, hostile social-economic environment, the African is trying to survive. Bosch correctly states in relation to how God is viewed in Africa: "God is utilised rather than worshipped" (Mofokeng 1990:171). Meaning that in Africa life has been made up of struggles like poverty, unemployment, crime and more challenges. All of these problems lead one to see God has one whose function it is to uplift us from our positions of discomfort. One way of restoring a sense of belonging is through the use of uniform. Kaiser (1990:472) claims: "People who dress similarly to others communicate that they are a group and have certain attributes or attitudes in common". This statement confirms what I observe in the Methodist communities that are predominantly Black, and also in the sodalities of the Roman Catholic Church. Arthur (1999:37) explains:

The wearing of traditional mennonite dress indicates a women's willingness to submit to the control of the church and its dictates; objective evaluation of a person commitment to the faith is impossible, so symbolic measures are substitutes.

Their use of uniform is likely to impact on their personalities as well. In their worship they show a certain submission, not in a negative but in a positive way. That is, they go along with church doctrine and are ready to accept the rules of the group. It cuts both ways as the individual members are accepted by the others. This does not lead to loss of the individual's uniqueness. There is space for one to appear and feel different from another. Even where there is a need for acceptance by others in the church community or group, a desire for uniqueness should not be overlooked:

Distinctiveness and uniqueness are likely to be important to a person ..... Such a person would enjoy expressing his or her individualism and would probably feel less need to conform with others appearances for the purpose of belonging (Kaiser 1990:298).

For a long time Blacks have been oppressed people and have suffered greatly from lack of self-worth. In the past Black workers were "stripped of everything that could make life even marginally human" (Nolan 1988:80). They have been "pushed down by societal structures" (Kritzinger 1990:41). They have been socialised into accepting the negative view of themselves which was held by White people. Therefore a poor self-image developed, which Kritzinger quoted from SASO

a slave mentality, inferiority complex, distrust of themselves and continued dependence on others culminating in self-hate (SASO Commission on Black Theology in Kritzinger & Saayman 1990:41).

## **2.10 Limitations and problems encountered**

Missiology is an integrating, multidisciplinary field. Although basically theological in nature, it makes use of other fields of study: anthropology, sociology, history, psychology, ecumenism, non-Christian religion and missionary experience. I can claim to have a wide view as I grew up in Uganda, studied for a few years in Lesotho and have been studying and ministering in South Africa since 1990. I have covered the other disciplines to some extent. However, I have discovered certain limitations and have come up against problems in arriving at the exact truth about people's motives.

People have long-term motivations for dressing up, which remain a mystery I think even to themselves. Langa (1999:295) comments:

The church in Southern Africa has realised that she cannot minister effectively to the people of God if she does not understand the cultures of people within a particular framework. Understanding culture helps the church to decipher the identity of the people to whom the gospel is addressed.



The concept of uniform can vary, since different churches or sodalities each have a different understanding of what a uniform means to them. This calls for a church to review its preaching to people who are poor:

The emphasis on self-love, self-acceptance and self-affirmation in Black Theology is a fundamental critique of traditional missionary preaching, which sees people only or primarily as sinners, thus overlooking the fact that they are also at the same time sinned-against people (Kritzinger 1990: 42).

Their church uniform calls on them to stand up and be counted as a re-created Black people, a people of God.

Most of the people I spoke with are financially poor Blacks of the lower income group or unemployed. I am not in a position to give any worthwhile data on the Coloured or White population. One interesting encounter I had was with a Reformed Church minister. He told me that some White women in his church have discussed the notion of dressing in black and white as a sign of solidarity with the Black brethren who belong to their denomination. This proposal may have arisen from an understanding of the Xhosa expression: "*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* - a person is a person because of people" Holness (1996: 25). This is a positive way of sharing life. I was touched by the depth of this idea and regard it as a good witness, a real effort on the part of the White members to walk with their sisters as companions on their faith journey. Both Blacks and Whites can enrich each other spiritually. Karecki (1999: ) presents a similar sort of argument based on the church in mission:

Through baptism we are invited to share life in Christ and are sent out to participate in God's mission to heal and to restore creation. We do not travel alone, but with others who form His body. (See 1 Corinthians 12:12-36).

I have given some indication of a variety of life experiences that I have encountered in the course of this research as far as the Black population is concerned, I have limited my research to Black congregations; my knowledge concerning the attitudes of Whites and Coloureds to church uniforms is merely anecdotal.

In my dealings with Black adults I find that uniform means more to women than to men. This stems more from women's general position in African society:

Control of female sexuality is essential in Christianity; control of the self is at the centre of Christianity's ethic of anti-sexuality. Culture attempts to control the body and its urges only make them more powerful and more in need of control (Arthur 1999:38).

Women are seen as inferior to men. Could their motive for wearing uniform be connected with lack of status? Women are in the majority in the churches and they may now perform many of the functions that were previously restricted to men only, including preaching. In the Catholic Church, women are excluded from the administering of the sacraments. Women I interviewed used a variety of terms to describe themselves. The Women of St Anna, a sodality of married women, are accorded a special role in the church. Their constitution demands that they are either married or widowed. They have to be models of Christian living, good mothers. They are expected to wear a purple and black uniform for church events. Their uniform gives them a sense of identity and a certain power in the church and in their daily life. It contributes to an holistic spirituality:

No aspects of African life, let alone its spirituality, can be understood without first coming to grips with the thorough-going holism that pervades everything that is Africa, without the body-soul temporal-eternal, spiritual-secular dualism that are so characteristic of the Western mind and experience, life in Africa is one. There is no distinction between religion and the rest of life (Holness 1996:24).

What about people in the church, who do not belong to a group such as the St Anna Sodality, how can they feel comfortable in worship? The special uniform of the St Anna, which is after all only an outward sign, seems to entitle them to a special position in the church. They have to be taken seriously by the pastors and leaders in the church. One of the women said that once she puts on her uniform she puts on all of the church's rules, that is to say she is scrutinised and interpreted as a measure of her good conduct just because of the symbolism of the uniform. Many of the women I spoke to expressed a greater sense of



freedom in being women who have clothed themselves in a particular type of dress. Clothing gives them a feeling of friendship with other St Anna women, even outside their own parish and diocese. Dress code is very important; women who do not dress according to the code are criticised by the others:

If your clothes are straight down the lines as the rules of the group, then everyone can see that you are submitting your will to the Church. The Mennonite dress is like a uniform - it indicates that you are keeping everything under control. When you are having trouble with the churches rules your clothing can show it. This is why everyone watches what everyone else is wearing and how they are wearing it, because clothing shows acceptance of all the rules of the church (Arthur 1999:41).

I have heard that there may even have been battles fought between those who wear uniforms and those who do not. Abuse creeps into all human institutions but I do not think this is probable in the case of church uniforms. Women in their sodality uniform might present a threat to those who dress casually for church services. St Anna members might give more weight to wearing the distinctive uniform than to keeping the more important rules of the constitution. Uniforms could lead to discrimination among women in the church. Women who dress in uniform are not necessarily better off spiritually than the rest. Ross Olivier (in Holness 1996:26), co-ordinator of the Methodist church of Southern Africa's 'Journey to the New Land' mission thrust, has articulated a particular problem regarding Manyano identity:

The women's Manyano group do not easily see themselves as part of their local churches, as members of the body, as it were. They regard themselves as a distinct entity, almost separate from the local church, and demand to be acknowledged as such.

This may also be true in other churches where such groups exist. Yes, it's true that the use of a uniform restores status. Therefore there is a pride expressed in their clothing. The house of God is primarily a house of prayer where no one has any "rights" over others. The correct use of uniform in the case of the *Manyano* is applauded by Haddad (2001:18):



The putting on of the church uniform is on one level simply a sign of Christian commitment ..... The wearing of the uniform is more than this; it takes on a sacramental value. The uniform is not only a symbol, but has a substantial quality, inherent in itself, which is conferred on the wearer. In this sense, the uniform embodies supernatural powers that infuse the material world and become a resource for dealing with this reality. In wearing the uniform women attest to it (making them feel alive). This overall sense of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being enables women to choose to live in the face of death. They choose to do this not to numb the senses in the face of material pain. Rather, demonstrating the power of God through the ritualised wearing of the uniform they experience dignity and autonomy, crucial resources in dealing with and overcoming oppression. Infused with God's power, the church uniform brings hope and comfort and healing in the face of illness. As churchwomen are provided with strength, they are able to carry out the physical demands made upon them every day of their lives.

The above account of motivation is positive but in the long run it stems from a material source. It takes Jesus' words to be "dressed and ready" too literally. For the Christian the sacrament of Baptism, initiating us into the family of God, is of infinitely more importance. In 1 Peter 3:3-6, there are instructions for the way we should dress. Our religious ideology affects our lives, which in turn shape our way of worship, so that we may recover our full identity as people of God. The church has not only provided systems of worship but in some instances it has influenced the way its members behave. Some churches advocate a conservatism in dress which indicates separation from the world. Youth that I have spoken to are put off by such conservatism. Uniforms are frequently a long skirt, big collar, a belt, and a head covering for the women - the latter symbolising submission. A tie, a three-piece and jacket are worn by the men, so that they can be respected in the congregation.

The Independent Churches expect the men to wear a white or blue-white gown. Thus dress in worship is of considerable significance to anyone who wants to join a church. Arthur (1999:32) remarks that "the principles of a world are found woven into the fabric of its clothing". This is very true since a person's clothing can be a vehicle to express his/her conformity or defiance. Gaines (1985:49) makes the comment that "faith determines fashion".

## **2.11 Conclusion:**

In conclusion I should point out aspects that have helped me to come to some findings. The qualitative research method, has been very helpful in the data generation. Different situations, have been linked to the causes of Christians to want to use uniforms in worship. There is a common understanding of what uniforms can mean to a congregation and to the individual. The methods that I used for data generation were a positive contribution to this study, assisting my discovery of key concepts concerning the use of clothing in worship.

Thus I can conclude that by interviewing, observation, documents, and my personal experience that all these methods have a kind of interaction, which is good in missiological analysis to the study. These means of data generation have been influenced by the context in which they were used. This chapter has helped to shed some light on the understanding between Clothing and worship. In the next chapter I would like to look at the role of the uniform in worship.

## **CHAPTER THREE: CLOTHING AND WORSHIP**

### **3.1 Introduction:**

Chapter three comprises the people's attitudes to uniforms in worship. In this part, I will provide a broad view of people's relation to what they wear in worship. I will be focusing on clothing/ uniform as a language of communication. Clothing is rooted in people's sociology has Larson-Miller (1992:6) puts it that: "We attempt to become what we are not by nature through our dress".

Therefore clothing and especially a uniform is a reflection of cultural norms and expectation. Briefly I will also look at the other factors that determine worship, for example a need for beliefs, one finds out that there are elements that are peculiar among the Black congregations concerning their worship, and their religious systems, such as personal needs, traditional norms, culture, political background, healing, psychological assurance, self-support, material security, singing, dancing, and preaching. These and more are some of the issues that I will give a brief outline of as well as their missological significance in worship.

### **3.2 People's attitudes to Uniform in worship**

Quite a few members of different churches that I interviewed referred me to the text of Matthew 22:1-14, the parable of the wedding feast. They take verse 11 as very important when it comes to worship:

When the King came in to look at the guests he noticed one man who was not wearing a wedding garment and said to him: How did you get in here, my friend, without a wedding garment? (Mt 22:11).



Most of the Independent Churches interpret the text as meaning that people have to be properly dressed when attending church worship. These churches maintain that they have to dress in the manner stipulated by their church. As Pretorius et al (1989:82) stress: "The church should always be a witnessing community". The external symbol points to a transformation of the inner life. Tarlo (in Arthur 1999:251) writes about how

dress can visually manifests the salient ideas and concepts fundamental to a culture; what dress is to make tangible the basic categories a culture uses to define its particular conception of reality.

The manner in which people dress when they come to church is important in their lives. Some believe that even on Judgement Day their regard for their uniform will be taken into account.

When I interview people, especially those not of my church, I am careful not to influence their attitude to clothing, but to share in their views and beliefs. Epp (1990:245) reported on a conference of the Mennonite Church which discussed the issue of dress in worship:

We regret the attitude of some of our brethren and sisters who have disregarded the regulations and practices of the church with regard to their attire, and urgently request their consistent compliance.

This apology points to the importance the leaders place on uniformity as a church regulation. I have been brought up in the Catholic faith to see a Christian as first and foremost a follower of Christ, keeping the commandments of God and spreading the Good News in the world as Christ asked us to do. I agree that uniform dress may play a significant role in helping to spread the Faith but it is not an absolute. Receiving the sacraments, keeping the Sunday holy, including being present at divine worship, reading the Word of God, loving God and one's neighbour are all more important than the way one dresses. However, when dress is considered from the point of achieving the essentials it can be a sacramental symbol, something which gives one a feeling of God's power.

Worship is an outward expression of people's religion and common faith. Worship differs from religion to religion, elaborate or simple, frequent or infrequent. The participation may be obligatory – for the Catholic this includes participation in Holy Mass on Sunday, reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year and Holy Communion at least at Easter. Public worship intends a meeting with God but it is also a social communal moment. Pretorius et al (1989:83) call this social group “a new fellowship. This fellowship which is so deeply rooted in God's gracious dealings differs qualitatively from all other human groups in society.”

We have to consider the personal and corporate cultural needs of the congregation. Humankind is gregarious by nature and the Church has to ensure that all the members present feel a certain equality as Christians professing the same faith. We belong to one another: "A person's developing conception of who he or she is cannot be separated from social interaction" (Kaiser 1990:155). As in all other spheres of life there will be inequality of poor/rich and this is noticeable in their appearance, in how they are dressed. Pretorius et al (1989:70) say that

People in the remote rural areas are often the poorest of the poor. Some rural areas have made progress, but in most cases the inhabitants are living in dire poverty.

The pastor and leaders of such a church congregation should take into account whether uniform dress would redress the imbalance:

Clothing and appearance provide a visible basis for assigning and receiving rewards in the form of compliments and group recognition; they also promote a sense of cohesiveness as a group (Kaiser 1990:354).

In a church group, members can express their mutual interests since they share much of their life in common. The display of dress in the form of a uniform can promote social acceptance. The manner of dress may either cause one to be accepted or to be rejected. A uniform could help the poorer people to fit into the church society, to be able to survive as members. Holness (1996:21) testifies about her life:

I have lived in association with Manyano women all my life. Among my earliest memories are those of sitting, as a young child, in the room of Elizabeth NOMPI Ngabo, my parents' domestic worker, and watching with fascination as she dressed for Manyano. Fastidiously washed and lavishly perfumed for the occasion, Elizabeth would don her distinctive black, red, and white uniform (symbolising respectively the blackness of our sin, the cleansing blood of Jesus, and the purity imparted by the washing away of sin) and excitedly set off to join her friends for their weekly Thursday afternoon Manyano meetings. Elizabeth, the white family's domestic worker, had been transformed into Ms E. N. Ngobo, Manyano woman in uniform, a person in her own right.

Here the use of a uniform plays a central role in the struggle to be oneself and to be accepted by others. One's identity changes by the mere use of dress; life is transformed. A new sense of community in faith and sharing together of life is celebrated. A sense of pride in the self is seen in this story.

### **3.3 Sociology of clothing**

Sociologists are interested in the impact that clothing has on the general trend of people's lives. Schmidt (1989:39) tells of an Anglican Rector, D. Jarratt, who reflected on the interrelationship that exists between dress and social status. He was born into a simple family and did not have access to the rich so he kept at a humble distance from them. As Jarratt advanced in social status from poor farm boy to esteemed person, clothes clearly marked out his elevation. At his ordination, he was given "a new suit of the best black broad cloth that clearly marked his attainment of a new social and religious status, his hierarchical elevation above the simple and the common".

Membership of a group may require that the members wear a certain type of clothing. One's status in the community is affected by the way one dresses. Clothing belongs to the non-verbal signs which show position and relationships within the community. Shorter (1998:54) interprets symbols as having a forceful impact: "Symbols simply make the real more real". They are a means of communication. Applied to religion, clothing can be



interpreted as an outward sign symbolising belonging. It gives a sense of security and fulfilment. This is evident in the Independent Churches where uniform has a great attraction for many black people:

One obvious factor about human beings is that they have bodies and they are bodies. This means the body is similar to a vehicle for carrying around an individual's thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. It is at once a part of nature (an environment) and a part of culture (Turner in Kaiser 1990:97).

The covering of the body and how it is adorned is vitally important. The cultural aspect of clothing in any setting will have repercussions on the religion practised by those people. A certain degree of self-esteem is needed in a church community. The covering of the body and how the person presents him/herself gives a feeling of self-worth. The church should use all means possible to make people feel that they are valuable in the sight of God and people, and especially within the context of their own church. The culturally dispossessed have to be considered. If the wearing of certain garments helps them not to feel out of place, then it could be regarded as a duty to introduce such an arrangement.

Among the youth whom I minister to I am aware that adolescents whose parents can afford to buy them suitable, presentable clothes tend to feel more secure socially than their peers who feel deprived because of the poor condition of their attire. Those who belong to one or more secular groups in the parish for which uniform is a requirement have no problem in this regard. There is a culture which uniform creates:

Culture, it must be remembered, exists in the mind of the individual's theory as to what his or her society holds as the proper way of coping with life (Luzbetak 1988:167).

The individual feels accepted and approved of by the other members. Dressed alike, the members have no need to gain recognition or to call attention to themselves. There is equality, no minority or majority subgroup, and each one is free to concentrate on the ethos of the group and deliver his/her best. This is similar to the way groups in religion, such as sodalities and individual churches, benefit from wearing uniforms

Correctly used, clothing can be a good symbol of power in a society, and of the church.

Kiernan (1979:13), describing Zulu Zionists, states that

the powers of status and office are given through a ritual act of conferral, such as an investiture. Through the rite of bestowal the limits of conferred powers are defined and linked to the distinctive sets of duties and obligations which are appropriate to different levels of rank and office ... The conferred powers are to be exercised for the good of the community whose members see themselves as an embattled minority under spiritual siege. Their function is primarily protective and preventative. While consulting with an individual over an illness which is afflicting him, the prophet may recommend the wearing of a permanent item of dress which will act as protection and deterrent against further bouts of illness. Once an item has been prescribed in this way. The material is cut from a supply held by the minister's wife who will make it up on her sewing machine. On a pre-selected Sunday, the garment is publicly blessed by the minister who then invests the recipient with it while the congregation sings: 'Rise up and put on your powers' (Is 52:1).

Kiernan also writes that the staff, like clothing, is part of the basic equipment of the Zionist in healing sessions. The Zionists quote the Bible to support this: 'Arm yourselves with weapons', says the Lord of Hosts. Among the functions of clothing listed by Luzbetak (1988:76) are to deal with

the inclemency of weather, to take care of our concern for modesty, to let everyone know that I am a man or a woman, to indicate that I am wealthy, to be respected by my peers, to enable people to relate more easily and properly to me who happens to be a clergyman, policeman, soldier, bus driver, bellhop, girls scout, patrol boy, train conductor, nun, altar boy, chorister, ushers, bridegroom, first-communicant, baseball umpire or football referee, ..... clothing connotes prestige and respect, a certain occupation, the level of education, and/ or participation in ritual is included.

### 3.4 Characteristics of uniforms

A uniform, more than casual dress, signifies the wearer's position or status. It minimises the possibility of confusing members of a group with non-members and is a sign of legitimacy. In most of the Zionist and Spirit-type churches,

church services are marked by a colourfulness in total contrast to everyday life, especially in tribal areas. Brightly coloured robes with monograms indicating the wearer's position in the leadership hierarchy are worn, or - as in the case of the ZCC - the congregation dress in neat uniforms wearing distinctive emblems (Daneel 1987:224).

All this helps a member to determine his/her identity. It suppresses individuality. It segregates a group from others external to it. By eliminating social differences, it promotes democracy in its environmental sphere. Uniform enables people to feel at home and equal among one another. Larson-Miller (1992:6) holds that

we attempt to become what we are not by nature through our dress 'Sacred Vestments: Intimation of Glory' ..... Clothing can hide our flaws, real or imagined, and emphasize our strengths' but even these flaws and strengths are culturally conceived. So we see from an anthropological perspective that the relation of clothing to the body is partially a product of environment in its origins; but more prominently it is a symbol of culture, interpreting or defining beliefs.

In such a setting, people often use the terms "brother/sister". The atmosphere lends itself to the sharing of problems, including those of a spiritual nature, and members can expect others to understand and to help them solve these dilemmas.

There are also some negative implications. Nathan (1986:87) maintains that "uniforms create obstacles noted in performance". Uniforms should not demand uniformity or conformity. There were difficulties in Catholic congregations of religious consisting of both men and women when they altered their traditional way of dressing; some have even abandoned a distinctive habit. Even if dressed alike we can agree to disagree at times. A religious uniform may be worn for the wrong reasons, for example when it leads to pride



and not as a help towards the humility we should practise in worshipping our Creator. It then becomes an idol of our own making. Larson-Miller (1992:6) comments:

Individuality expressed through clothing may be an indication of mood, of deliberate differentiation from others, or of relationship to others. It may also define one's social role and worth, an important category in the history of clothing symbolism. There are many historical examples of certain garments or colours of clothing being restricted to upper class, lower class, slaves, royalty, or other social classification, all with suitable punishments listed for transgressing the culturally defined levels.

I have witnessed this happening at a funeral where women in uniform were given the first seats in the church and again in the queue for the meal afterwards. A deceased woman was praised for having achieved the status of wearing the sodality uniform; a far more fitting tribute would have been that she had devoted herself to charitable work in the church. Her chief attribute was a projection of human achievement and self-centred aspiration and not one of self-giving. Dress is only an aid in worship, never essential to it.

For some religious groups uniformity in several aspects, including clothing, is an absolute. Clothing becomes a culture construction as Nevadomsky (1995:64) explains: "Clothing's have ideas about society inscribed upon them". The Muslim type of dress is totally distinguishable from that of other religions; in this way they differentiate themselves from adherents of other religions. Their use of uniform has become a metaphor for their belief and ideologies. All Muslim men see themselves as brothers. Larson-Miller (1992:6) describes how clothing can create differences:

Examples from our present day can be found in many religious groups, where the attire of the whole group distinguishes them from society at large, and where, within the group, move subtle differentiation in clothing, differences in class, age, and gender.

Muslim women are sisters to one another. One can easily identify an individual Muslim, whether man or woman. Their uniform is used to control their behaviour. Their mode of dress is bound up with their culture, which creates the whole milieu from which they

operate. This use of a uniform gives them that mutual membership, identification and mode of interaction among themselves and with the world outside. CNN news, since the bombing of the World Trade Centre, has often presented Muslims from various countries – the men are immediately identifiable by their special hats and long white robes, the women by their enclosing veils and protective gowns. Such marks of clothing are visible signs that acknowledge who they are even during difficult times. Their uniforms give them a social and religious commitment.

A handkerchief is used as part of the uniform in most of the Independent Churches and is known as the *duke*. It is emblematic, pointing to the individual's adherence and giving him/her social control within his/her community. The use of special clothing by ministers symbolises authority and leadership within their respective churches, a kind of special ability to communicate with the Deity. Today it is often difficult to distinguish among the various types of vestments. In the Catholic Church, Mass vestments have historically served to symbolise the conscious change from earthly to ordained man. Arthur (1999:32) writes: "Clothing in particular, is a vehicle for the expression of both conformity and deviance". The round white collar, used originally only by priests of the Roman Catholic Church and one of the symbols of their religious authority and social status in the community, is now a frequent item of dress for ministers of other churches.

Coursey (in Kaiser 1990:381) says that "symbolism related to holiness, cleanliness, and purity has prevailed in Catholic uniforms for priests and nuns". Long (in Kaiser 1990:381) remarks how "research has shown that students spend more time responding to questions posed by a nun wearing her habit than to the same nun in a lay dress. Also students respond more conservatively in the presence of a nun's habit". Pastors who use a religious uniform say that it represents their religious dedication. As the use of their uniform is associated with spiritual disciplines and beliefs, it influences how lay people respond to them. Dudzinski (1992:14) sees vesture as "an outward sign of a person's baptismal call to ministry". It is a constant reminder of their ministers' religious roles and serves to set the ministers apart from the members. The use of uniform here differs from that of a religious group who identify themselves by means of a special garb to express their commonality.



Faith determines fashion. According to Cazzoil (1988:79) "the reason for the Emajeriko continuing to wear a red uniform is that the Jericho Church is still fighting to overcome evil and achieve purity". Clothes convey culture and culture is re-created in uniforms. This means that "dress provides a window through which we might look into a culture" (Tarlo in Arthur 1999b: 251). Culture is seen in one's fashion of dressing since dress is a visual sign which manifests the salient ideas and concepts fundamental to one's faith and culture. One's religion is made visible by the manner in which one dresses -therefore the Zionist have a similar idea with the Muslim in the manner of dress. Therefore dress is used as a means of exploring identity. The person's faith and culture is visible:

Dress used in ceremonial rites contributes to the creation of mood. Because of sentiments attached to bridal attire, it can add to the solemnity or joy ... The lively spirit of the festivals may be promoted by clothing clearly designated to be festival dress and not everyday attire (Roach 1979:9).

In the Xhosa traditional ritual of circumcision the graduation student is given new clothing which means a new life for him; his old clothing is given away. This giving away of the old clothing means that he has received a new life, a new spirit:

Focus on clothing is a principal medium of communication between people and spirit among the Hausaphone Mawri in Niger. Dress creates spiritual beings; specific spirits require particular types of attire, which must be provided by those faithful to them, clothes express the commitment of the living to the spirits and harmony between them Masquelier (in Hendrikson 1996:9).

The wearing of uniform gives identity and for a religious purpose it shows one's adherence to a church or group within a church. It is right to be proud of one's faith and culture; the way we dress for worship communicates something about our beliefs: "Both power and relationship are revealed in dress, uniforms and costume" (Nevadomsky 1995:64). This is to say that clothes give one a "sacred skin" which is a means of communicating truth and purity. Uniforms are a modern display of the traditional body markings used by many tribes of Africa. American Africans have the same idea: "We of African descent have always felt that we ought to worship God in our best clothes. White folks are often much more casual,



but we follow the old tradition from Africa” (Mitchell 1990:47). For these people, their faith determines their fashion.

### **3.5 Other factors that determine worship**

No one factor can be said to be the dominating factor in determining the essence of worship. A variety of factors combine to influence our approach to communication with the Deity. The work of mission includes the formation of church as a home for the people. In our post-apartheid era, there are many needs and much loneliness. The faithful come to church not just to adore God but also for other reasons – to find ways and means to improve their lives in all its aspects:

The gospel can also be preached by means of public statements. The church comments on current events in terms of the good news, denouncing sin and announcing the hope of salvation, supporting what is right (Nolan 1988:209).

It is not enough to tell people to pray for what they need; the church has to use all kinds of resources to serve its members. Nolan (1988:209) urges the Church to practise “what it preaches by action or campaigns and by social services such as feeding the hungry or running hostels and schools”.

From the beginning of creation, humankind has displayed a natural need and desire to worship. Daneel (1987:219) observes that in the Zionist and the Apostolic Churches this need and desire has increased:

God the Father also occupies a far more prominent place in the lives and faith of Church members than he held in the pre-Christian view. His more direct involvement in the lives of individuals is evident from regular references to Him in sermons and invocation in prayer to God the Father (Mwari Baba), ‘God of power’, ‘Living God’, ‘God of miracles’ and ‘our protector’.

Contact with the Deity has always been seen as necessary for existence. This is seen particularly when human beings experience danger; they feel a need to turn to something

higher to hang on to. There is a psychological value in religion. We benefit from calling on a Supreme Being to meet our spiritual and physical needs. While worship appears to be a purely human activity, the initiative is God's. He inspires us to trust and call upon Him. In Blenkin's words: "God can never be the object of man's worship; he is always the subject - that is to say, it is he who initiates within the heart of man the desire for union with Himself" (in Macquarrie 1977:488).

Christianity has had a significant impact on the lives of African people, often for the better, but missionary endeavour has been at times insensitive with regard to personal relationships, traditional culture, political change and western influence.

In South Africa and in other parts of Africa, especially in the Roman Catholic Church and in some Mainline Churches, Black Christians have been financially and theologically dependent on the White church, and therefore controlled by it. Kritzing (1990: 46) suggested that

one of the central concerns of the re-evangelising of the Black church is thus to establish its own authentic theological identity as distinguished from the colonial and dualistic nature of the White church.

The faithful feel that they are Christian, therefore they have to demonstrate their way of life. Christianity as a religion has also had an impact on people's ways of life and the tendency to clothe themselves in a certain manner. Therefore one needs to see the role played by mission. It would be incorrect, however, to think that after three centuries of Christianity on Southern African soil, it has had no influence on the manner of dress of its followers.

It is a human need to assemble in order to render thanks for the great benefits received at God's hands. Another reason is to ask for the necessities of life, for both body and soul. The Independent Churches concentrate greatly on healing and a variety of ritual acts such as

washing of the feet, anointment with oil, use of candles, exorcism and so on all which contribute to a rich diversity which helps to determine the identity of each group (Daneel 1987:224).

The laying-on of hands, which is a kind of therapeutic massaging, and the thumping and pummelling of the patient and dancing in a circle (*ukugida*) symbolises wholeness. In Old Testament fashion the faithful come together to acknowledge their sins before God. Participation in these rites gives the members personal psychological assurance and group support to help them cope in this often evil world. Their church has been referred to as a "place to feel at home" (Welbourn & Ogot in Daneel 1987:243). They feel comfortable in the spiritual, mental, and even material security afforded by their church. There is mutual concern among the members of the congregation. They feel at ease in each other's company and even their homes are open to all the other members. The minister's house is a welcoming place of meeting and sharing at all times. I have already stressed how essential a common mode of dressing is to these churches. Uniform is a sign of identity. In the Jericho church "the reason given for wearing a red uniform is that the Jericho church is still fighting to overcome evil and achieve purity" (Cazziol 1988:79). The use of uniform also has a psychological meaning in that this new identity is a necessary element in forming a people who have been damaged during the years of colonial rule and apartheid.

Archbishop Ngada in one of the Independent Churches claims that "music was born in Africa" (Ngada 1991:18) This saying expresses the naturalness and spontaneity of musical rhythms, singing and dancing in our culture. Music is one of the dominating factors in worship of the African Independent Churches. In most Black churches it is the source of inspiration, a way of coping with hard work, pain and suffering. Music is an essential element in celebrating. In the African Independent Churches that I visited, I found that the heart and soul of their liturgies was expressed through rhythm – lots of bodily movement such as swaying, dancing, clapping and humming. The holistic approach of soul and body seemed to unite the congregation. One of the leaders said that it gives him a feeling and experience of being closer to God. Mainline Churches generally do not favour this form of worship.



In most of the African Independent Churches there is a great emphasis on preaching. This remains a central part of their worship. Daneel (1987:223) commends them for the number of sermons: "Eight to ten on one afternoon are normal". This is the very factor which motivates people to attend services:

Sermons are interspersed with dance, song, clapping of hands, drums, and other traditional musical instruments, ecstatic experiences, prophecies, communal prayer in which everybody prays aloud in unison, and the like (Daneel 1987:224).

The emphasis on preaching is a challenge to the mainline Churches which devote just a few minutes to the sermon. The sermons may be preached by either men or women; all dress in their ordinary church uniform. In the Catholic Church such a practice is still new and you only find it in the rural areas.

Since missiology is concerned with the historical process of Church growth, it needs to pay attention to the factors that influence worship. Independent Churches are of African origin. For reasons, some of which are stated above, there is a move away from the mainline Churches to join the Independent Churches. Turner (in Daneel 1987:71) adds another dimension to the "vital development" of the new churches "when the African past is confronted with the challenge of the new world of the Bible. The origin and growth of these churches relate directly to the work of the Holy Spirit". Mainline Churches should take more note of why the Independent Churches have such a strong appeal for Africans. In the words of Karecki (1999:89):

Previously, great importance was placed on denominational differences as a key factor in shaping mission praxis. Now we are beginning to see that someone can be an Evangelical Christian and another an Anglican and have similar patterns of mission praxis depending on the context in which they are living.

It is a priority to retain the pre-eminence of the sacraments in the church and of the reading and praying of the Bible, but it may also be necessary to look at human factors employed in the Independent Churches, including the role of dress. To make a comparison here, the

Basic Christian Communities, which concentrate on Gospel Sharing and on applying it to their life situation in solving local problems, originated in Latin America. When the Catholic Church in Southern Africa studied the benefits of this movement, they then introduced these BCCs with good results; they have contributed greatly to the growth of the local church.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

The link between people and clothing is of great importance, in worship. Clothing and in particular the uniform has a great influence on the Black churches. This is a challenge to mission and its identity in the baptism. I have shown that we cannot just avoid the use of uniforms within worship. There is a call to be realistic to people's views and attitudes towards the use of uniforms in worship. In the next chapter, I will discuss the pastoral circle method that will be used in the study to reflect upon the practice of using the uniform in worship in contemporary South Africa.

## **CHAPTER FOUR:**

### **USING THE PASTORAL CIRCLE METHOD**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This section outlines the particular methods that I have employed in this academic research. The phenomenon of the relationship between worship and clothing. I will show that there is a certain viable manner if one is to engage in a more meaningful worship. I will follow the pastoral cycle or spiral as described by Holland & Henriot (1983) and others. This spiral comprises the stages of insertion, analysis, theological reflection, and pastoral planning. Clothing is a visual communication that is particularly vital in most of the Southern African Black churches. Clothing is fundamental in worship as an outward garb which expresses the inward virtues.

Then in the second part of this work, I will concern myself with how the economic factors have also influenced the peoples behaviour and attitudes towards the use of uniforms in worship. The last part will attempt to give the significance of the colours of those uniforms. Wearing of certain clothes calls for certain colours to be used in a ritual. Colours have a multiplicity of meanings, for example purity, redemption, and heaven. All these can be communicated through the colours of the clothes that people use in worship.

#### **4.2 The Pastoral Circle Method**

The Pastoral Circle Method is a contextual approach to Missiology comprising four stages: 1) insertion; 2) analysis of the context; 3) reflection on the Biblical text; and 4) planning for the future.



### 4.3 Insertion

Insertion into the situation is an attempt to get an answer to the pastoral problem or intellectual puzzle from and with the people.

I have had previous experience in my field of work before registering for the intensive study of "Dress in Worship". Over the last two years I have consciously involved myself in various situations to learn more about the way people dress for Sunday service and other church functions. I have endeavoured to discover why church-goers show concern for the clothes they wear to a church assembly, which at times differ from their everyday attire. As a Catholic pastor I dress in special garments; I dress according to my different roles in the priesthood – celebrating Holy Mass, presiding at funerals, anointing the sick, etc. My understanding of my different roles has been my point of insertion into the holistic survey of dress in the Church. The aim of insertion is to understand and deal with pastoral problems. Luzbetak (1988:71) proposes a method:

Get the answers to your pastoral problems and strategy from and with your people. At times the expatriate pastor, religious educator, and national and international church authorities will have to disagree and challenge the local church, but the chances are that if there be an answer it will be found deep in the soul of the community.

I am not an outsider, merely looking at the value my parishioners and the members of other churches give to clothing. In interviewing individuals and groups, they questioned me about the various garments I wear - a black cassock, a short white surplice or long white alb, various coloured chasubles and stoles. It was even necessary for me to devote a Sunday homily to an explanation of the meanings of the different vestments and the reason for the change of colours – the relationship that that colour has to faith.

I have had to use a different approach with members of the other Christian churches, especially the Methodist and Independent churches, as these people are outside my direct pastoral experience. Ecumenism involves a better understanding of the part played by dress in worship in various churches, though this might appear at first to be a very minor

contribution. However, I have begun to see clothing as worthy of importance in the understanding of the faith of other churches. Karecki (1999:38) calls this a means of communication which takes place in many ways: "We communicate verbally and non-verbally. Both are necessary for authentic identification."

It was necessary for me to reach out to these churches in order to find out their ideas first hand, to be more sensitive to their way of life, what they expect their church to do for them and the part they play in the activities of their church. I could then come to a better appreciation of what prompts them to see the need for identity as a church, which includes the use of uniform in dress.

The pastor and congregation have a common goal in worshipping well. Holland & Henriot (1983:8) expect one to know:

What people are feeling, what they are undergoing, how they are responding - these are the experiences that constitute primary data. We gain access to these by inserting our approach close to the experience of ordinary people.

This I see not only in my own church but also in other churches. My attention has been focused mostly on rural areas but I would think that the same also applies in urban settings. Apart from the Catholic Church I have concentrated on the Mainline churches, chiefly the Methodist Church, and primarily in Aliwal and Umhlanga parishes. I have been in direct contact with at least twenty of the Independent churches in the Eastern Cape. I chose them because of the central position they give to clothing in their churches. I have learnt much about how these church members feel when they dress in uniform and when they do not. Without the proper clothing as they see it, their worship is adversely affected. To grasp this I have had to immerse myself in their everyday life, Their background, the reality of their situation involving their history, culture and how that is changing, and their local environment at the beginning of the Third Millennium. I have thus gained a lived experience of how dress affects worship. I have enlarged on this by wide reading about what has been happening beyond my field of vision. Luzbetak (1988:219) presents it thus:



In true identification, we seek oneness with the community mainly for altruistic reasons, namely for the good of the community and for the spread of the Gospel message, in pseudo-identification we are driven to an imaginary hoped-for oneness out of strictly personal and ultimately selfish reasons.

In my encounter with church-goers I have heard them speak of 'my Sunday dress, shoes, hat ...' and I am able to identify emotionally and intellectually with their feelings and understanding. I, too, carefully prepare the garments I need for the particular church service, sometimes well in advance, as I have to travel distances to outstations. In fact, encounters with the many people I have talked with and observed, who regard clothing as a crucial element in worship, have made me more aware of the part played by clothing in the liturgy as far as I, myself, am concerned. Karecki (1999:41) offers a similar point of view in her experience of coming to South Africa as a missionary:

Identification means that there is a willingness to share in the life of the local community. It requires that people are willing to learn from one another. This can only happen if we approach others people, whether they are from our own culture and religious tradition or not, with respect and sensitivity.

For many church-goers dressing neatly, cleanly and appropriately for Sunday worship demonstrates respect for God, for the members of the congregation, and for God's house.

My priestly cassock is a visible symbol to the people that I minister to my parish. For the members of African Independent churches, their uniform, which makes their community a brotherhood and sisterhood of believers, is similarly symbolic. They emphasise a conservative attitude toward styles: "Keep out of the vain fashions of the world, let not your eyes and minds and spirits run after every fashion" (Rushby 1986:181). These churches use a simple, plain garb. They are very careful to appear modest and unpretentious. They keep to their white or white-blue uniform as a way of dress for their Sunday service and are mostly conservative in their dress for other associated assemblies. This is a notable characteristic of these churches. Many church people have advocated the use of simple clothes. John M. Brennman (in Rushby 1986:184) writes: "A humble heart ... could not be found beneath gaudy fashionable clothing". The constitutions of the St Anna



Sodality in the Roman Catholic Church require all members to conform to the rules regarding dress, which must be simple and uniform in colour.

Sociologists point out that distinctive garb is "a mechanism for maintaining group boundaries" (Rushby 1986:186). In African communities a group boundary is much more important than in Western society. Most African people have grown up in rural areas and many continue to live there. Most of them have a limited education and modest income. This may be among the reasons why they do not go to churches where they might feel out of place. Pretorius (1996:70) advises missionaries:

The church has to understand both the difficulties and obstacles as well as the opportunities and resources, in order to work out a strategy for opening the way for the coming of the Kingdom of Christ in that particular context.

Social-economic status, education and occupation are determinants as to who would wear common, simple clothes. The plainly dressed do not feel at ease among the richly clad.

The outward sign of clothing can be a way of transmitting people's faith from one generation to the next. It can instil, for example, the Gospel value of humility. When it comes to head covering, Rupel (1986:140) points out that "in certain traditions, a covering has been worn during the entire day to signify that all of life is worship".

This may cause a dilemma in the concept of our Christian faith. It is necessary to possess a religious identity. For the Mainline churches the sacrament of Baptism is *the* event that distinguishes their adherents throughout their lives. We are baptised people and have to live according to our baptismal vows; then we receive other church sacraments as children, as young and older adults. In the Independent churches there is the additional value of distinctive dress to show that the wearers belong to a specific church. According to Ter Haar (1990:54): "African culture emphasises relationships ... Interhuman relationships are among the highest priorities in African traditional society". The choice that each church makes has far-reaching implications. One has to look at each case individually to see why

some groups of people wear distinctive dress while others do not wear clothes common to all the members.

The meaning and appeal that clothes have for people is greatly influenced by all the circumstances of their past life, the various experiences they underwent in their historical situation, which, in turn, reflects their culture. Stuart C. Bate (1999:151) says:

The separation of society and social institutions in a racially divided way was an unquestioned cultural value. White people did not want, nor expect, to mingle with black people on any level at all other than in a master servant relationship at work or in the home. There was very little difference in white racial attitudes amongst the different Christian Churches.

Applied to religion, this has to be taken into account to understand the role clothes play in peoples lives, how they might respond to their church affiliation being governed to some extent by the use of uniforms.

God's liberating act in Jesus Christ is very real and fundamental. We learn this from the Bible. Themes such as salvation, liberation and justice assure people that they are loved. Many churches therefore see no value in clothing as an important factor in religion. From my experience in St Augustine's, Umhlanga, I can appreciate how a uniform does unite a group such as the St Anna Sodality Women in the Catholic Church, also the Men's Union that has adopted a blue-and-grey uniform. Recently the youth of Umhlanga parish have been discussing the value of a uniform. The parish congregation as a whole has not mentioned a uniform as a mark of identity and I don't foresee this as a future possibility. I do conclude that clothing is an aspect of human behaviour which contributes to our knowledge about a certain group of people in a church.

I have met with Catholic youth who say that they do not want to attend Sunday services because they do not have proper shoes or jackets. We Catholic pastors assure them that this is no reason for staying away from church, that they must feel free to attend in any kind of clothes however poor, that God looks at the person and not at his/her clothes. At the same time I can understand why in the Independent and a few other churches, clothing is an

important issue. Arbuckle (1985:426) sees the lack of the correct clothing as “a major obstacle hindering people from culturally deprived back-grounds from attending Sunday liturgies with the well-to-do.” In one sense it obviates the feeling of not fitting in because of being poorly dressed. As stated above, these churches limit church uniform to simple, inexpensive outfits.

#### **4.4 Social Analysis of the Context**

This is the second step of the pastoral cycle. Missiology uses the context in which the event is happening in order to understand the situation. Research has to read the signs of the times and to analyse them “Analysis is the attempt, however unsophisticated, to understand the meaning of Christian faith and obedience” (De Gruchy 1990:70-71). The people that I am working with and those that I meet with are members of a definite situation with particular socio-political structures, history and culture. People who see dress as a factor in worship live within the greater context of a national situation and are to a lesser or greater extent affected by opinions that differ from their own. Karecki (1999:10) calls this context “the environment in which we live. It is comprised of the social, economic, political, cultural and religious aspects of a society”. Nowadays when things change so rapidly and thought patterns differ so widely, the Church needs to keep in step by calling upon the help of people who are living in the world, who are experts in its organisations and its forms of training and who understand its mentality in the case of believers and non-believers alike. To be able to create the reality that shapes that particular community Holland and Henriot (1983:14) have this to say:

Social analysis explores reality in a variety of dimensions. Sometimes it focuses on isolated issues such as unemployment, inflation, or hunger. At other times, it focuses on the policies that address these issues, such as job training, monetary control, or food aid programs.

I used this advice to unlock the real life situation of people who see dress as a factor influencing their worship. Therefore social analysis of a context gives one a better picture of that community. There are reasons that may not be discovered by just looking at the



visual aspects of a congregation. There are things hidden from view. De Gruchy (1990:63) comments on the part played by church theologies against Apartheid in South Africa:

In so far as these theologies opposed apartheid, they did so in traditional terms usually based on liberal assumptions or traditional Catholic social teachings. But they were not grounded in the realities of the South-African context.

The use of analysis of the context makes the hidden known. To obtain a deeper understanding of the complex reality and in order to make this research really meaningful I have used the tools of social analysis. Karecki (1999:49) affirms that "to reflect on your context is something more than simply thinking about it". There is social intercourse when uniform provides scope for forming friendship. The present mixture of society in South Africa can be quite impersonal at times and more so in certain places. People need an intimate circle of friends where individuals can receive recognition, feel at home and feel able to cope with the new challenges that they meet daily. Boff (1987:51) reminds us that one first has to ask:

In order for theology to establish its socio-analytic mediation, what cautions are to be observed with respect to existing sciences of social ? What is the code that ought to preside over this relationship?

Many people I interviewed spoke of their lack of a feeling of identity. And I noticed that this occurred more in the rural areas, less so in the urban, but I have only limited experience in the latter. Among the Xhosa, dress is very important and is used to illustrate differences between people. As Pauw (1975:42) explains:

In Mhlanjeni the *inxiba* or 'dressed' person is the unbaptized person who is no longer a true Red in manner and values. The *umgonwa* is the baptized person who is however, not otherwise an active or registered member of the church, and in many cases associates with Red people more than school people normally do.

A reality hidden by a cursory perception of these people is their sense of insecurity. This does not happen so frequently where people are members of a church identifiable by its use

of uniform dress, which evidently gives them an identity and also a feeling of security. Among the women parishioners of Umhlanga, the St Anna uniform gives the members a sense of personal worth. Of course it is essential also for them to keep all the other rules in their constitution and this requires regular attendance at church, certain prayers to be said daily, perseverance in the faith, sacrificial acts and service in the Church. Mrs Kumalo a Methodist in Umhlanga, whom I interviewed, said that as a member of the Manyano (Mothers' Union) she never suffers from feelings of isolation or inferiority. The distinctive red-and-white uniform ensures that she is accepted not only in her group but also in her church and marks her out as one who is entitled to "exercise a strong disapproving discipline over the younger women" (Brandel-Syrier 1963:166). Uniform can give the wearers a new sense of personal value.

Uniform of a religious nature gives self-confidence and protection even on the streets of Johannesburg. Rupel (1986:140) says, with regard to women's dress: "Socially it identified the wearer as a member of a religious sect and therefore as holding certain beliefs". It serves as an outward witness to the word of God in everyday life, so we could say that it is a silent proclamation of one's faith. There is a sense of fellowship when meeting another dressed in similar fashion, and a strengthening of belief. A member of the Sodality of the Sacred Heart greets another member with the salutation: "Let the Lord be praised!" The other answers: "Now and forever!" This recognition of solidarity gives the members of the society a sense of belonging. They do not belong to the same blood family but to an extended one bound by spiritual ties. The members of St Anna meet on Thursday to pray together but also to share their plans, worries and joys. Some of them are widows or their husbands are far a way in big towns and they have to care for their children alone:

Life in these circumstance is particularly hard for women. If they do find a job (usually as a domestic servant or in a factory), they have to do what is called 'the double shift': at work and then at home perhaps with considerable hours of travelling in between. And then what about the children? On the other hand if they do not have a job and their husband has gone elsewhere and other men are offering money for sex and you have had to get used to sexual abuse anyway and the children are starving ..... There is no end to the problems, the worries, the suffering (Nolan 1988:55).



The mothers face many difficulties including proper control of the children. By sharing their problems they are better able to cope and to be more hopeful about the situation. One woman said that when she wears her uniform it takes a burden from her shoulders. It is linked to the way she evaluates her relationship with the other members of the group, the Church and with God.

This sense of belonging to one another encourages members to share on many levels, including living a common behavioural code. When it comes to laws it is easy to enforce them with love and respect. In time of sickness and death, at weddings and other church feasts women belonging to a church group come together to be there for one another. These are some of the positive benefits which people who dress in a church uniform enjoy. Their common uniform gives them a feeling of security; each has an identity as a church member and the added asset of an understanding friendship within the special group. Members assist one another in their hour of need.

Worship in some Independent churches is very "colourful, in total contrast to their everyday life" (Daneel 1987:224). A church is like a theatre; when people come to perform they have to go on stage. They dress in a certain costume to suit their part in the next act, and when they come off stage remove the costume in order to relax. If they perform different roles, they require different costumes to symbolise the characters they play. There is a constant movement back and forth, between acting and relaxing between roles of performance. Therefore when a congregation dresses in a uniform, it shows movement from one role to the next. Different clothes are required for the various roles.

In South Africa, the cultural image of certain ethnic groups which was damaged by the practice of classifying everyone according to race, colour and ethnicity can be restored through the use of uniform, which helps people of the same culture to come together. There has been a missing gap, a space in their life which uniform can bridge to some extent. Nolan (1988:116) sees that this gap can be rectified by structures "that embody the right use of power; the power of service, the power of sharing, the power of solidarity and love, the power of faith and commitment, the power of hope".



People look for a home and family to which to belong, especially those who live away from their home. Nolan, writing about the era of apartheid in South Africa, refers to three million people being:

uprooted from their homes, sometimes from land that they have owned for generations or from the sacred places where their ancestors were buried, and dumped in dry, dusty places where there are no jobs and no land to work. Frequently they find that they have ended up in what is technically another 'nation' a 'Bantustan' (Nolan 1988:55).

By dressing in a uniform similar to those around them people are able to hold on to their roots. The flag designed to give meaning and worth to a group carries a fundamental message for all the members; in like manner, uniform carries a vital message for the wearer and the others in the group.

A Catholic pastor who grew up in the Anglican Church maintains that the way people dress for church is very important. He says that Anglicans who do not have proper, decent clothes will not attend liturgical services. He tells of an experience he had in the Herschel district of the Eastern Cape regarding Basotho Catholics who love to attend church wrapped up in their colourful blankets (*lesolanka*). The Anglicans laughed at them because they were not in European dress. He remarked on the different approach taken by the Catholic Church where there is much less emphasis on how one is dressed for Sunday services – shabby clothing is no reason for absence.

In the Catholic parishes of the Eastern Cape, mainly White or mainly Black or mixed, there is no specific uniform for a congregation as a whole but only for the different sodalities of men and women. This differs from the Methodists whose Black congregations have a definite uniform for all the parishes in the Eastern Cape – red-and-white for women, and grey for men. I was of the opinion that they all like to put on their uniforms until I met Tihoriso, a member of Dukathole Methodist church, a well educated person who holds an important nursing position. She wears no church uniform and maintains that there is far too much importance given to it. I asked her why White Methodist women and men do not

dress in uniforms like their Black sisters and brothers. Tihoriso has an idea perhaps from her nursing experience that Whites introduced uniforms to keep Blacks clean! She criticises the use of a uniform for the wrong motives, for example Methodist members who think that their uniform gives them a licence to dominate others by disciplining them according to their own principles. Their uniform counts more than age or education, and the concept of age is still a weighty issue in African society. I have not encountered opinions like these on the part of the Methodist men with whom I spoke and who were more accepting of the practice.

It has been observed that when a leader gave Holy Communion in a Presbyterian church without wearing his gown, some of the congregation refused to receive. A proper celebration of the sacrament requires proper dress on the part of all who officiate. Matthews, (1995:25) remarks:

Humans address themselves, their community and the world by the choice or style of their clothing. Its weave, its colour(s), its decoration and its style have all contributed to clothing's desirability as a trade item and as an indicator of membership within a defined community.

The members will then regard you as belonging; if you are not dressed in the stipulated alb or gown you are incomplete. There is the danger here, however, of looking at the leader's outfit and not taking into account his life style, which to my mind should be of vital concern.

There are rules attached to the right to wear the respective uniforms of churches or sodalities. The constitution must be adhered to by the members. What is considered immoral behaviour deprives a person from wearing his/her uniform. Transgression may require a time of penance. The Methodist Tihoriso told me that a public confession of sins is required. The offender has to refrain from wearing the uniform for three months. Then s/he will be invited to go forward and receive the uniform again. The uniform is a human attempt to discipline the church/group member.



Clothing, as it were, gives scope to be active in the Church and in the community. A few months ago, Fr Pitso, a Catholic pastor in Sterkspruit, shared an interesting account of what a uniform means in the St Anna Sodality, a fact of which I was not previously aware. In the week before the funeral of a deceased member, which is ordinarily on a Thursday, a special service called *Ukuxhoma* in Xhosa is performed at the home of the deceased. Her uniform, after having been carefully laundered, is hung up in the room where the other St Anna women have gathered to pray and sing for the deceased. It is a way of saying a formal good-bye and thanking her for what she has done as a member of the sodality, and a recognition of her fidelity to her faith. Of course she is laid out in the uniform for burial, which usually takes place on the Saturday. Sometimes a disparity is evident between the funeral of a member of a church group, who has remained a faithful adherent to his/her group including wearing the prescribed uniform, and an ordinary parishioner who did not belong to any group within the church. It is sad that parish councils and pastors feel obliged to attend and officiate at the first funeral and do not give equal regard to the second, assigning the service to funeral leaders.

If a parishioner is one of those who dressed in a uniform, then it is accepted that his/her body will automatically be brought into the church as part of the burial service: "Cloth and clothing have a variety of cultural uses which are indicative of the human desire to define and maintain identity of persons and groups" (Matthews, 1995:25). For the person who did not own a uniform, it may happen that the body is brought to the church but that does not necessarily occur, and on some occasions the body will be moved directly from the person's home to the graveyard. I don't approve of the policy where it is the leaders who mostly officiate at funerals of 'ordinary' parishioners and where the pastor makes a point of being present at the more 'important' funeral due to the deceased's role in the church. The depth of the individual's faith is of prime importance, an invisible reality. Uniform, whatever its role in the visible church, has no prerogative beyond being a visible sign. Missiology has a role here to do something with regard to this misconception about a person's worth in the church. All members are of equal worth in the eyes of the Creator and should receive like attention in death.



A church practice that differentiates between members is akin to apartheid, which can spread like a contagious disease to affect many structures of the society. The stance that the deceased enjoyed in church life can extend not only to the quality of the funeral service but even to the meal afterwards where those dressed in uniform are given preference, are among the first served and receive the choicest fare.

The church is both divine and human. All human values are to be appreciated where they help towards ensuring that a person reaches his/her full potential as a mature and fulfilled human being. The person who does not feel fully accepted in his/her church suffers from an inferiority complex, regarding him/herself as a lesser Christian, a second-class member. Doors must stand open for all members to feel welcome. An Anglican friend of mine, Mr Zimbaya, told me of a recent incident in his church. After a Sunday service, a man was taken to task by a few members of the church council. They asked him why he was not wearing a proper jacket. It happened that the man had been delayed and could not reach home in time to change for the service, so instead of first going home he went straight to the church. The councillors' reprimand was an embarrassment and especially inappropriate as it was connected with religion. Mr Zimbaya, a deeply committed Anglican, thinks that the emphasis his church puts on correct clothing for worship is unnecessary. Jesus is the centre of worship; attendance at church services cannot be so bound up with outward appearance.

A recent pastoral problem has arisen in the St Anna Sodality. Before a mother dies her right to wear the uniform is passed on to one of her daughters, who is then regarded as her successor to walk in her footsteps. This idea is very much on a purely human level Matthews (1995:25) notes:

More than any other material product, clothing plays a symbolic role in mediating the relationship between nature, man and his socio-cultural environment.

The practice of a daughter inheriting the right to wear her St Anna uniform is questionable – it may not be the daughter's wish; she may not be a suitable choice; other impediments

may be in the way such as the lack of a proper faith-filled life. A tradition, somewhat similar but probably not so problematic, appears in the Bantu Church of Christ where the bishop's role is passed on to the next leader via the handing on of robes. This ceremony confers the power and duties of leadership. The clothing has a symbolic meaning. "Clothing always serves as a means of visual communication" (Matthews 1995:25). It is something similar to a lineage claimed by the sons of the faithful. Uniforms are known as robes of succession in some Independent Churches. It reminds one of 2 Kings 2 where Elijah's cloak is the outward sign of his spirit being passed on to Elisha who then possesses the authority of Elijah when the latter is taken up into Heaven.

In many African churches there is much credence given to the power that uniform confers on preachers, especially when holding a Sunday service. It seems to lend extra weight to the content and delivery of their sermon, and bestows a certain power which gives them a feeling of ability and competence.

The Zionist uniform has a socio-economic significance. It is widely accepted that membership of the ZCC brings prosperity. They are identifiable by their special uniform badge, a star. Employers are willing to engage them because they are said to be diligent workers and more conscientious than others. Firms are generally prepared to pay Zionists higher wages and advance them to positions of responsibility (Kiernan 1979: 20).

Zionists believe that their good fortune rests on observing the strict church taboos on alcohol and theft, matrimonial infidelity and other forms of behaviour which squander resources, both material and human. Daneel (1987:136) describes how

for newcomers from elsewhere the Independent Churches provide useful information. At the church service new members are informed of job opportunities, the workings of the transport system and where to apply for housing.

For their work in pastoral care a Zionist lay person is required to have a uniform. Zionists moving from the country to the city are met at the bus or railway station by representatives of the local congregation, guided through the bewildering maze of bureaucracy, helped

with food, housing and employment, and, of course, integrated at once into the congregation.

On certain Sundays the *Manyano* of various churches dress in their uniform, ready to preach on the Sunday readings. They take a major part in collecting the money offering and they teach the young children in Sunday school. It is their full uniform that gives them authority and responsibility:

These items of clothing can be used to demarcate membership in or even sympathy with, a more loosely knit group. Even when such groups consist of marginalized segments, of society in direct conflict with those in power, the wearing of uniforms affirming their membership can be more important than any ramifications promised by the state (Brown 1995:30).

They feel loved and important in the church and one rarely hears of their becoming lapsed members of their church or changing over to another church. Women who have not joined a woman's group do not practise the same allegiance to their church. They move easily from Mainline to Independent churches. One of the attractions is the latter's emphasis on the wearing of a church uniform. For the *Manyano* there is a place in their church of origin and so they feel at home there with no temptation to look for another spiritual dwelling. Pityana (in Kritzinger 1990:46) writes movingly:

To Black people the church needs to be a haven where they can freely shed their tears, voice their aspirations and sorrows, present their spiritual needs, respond to the world in which they live and empty their souls out to God. Traditional belief provided psychological areas where uprooted men and women could find comfort, a sense of oneness and belonging together, and a recognition of being wanted and accepted. This is the true church but the church, as at present constituted, is still foreign to the soul of the Black man, ... The church of the people must have its roots deeply established in the history and traditions of those who profess its doctrine.

In the Roman Catholic Church this idea is visible in the Small Christian Communities. They are instruments of conscientising and mobilising people, especially women in the church. They are in leadership positions with men and sit on the parish council. It is an



inclusive situation; the women do not feel excluded but are regarded as valuable members of the congregation.

#### **4.4.1 Economic Factors**

The Church was never meant to identify itself with the rich and the powerful. Shorter (1998:33) says:

The status of Christianity as a world religion is largely due to Euro-America, and the official Church tends to identify with the rich and the powerful..... However, the Church is supposed to be 'the Church of the poor'. It needs to evangelise the affluent and help them act in solidarity with the poor, in their movement of liberation from poverty.

Clothes have been an economic commodity and a social marker throughout human history. We know people by their standard of clothing, the quality of material, cut, style and sometimes colours. It is a human wish to define and maintain one's identity and place in the economic sphere. This can be a problem for the poor. For example, in colonial Rhodesia (the present day Zimbabwe) the women's group of the Wesleyan Methodist Church adapted a black skirt and red blouse with a white collar and cap. Various elements of this dress were assigned specific Christian symbolism. Brown (1995:33) observes:

Uniforms were intended to reduce the class distinction between group members as well as provide poor women with extra clothing appropriate to their position.

There is a way out of this dilemma as far as the church is concerned. Uniform acts as one answer to combating what could be a deterrent in church relationships. Haddad (2001:17) writes about the intertwining of the spiritual and material realms of the *Manyano*: "There are primarily three ways in which they do this: extensive use of extempore prayer and preaching, the wearing of church uniform, and fund-raising".

The solution belongs to those engaged in contextual missions to help both men and women improve their living standards by awareness programmes on how to fight poverty, by teaching them skills and creating employment for them. Consequently some churches that

serve the more impoverished congregations have introduced uniform as a means of helping their members to cope with their social-economic situation, thus enabling them to concentrate on living life to the full as good human beings and creatures of the Most High. Efforts made in Umhlanga in this regard have been very successful. The improvement in their social status and in their appearance, including their clothing, has enabled the poorer among the congregation to relate more easily to those financially better off. I have noticed how a greater feeling of equality carries over to the relationship among women in the church life. Those who were not attending church are encouraged to join the others and the congregation grows.

The challenge is for pastors to first observe and pay attention to the needs of the poor, to see how important a part clothes play in their lives and as members of the church, and how uniforms for groups within the church congregation could solve problems that have to do with economic factors. Uniforms can look decent at a limited cost. They prevent people from feeling out of place because of the way they are dressed. Due to greater poverty and suffering in the rural areas, the people there need more help to enable them to better their standard of living. They look to the church as a source of hope. There is a certain witness in coming to their aid in this important matter.

Poor Black Christians in several South African churches use clothing in the form of uniform as a substitute source of symbolic completeness. "Several studies have tested the symbolic self-completion theory and have found support for the idea that individuals lacking a sense of completeness with respect to a self-definition are most likely to make use of available culture symbols to pursue a sense of completeness" (Kaiser 1990:177). I find that there is substantial evidence of the symbolic use of clothing for purposes of acquiring an acceptable self-definition, especially among the poorer Blacks. I perceive clothing as a strategy for acquiring a sense of success not only in civil society but also within the church:

The African woman belongs to a human community in which women are commanded to be stationary. Women must take their lives into their own hands as men have always done (Oduyoye 1995:188).



The St Anna women have done what the Manyano women in the Methodist Church have felt. They are able to give an account of themselves, "insisting on a high degree of autonomy from the local and institutional church" Holness (1996:25). They know who they are and can raise up their voices; they do not accept or endure the pain of crying silently, hoping that men of their family and/or church will come forward to help them. Their uniform helps to give them the courage to participate in their church activities, according to their own ability and their God-given talents and gifts, and not according to the needs of the men. "Women must work out their own salvation without any gender-based constraints imposed on them by a particular culture" (Oduyoye 1995:188).

#### **4.4.2 Significance of Colours**

The external elements of colour are meaningful and useful. The human being is a person with various senses, including vision. Colour conveys a non-linguistic message: "Words seem to fail us when we attempt to describe appearance, it is difficult to express appearance through words to others in a way that evokes an image in their minds" (Kaiser 1990:238). Colour has different layers of meaning according to culture and context. It is necessary to take both of these into consideration to grasp the meaning of a particular colour. The symbolic meaning changes according to the original intention of the designer.

The relationship of colour to dress is important when it comes to discerning the symbolic meaning various colours have in the sphere of religion. God can be very "substantially present in visible things" (Nicol 1990:88). Colours of dress can say something about God. This applies to all world religions, both Christian and non-Christian. The Old Testament frequently mentions the part that certain colours of clothing play in different ceremonies. Colours have a similar role in the Mainline and Independent churches, though this function is more predominant in some churches than others. Colours help to define and to publicly affirm the wearer's faith and his/her role in the church. One is certain of where s/he belongs as a member. "At times clothes may be used to boost morale or to make one feel more self-confident" (Kaiser 1990:298). The choice of suitable colours in uniform is fundamental in serving the purpose of clothing in religion.



Colour is a constant reminder to the wearer and to the community to apply its significance to their lives and in particular to their worship. As already mentioned above colours are influenced by contextual factors such as culture and social means. A leader in a traditional-type church told me that their colours are communicated to them by the spirits and have a physiological as well as a psychological effect on them. Certain colours help the wearer internalise his/her worship. I was told that the Methodists regard red as signifying the blood of Jesus, black reminds them of sin, white is for purity. For the African Traditional healers, these colours have quite different connotations. Black symbolises the people who have died; it is not known where they are, thus they are in the dark. Red is symbolic of blood but the blood of those who have died in war, and white for those who are holy – ‘the white bones’. The Zionist Christian Church claim to be politically neutral but the birth of these churches came at a time when there was strong African resistance to colonial oppression. This may be the reason why most of the women still make lavish use of green and gold, and why the men of some ZCC’s , unlike those of other ZCC’s, wear a kind of khaki uniform.

I had an interview with a leader who seemed to have an overall picture of his ZCC congregation. I asked him to spell out why they give so much attention to uniforms. Mr Poto attested to the fact that diverse colours in uniform distinguish among the different Zionist churches. Brown (1995:34), explained why there are many types of uniform among the churches:

Each new Church then needs a new uniform to distinguish it from the others. Despite these differences denominations, the role of uniforms in defining and publicly affirming the wearer's faith is very similar.

Each church has its unique colours, so the specific colours are very special to each community. Colours are regarded as having a bearing on healing and this can be made known to one in a dream. A faith healer uses a certain colour when he prays over a sick person. As for some members of other churches, mourning calls for a display of dark colours, often black. Leaders are distinguished by special attire which adheres to definite

colours. He explained the significance of his. Men wear a long white tunic over their normal clothes and women wear a short tunic and a long skirt with a cord round their waist. They carry an iron staff and a flag is employed where there is a group. It is relatively easy for Zionist congregations to split up. Zionists are numerous and when a community grows large it often breaks up into smaller groups, each of which has to decide on its own uniform in order to look different from the other groups. One can notice the addition of a blue or red border or other adornment.

In the traditional African Churches, uniform is used in the graduation ceremony of the healers. Broster (1981:25) explains a graduation among the Xhosa tradition:

The white beads are symbols of light that reflect the omniscience of the ancestral spirits. White has a special significance for the *amagqirha* who are called *abantu abamhlophe*, literally 'white people' which can be translated as 'people of light'. They dress in white, use white clay, wear white beads and strips of white-haired goats skin. The *igqirha* carries the white-brush or switch of the beast scarified on the day of graduation. All these symbols facilitate communion with the ancestral spirits and also indicate the status of the wearers. Furthermore the use of white by an individual is debarred from the everyday life of the tribe and must therefore be approached with decorum.

Healers are clothed officially in special garments of regulated colours. The accompanying chants declare that these clothes will give them power when they wear them in divination and in healing. The use of white clothes symbolises light. That is why the healers are known as people of the light (*Amagqirha amhlophe*). They act as channels between the ancestors and the living members of the family. Hendrickson, (1966:140) describes a similar approach among the Hayi tribe which live in the north west Tanzania:

There are some important continuities in Hayi mourning styles that gives evidence of an ongoing concern with the use of clothing to mediate relations between the living and the dead.

In some instances those connected with a funeral are required to wear sombre attire. Among the Xhosa people, after the death of her husband a widow is dressed in new black or blue clothes or blue, known as *Icepu yezila*. The widow shows to others that she is in the



period of mourning. The Moravians "rejected traditional funeral costumes; for them death was not an occasion for sorrow and grief but for the celebration of the Christian's entrance into heaven" (Schmidt 1989:46).

The Women of St. Anna Sodality are quite powerful in the Catholic Church. I have had much firsthand experience of these groups in various parishes in the Aliwal North Diocese. Their history is fairly recent; this movement for married women was imported from Lesotho where it originated. It was introduced into that country by missionaries from Canada and adapted to serve a different culture. The members have enlightened me on details of their history and also of their activities in the church and how these have progressed up to the present. Not only does their distinctive uniform serve to mark them out as a special group but still more meaningful to them and to the church is what the uniform with its definite style and colours stands for. I listened to discussions about the value and implications of the uniform and heard what they themselves think about it and also how others, women and men, regard it. I was interested to learn how far the St Anna outfit is influenced by traditional African dress and by Western fashion and whether colonialism has played any part in it. I was given documents to look at, which stipulate very clearly the exact pattern and colours.

The St. Anna uniform includes the colour purple, which is specially chosen to remind the members of the sodality that they are first and foremost women of prayer and fasting. Anna in Luke's Gospel is presented as a woman who spent a great deal of time in the temple. She prayed day and night and fasted frequently. It is implied that because of her devout attention to the Lord, she was blessed by being there in the temple when Mary brought the boy Jesus to be dedicated to Yahweh. During Advent and Lent, the Church seasons of prayer, the St Anna women are especially obliged to wear the uniform every Sunday. Therefore the choice of clothing has been motivated by religion, that of the Old Testament which carries over to the New Testament and to present-day Christianity. (The Catholic priest, too, on certain occasions wears a purple chasuble and stole as an outward sign to his congregation of the need to perform acts of penance.) Black is to remind the women of the evil of sin. A combination of the purple and black colours points to the need for discipline



in their lives – to keep the commandments of God and of the Church, to provide a good example as exemplary mothers and active members of the church. They are expected to be self-giving in the service of their neighbour and especially caring towards other St Anna members.

In the Eastern Cape there is a special church ceremony every year when the new members of a St Anna Sodality are clothed for the first time in the purple-and-black uniform. After the religious service the new fully-fledged St Anna Women proceed from the church to a nearby building or tent where a festive meal is shared by all the members of the group, the clergy and the families of the celebrants. It is said that the newly equipped members return home changed people, and they enjoy a new status in the family, in the congregation and in their lives in general. They have prepared well for their new role in religion and are regarded worthy of wearing the St Anna habit of the veteran group. This is the time to think about what the colours of their uniform convey – the meaning for them as individuals, as mothers, as members of their church congregation and in all the other spheres of their life. Clothing with its special design and colour(s) is the outward sign of assimilation into a group within the church or into a specific church where this is a requirement of the constitution.

Considered as a whole, uniform in worship appears to be reasonably simple and inexpensive and serves the purpose of identification, as well as being an inexpensive means of dress so that all the followers can afford it and feel at ease in the community no matter what their economic status is. However, it seems to me that there is a danger of a uniform becoming too elaborate in colour and design. Decoration in the form of beadwork, for example as used by the Xhosa, is all right for reasons of culture but not as a religious symbol. Where a uniform becomes too colourful, too expensive and too artistic, it defeats its proper purpose, is wasteful and without point. Brown (1995:28) describes "these garments (that) were of imported materials and were purchased with earned wages". Whereas clothing can indicate wealth and can be used with this aim in view, it should never be employed in religion with such mundane objectives. Neither does one need more than one uniform at a time to show one's belonging to a church or group.

#### 4.5 Theological Reflection

The third step in the pastoral circle method is theological reflection. Mission requires that all findings in the study of the relationship between worship and clothing be substantiated by reference to the Bible and church tradition. Boff (1987:14) writes about the two regimes of theological prayer:

Theology can be conceived in such a way that it seems to have no other determinations than those of praxis as such. Its rules of practice would be dictated to it by praxis itself. Thus it would be no more than a simple reflex on the part of extrinsic interests. At the other extreme, it can happen that theology is considered as absolutely disconnected from any historical context. It would transcend history and praxis, as if it had no relationship to them. This, in my view, is an idealistic speculative conception of theology.

There should be a relationship between the way people dress and their faith. As Karecki (1999:14) writes: "The cycle of mission praxis combines action and reflection in a way that leads to social change or transformation". A uniform is a religious sign, as seen from the theological perspective. There is a link between the social and the religious aspects in worship. "Theology is therefore always coloured and influenced by circumstances and context. If not, it would be irrelevant and abstract" (Mofokeng 1990:172).

I have listened to and learned from people who are concerned that they do not have the right clothes and so cannot attend church services. The many interviews with members of churches where uniform is a requirement have shown me how some people regard a uniform way of dressing for worship as a legitimate constituent part of church regulations. I can agree with many of the practical arguments in favour of uniform, but as a Catholic, with all that this term implies in being open, universal, all-embracing, global, and so on, I would baulk at the insistence on uniformity in dress for a world-wide church. Local groups within a church are another matter. While I could never imagine all Catholics dressed alike for church, clothing has an important role in the Catholic Church. Karecki (1999:14) with regard to mission praxis says:



The cycle of mission praxis integrates gospel, cultural, tradition, political, and economic realities, and social transformation in a way that keeps all of them in perspective. It unites knowing and doing in a way that is relevant to a particular context.

As a pastor, I dress according to certain rubrics laid down by my church. This is the tradition of the Catholic Church, which is based on the Bible. The design of clothing articles and the various colours according to their symbolic meaning, modified to some extent over the centuries, has been maintained to different degrees in other mainline churches. A recent development regarding the meaning of death has led to a change from black to white for the funeral presider's vestment. Death is regarded not just as mourning but as the passage from death to resurrected life. Therefore theological reflection, as Karecki (1999:18) suggests, "is meant to help local Christian communities to see their situation from a biblical perspective of their particular Christian heritage".

Different kinds of garbs indicate different roles among the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church, from the Pope to the newly ordained priest and the clerical student. We speak of the cardinal's hat, bishop's mitre, monsignor's robes, and there are a great many items of dress which indicate rank among the "lesser" clergy. Such importance is given to religious dress that details are laid down by what is known as Canon Law, which is compulsory study in seminaries and to be referred to in any case of doubt. In the late twentieth century, inculturation and acculturation in multi-cultural societies have become everyday concepts and have found their way into the Church. The effect is noticeable in church vestments that are refashioned to display ethnic bias. As a priest I am guided daily and especially on Sunday by the rubrics as to how I have to be vested for celebrating the liturgy. I see this as one of the ways to bear witness to my faith.

I have referred at length to the St Anna Sodality. There are likewise many other groups within the Catholic church, men and women, that wear uniform dress or have some item(s) of clothing in common to identify them as belonging to a specific group, and these material features are chosen with a view to their symbolic meaning of a religious nature, often going



back to biblical incidents and injunctions. A similar situation is found in other mainline Christian churches.

Founders of Independent churches claim that they received commands in visions and dreams, which included particulars of the clothes the members should wear. `Pauw (1975:300) notes "The details of each individual's vestments derive from special revelation and are associated with health and general well-being" Isaiah Shembe maintained that a series of visions inspired him to choose a white gown for himself and all his followers, the members of the Nazareth Baptist Church. They are called 'garments of Heaven'. However, in a 1958 sermon, Shembe preached on the subject of faith as being infinitely superior to the mere wearing of a special uniform:

You don't believe just because you are dressed in white. You say this is the dress of Heaven. Do not think you will reach Heaven just because you have worshipped many years at Ekuphakameni. A white dress cannot remove sin. We are evil and not worthy of being clothed in white. They are the garments of Heaven. But Jesus lifts off the yoke. (Sundkler in Brown 1995:106).

Fogelqvist (in Cazziol 1988:79-80) writes about the Jericho Christian Church in Zion (*EmaJericho*), founded in 1951 by Bishop Elias Vilakati. According to Fogelqvist they look at their clothing and practices as a source of power: "The *emandla*, the mystical power of the traditional Swazi world-view, found in the Jericho Church, originates from the unique personality of Vilakati, the founder and prophet of the church". Members of this church, which has now spread to South Africa are known widely as Red-gown Zionists. Fogelqvist describes their red gowns with green tassels and other trimmings. The embroidered spears, hammers and sickles indicate the strength and struggle of a recently independent country. The colour red has a deep theological meaning for Christians, symbolising the blood poured out by Christ and the many martyrs who died for the faith. It is a reminder to them that their witness to the Gospel may mean martyrdom for them too. Fogelqvist observes how the Jericho Christian Church in Zion, Swaziland, has moved a step ahead in inculturating its Christian beliefs. In the traditional clothing, especially of the Swazi nobility, red predominated. The Swazi people struggled to obtain independence from the British and they continue to fight the evil in themselves and in the world: "The reason

given for wearing a red uniform is that the Jericho Church is still fighting to overcome evil and achieve purity". (Cazziol 1988:79). Church uniform in this instance is the outward sign of theological reflection.

Broster and Bourn (1981:17) explains that in the Transkei there are two distinct groups. The one section has adopted Christianity and Western culture, and is known as 'School People'. The other section has retained the ancestral cult and a semi-pastoral way of life and, because of their picturesque red -ochred dress, the members are known as 'Red People'. Red , or the blood of the earth, is the colour beloved by the spirits of the ancestors, and for their people it is the colour of faith and happiness.

Fogelqvist comments on the different understanding about uniform that the Swazi Zionists have. They claim that "they have been purified, hence the white uniforms they are wearing" (in Cazziol 1988:79). There is a hidden theology to be found in the uniform and we are called to discover it - to see the connection between dress and worship and its link to faith. To come to an understanding of why certain churches choose to wear certain colours we have to look deeply at those churches to see their beliefs and practices.

A theological reflection on dress in worship is a world-wide phenomenon: early Christian literature has much to say about the ritual significance of sacred vestments.

Dress evoked significant spiritual and theological meanings within the Religious Culture of early America. Images of the Sabbath, of Ritual, of Sin, of Good works, of Purity, of Eschatology, of Redemption, all were made vivid through the medium of dress" (Schmidt 1989:44).

Therefore reflection on the situation of dress has been based on a faith perspective.

In the Old Testament (Ex 39:20) the priests wore robes to the tabernacle each day. The designs and colours were not only beautiful but also significant, symbolising how the high priests represented the people before God. A reflection on biblical references to clothing is important. It sets a precedent for us to follow to a certain extent. The manner in which we



dress for Church has a meaning for us in some way as a consequence of what our Jewish and Christian ancestors did.

Cochrane, De Gruchy & Peterson (1990:100) hold that one of the goals of mission is to "maintain and promote the identity of the faith and its relevance to human life". This would include the mode of dress pertaining to worship, which requires theological reflection on how the people's faith is affected by it. Dress can be a means of transformation. There is an indirect relationship between our dress and our Faith. Clothes can be conducive to religious meditation, an aid in preparing us as individuals and as community to turn away from our mundane tasks to engage in communication with the Divine, to worship Christ who died for our sins. Reflection on the Gospels shows how clothes can be a sign of purification and righteousness.

It is as a result of Scripture study that the Christian churches introduced special robes for the Sacraments of Baptism, first Holy Communion, Confirmation, Marriage and Ordination. The Zionist Christian churches dress mainly in white, the theology for which developed from the belief that wearing white functions as a way of "separating the faithful from a sinful world" (Brown 1995:32). Their uniform is symbolic in setting them apart from people of other faith.

The Independent churches use the Old Testament for the justification of their wearing of uniforms. In Numbers 15:37-39: "Yahweh spoke to Moses and said: 'Speak to the sons of Israel and tell them to put tassels on the hems of their garments, and to put a violet cord on this tassel... the sight of it will remind you of all the commands of Yahweh'". The tassel is used today by some churches to express rank and authority. It has a significance in the religious context similar to that of today's identity card in civil life. The colour purple indicates high rank, nobility, as seen in Ezekiel 23:6 and Esther 1:6. Christians of the Independent and other African Churches wear their uniform to remind them of the commandments and thus to be holy. There is also a theology of responsibility. Robes can be passed on to confer authority upon the next leader of a Church and are called robes of succession.



The inward spiritual state of a person can be judged in some measure by his/her outward appearance. Broster and Bourn (1981:20) explain this concept with regard to the Xhosa Tribe:

Colour also has religious significance. In the absence of the written laws, the colour of beads and are used to convey information related to custom and procedures. For example, red is used by all who are leading a normal tribal life. When white clay replaces , something abnormal has occurred. White clay covering the face, body and clothing not only indicates contact with the ancestral spirits but also shows that, for some reason, the wearer is excluded from tribal life. It is, therefore, an effective warning acquainting others with the wearer's condition.

Broster and Bourn (1981:20) describe the mourning procedure of the Xhosa, which is called *ixila*: "To signify this state they shave their heads, remove all ornaments and beadwork and overlay in grey the white clay on their huts."

We read in Gen. 3:7 that, after the fall, Adam and Eve were desperate to clothe their nakedness, which exposed the corruption of sin in disobeying the Creator. Theodore of Mopsuestia had this to say to those who were being baptised:

When you advance to the holy baptism you take off your clothes. Adam was born in the beginning without any reason to be ashamed, but after having transgressed the commandments and becoming mortal, he needed a garment. Just as you received the gift of the holy baptism to be born again to grace through Him and to become immortal as a figure, it is required to take off your clothes, the sign of mortality and evidence of the sentence that submits man to the need of the garment ... but at the time you come up out of the water you will recover yourself with a shining garment. That is the sign of the radiant and glorious world. ... When you resurrect you will recover yourself with immortality and incorruptibility; that garment ...will then be necessary for you (in Ostler 1982: 35).

Today this is the theology that we still teach to the people, that the garment represents the treasure laid up in heaven waiting our soul's return.

Among the Seventh-Day Baptists at Ephrata, members were required to clothe themselves in white year-round. Dressing themselves 'white as snow' for worship, members of this Protestant cloister expressed through clothing their union with the saints in heaven and their readiness and longing to meet with Christ (Schmidt 1989:49).

This requirement of their church is a theological reflection on the way the members should dress. A decent exterior is the outward expression of the inner person in the house of God. In the cycle of praxis mission theological reflection, Karecki (1999:72) has defined it as

a way of learning that looks at the reason that lies behind the factors that shape our contexts. We said that theological reflection equips us to look critically at our context in the light of the reign of God and our participation in the *missio Dei*.

I have experienced how much clothing contributes to the spiritual growth of our Black people and this is a call to change the way in which we religious leaders may overlook the theological reflection on the way our congregations dress for worship. It has been said that 'by their fruits shall you know them'. The value that the church-going person gives to suitable clothing is one of the oldest and clearest ways of pointing to his/her Christian identity. Therefore many Christians in the context of their reality reflect on the Bible in order to focus correctly on their situation and to link their manner of clothing to their faith.

#### **4.6 Pastoral Planning**

This is the fourth and last phase in the Pastoral Circle Method, namely planning for further action, and leads back to the first phase, insertion.

This final element underlines the view of contextual theology, that theology should never be reduced to abstract theories which are of no earthly use to the people of God, as they worship and struggle to be faithful to the Gospel in their daily life (Kritzinger 2000: 7).

The aim of this step is action. I aim to help pastoral workers to plan well when drawing up a policy to carry out mission. The theories extracted from the study of the use of clothing in worship have to be applied in the church situation to enable people to worship well and to be faithful to the Gospel in their lives.

We need to hold ourselves open to personal change, because as we participate in God's mission we are called to change . In this way we become agents of change in our contexts (Karecki 1999:74).

It saddens me to see our new generation use the Sunday service as an opportunity for a kind of fashion show. This attitude is a danger to our Christian religion. The Sunday Liturgy is not an occasion for provoking people to turn away from God and to focus on other people's bodies. The mode of dress, especially for the youth, should be monitored by the worshipping community. In my discussions with various groups of youth I find that they are divided in their opinion about the use of uniform in worship.

There is a cross-cultural influence among the South African young people. Some of them maintain that they are happy with western-type dress for worship - mini-skirts, female trousers, jeans for both boys and girls, etc. A youth group in one parish of Aliwal Diocese has introduced a fairly simple uniform and a few other parishes are slowly taking up the idea. I can see it as a way to solve the dilemma caused by total freedom to dress as one likes, which could become scandalous in the Church.

A Christian's whole way of life should witness to his/her beliefs. At times we are unaware of the part played by what we wear, or at least unable to articulate its meaning. Yet it speaks for us and gives a message to the onlooker; we, in turn, are affected by how others dress. "The way I dress is a way of speaking all day long even when I do not utter a sound" (Luzbetak 1988:77). Girls are frequently criticised for their provocatively dressed bodies



and this even in church where it is a source of distraction and temptation. Schmidt (1989:47) quotes from an English pamphlet: "The devil makes use of the windows of our bodies, so that sin may enter into our souls". In the Nazareth Baptist Church: "Ritual or sacred dress is frequently worn in order to express opposition to the everyday, often profane world" (Roach & Eicher in Brown, 1995:12). To avoid both ostentatious show and an inferiority complex, because of the decrepit state of one's clothes that could even inhibit one from attending church services, the answer could be a simple church uniform. Karecki (1999:74) asserts that a strategy could be found: "a plan of action to get something done". The local churches in South Africa need to see that there is some implementation of what we have identified, analysed, and reflected upon as regards church uniform.. We need concrete action in response to the needs of our congregation.

I would like to choose a middle course while giving due recognition to the churches who favour a conservative approach. Mofokeng (1990:172) comments on Bosch's advice to the African church :

to listen critically to the voice of African culture and religions as well as to the normative, liberative message from the Bible and mould itself in a manner that will best express its faith.

Perhaps we in our poverty-stricken continent could take cognisance of an earlier century and a different land when clothing was a pressing ethical issue about which the Evangelical Methodist John Wesley (in Schmidt 1989:46) wrote so eloquently and urgently:

The wearing of costly array is directly opposite to the being adorned with good works. Nothing can be more evident than this, for the more you lay out on your own apparel, the less you have left to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to lodge the strangers, to relieve those that are sick and in prison and to lessen the numberless afflictions to which we are exposed in this vale of tears. What you put upon yourself, you are in effect, tearing from the back of the naked as the costly and delicate food which you eat, you are snatching from the mouth of the hungry. For mercy, for pity, for Christ's sake, for the honour of his gospel, stay your hand! Do not throw this money away! Do not lay out on nothing, yea worse than nothing, what may clothe your poor, naked, shivering fellow creature!

Wesley's prophetic call asks us to look more deeply at the whole issue of clothes in terms of our spiritual needs and duties. Christians might dress simply in order to help those who are financially worse off than themselves; it is a matter of justice. At the same time there is no excuse for not attending church because *they* do not have the right clothes. As the hymn says: 'Come as you are'. A congregation in simple attire, whether uniform or plain clothes, witnesses to the belief that Christianity is a way of following the poor Christ, of loving the brethren, of living up to the demands of the Gospels. Clothing for the body should lead us to God, to holiness, to purity of both body and soul.

A less conservative approach to clothing in worship also has to be taken into account. Daneel (1987:272) writes about the sense of *Koinonia* that is created by uniform:

The weekly church gatherings when members appear in festive mood in colourful garb, wearing distinctive insignia aware of recognition and status within the group and all that, are par excellence occasions when the drabness, drudgery and problems of daily life can be forgotten.

The joyfulness of the service is an important element. Christianity is not a sombre but a joyful religion – Christ came to set us free, to live life to the full. The perfect human being is the one fully alive. The Methodist member Tihoriso, mentioned above as not being fully convinced about her church's insistence on uniform, is aware that in her church one is not recognised as a full member until one has received the uniform of that congregation. The question that one asks is: How do Methodist women experience a sense of belonging? If they regard the uniform as the religious expression of their belief, then there is great joy for those who have taken this step in their life. Tihoriso spoke about their new status in the church regardless of age, level of education, social or economic position. The uniform gives them a certain dignity and it has feminine appeal.

Above all the use of the uniform helps them to pray better. The Zionist and other churches "believe they received the spirit that is the source of true knowledge and power"(Pauw 1975:303), that is when they dress up their uniforms. Here Tihoriso was speaking for most



of the Black Methodist women she knows and she accepts that this is what is right for them as they are convinced about the value of their uniform. While she considers herself a faithful member of her church, she objects to the control exercised by wearing a uniform. She needs to feel free to express her opinion and found on some occasions that this was not acceptable when she wore the uniform. Theorist William James (in Kaiser 1990:95) once wrote: "The old saying - that the human person is composed of three parts - soul, body, and clothes - is more than a joke". Through the body, as well as other objects with which we surround ourselves, such as clothing, we communicate to others and to ourselves who we are and what we view as important in life. Terms such as the *visible self* (Roach & Eicher, 1973) and the *second skin* (Horn and Gurel, 1981) refer to the closeness of clothing to the self (Kaiser 1990:95).

Clothing contributes to the whole meaning of life and for religious-minded people is therefore an important factor. Another quotation from Kaiser (1990:302) substantiates this:

Hare Krishna followers believe that as they give up their old clothes and adopt the attire of their faith, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones. Thus, the religious attire becomes a metaphor for Hare Krishna values. Inward searching is emphasised over outward display of material goods.

Mphozo, a *Sangoma*, told me that she knew and felt she was elevated to a position of responsibility when she received her *Sangoma* uniform. It was an outward sign of her authority and enhanced role within her community and a symbol of her role for the others. However, she knows that she has now to make a great effort to control her human weaknesses, humble herself and even break away from her whole former manner of life. From these observations, one could conclude that the idea of praxis also calls for spiritual change. In the context of Christianity Karecki (1999:81) has this to say about change:

This is the form of change that Christians experience as continuing conversion. We often experience this kind of change as a 'smashing of idols' in our lives. Things, attitudes and forms of status that once captured our dedication and sense of commitment are challenged and come crashing down. It often manifests itself as creative energy to spend ourselves for the benefit of others. This form of change unifies the others and provides the conditions that



facilitate change in the other areas of life, so that we are more open to God's invitation to share in mission.

The wearing of the *Sangoma* uniform is compulsory for special occasions. Thus uniform can give encouragement to the wearer and it enables others to recognise the *Sangoma's* role. They are able to enter into a relationship more easily with her as her office is projected by the use of her *Sangoma* dress. She is called to live up to the required image which is one of dignity, self-control, patience, dedication and efficiency.

As a result of my interaction with Mphozo and others who wear a uniform as a religious sign, I have now given more thought to my own use of priestly vestments laid down for liturgical worship for which I have been ordained, as a right and a duty. I have reflected more deeply on the biblical and traditional church implications. I conscientiously treat each item with deep respect and take note of the significance of each as I vest in a dignified manner for the different church rites. The meaning they have for me in performing acts of worship to God and in the service of the people to whom I am sent on mission has intensified. My use of the proper clothing for the right reason is communicated to the congregation who are inspired to draw closer to God and to worship Him in a more devout manner. I can sense that my efforts have borne fruit by their obvious bearing on the congregation. One is able to see that the liturgy we celebrate can lead to new possibilities for the transformation of mission.

Pastoral planning is very important to any research, so that what has been researched may contribute something to the church. The contribution is to make what Mofokeng has requested of all theologies: to be totally committed to the African church. Mofokeng (1990:172) advocates a "process of giving the African church its religious and theological identity". The church has to be able to respond to the congregation's needs, to mediate. For me, people need to feel welcomed in the Sunday congregation regardless of the poverty of their clothing.

I discussed the matter of church uniform with my bishop. He is quite open about the idea. Where a group or even a community would come to a decision for themselves they should

be guided by the priest in charge. Intense dialogue and careful planning is required and a certain flexibility. The bishop gives the freedom for action but will not put any stipulations in writing in case this could lead to a future problem. He regards it as a minor and local matter and he fears to appear as too authoritative on the matter, or to pass on the problem to his successor.

The church was previously patriarchal in its decisions but is now more open to dialogue. In today's world the faithful are rightfully demanding a greater say in their lives. The African woman has a much longer way to go in this regard than her Western sister. We have to pay careful attention to what the women are saying in our church. No longer can the men decide what the womenfolk should wear for worship. Oduyoye (1995:203) has advocated for the "woman to break the very chains that they have been wearing and examine them one by one". It is also vital to listen to the youth, the future of the Church. The pastor may not dictate to his congregation on this matter. When we come for worshipping we come as a community.

A community involves a group of people united around a common message or word and in such a community there will be much diversity. Therefore even a congregation is not simply a body of people forcibly brought together under a ruler, it is a group which is gathered together by a common belief and commitment. This type of commitment is described by Rupel (1986:143) in reference to the Brethren Congregation:

Applicants for membership affirmed at Baptism their faith and agreed to refrain from wearing worldly fashions. A new member was allowed a probationary period, not exceeding a year or two, to acquire the prescribed items. A member not dressed in the order, having been admonished three times by the elders, would be disfellowshipped. A member who heeded the congregations counsel and confessed the error would be restored to full fellowship by the Church council.

In our churches we need to reflect both on the personal and communal dimension, on matters of dress and see if that context is a reality in our lives.

When we come to dialogue about Church matters, we have to read our past - what has been done - and our present realities. Worthwhile traditions are to be maintained and perhaps modified; others both cultural and of a religious nature are to be abandoned. We know that in their ignorance of the people's culture, missionaries could be most offensive in some of their decisions and practices. The Zimbabwean politician and activist Maurice Nyagumbo recalls that when he arrived at St Faith Mission for his primary education, he and the other new pupils were marched to the stream while singing:

Tiri manyukama, Tiri manyukama. Tine tsivina, Tine tsivina. Hutigoni kuyeza. Hutigoni kudzidza. We are the newcomers, we are the newcomers. We are dirty, we are dirty. We do not know how to wash ourselves. We have not acquired education (Burke in Hendrickson 1996:24).

It seems that uniforms are an essential part in some churches.

Bosch maintains that our first task in approaching another people culture and religion, is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy. Here and there some of us are beginning to accept that in going out to meet people of another faith we never move in to a void, because God has already been preparing them within the context of their own culture and convictions (Du Preez 1990:197).

We have to develop a relationship between those who see church uniforms as a way to develop a sense of importance and belonging and those who feel otherwise. There is a need to engage in continuing dialogue. This is a call to reflect on our belonging to the church of Christ. Where a uniform is considered an essential practice then one might think theologically that there is a possibility of something lacking in our preaching or catechesis about what constitutes full membership in our churches. Where faith is sufficiently strong, do the people of God need to look at the external elements such as dress for them to worship well? The Gospel urges us to trust in Providence, not to worry about our body or how we are to clothe it (Lk. 22:32). In the paradoxes of the Gospels we come across seemingly contradictory advice – we are also advised “to be dressed and ready”.



I am not advocating a church without uniform, but in our multi-cultural, multi-ethnic society there is a crisis and a lack of understanding as to what makes one a member of a congregation, a lack of profound *koinonia* in the life of the church. It is time for pastors to address these issues in their churches. The quest for belonging is a mission issue. This study is an effort to make a contribution to missiology especially as regards the Black congregations, if we are to bring the Gospel message into the contextual reality of the people we serve.

I have given only minimal attention to the better-educated Black and Coloured population in the Diocese, and still less to White Christians who mostly belong to those who are the economically secure. Such people are in a position to provide themselves with what they consider proper clothes for church services. They do not feel inferior about belonging to the congregation because of their outward appearance. However, vigilance is required here too to ensure that a worshipper's way of dressing is an aid and not a hindrance to him/herself or other members of the congregation. The traditional practice of wearing new clothes first to the Sunday service, by way of acknowledging dependence on God and thanking Him, is laudable. Where the motive would be to display new finery and even very worldly immodest fashion, is unacceptable because it does not reflect Christian values. Rupel, (1986:145) commends the use of uniform among The Brethren: "They accepted that the order of dress prevented members from entering sinful places, yet permitted access to the world for spiritual service".

One of the main tasks in missiology today is to focus on the way people live as Christians, so that it may study the expansion and growth of the mission of the church. Rupel (1986:145) is of the opinion that "each generation must deal with the dress issue in the context of its own time". The Western mentality is conditioned by a dichotomous dualistic anthropology, which divides a person into two separate entities - soul and body. The Independent African churches generally oppose this dualistic view of humankind; their approach is holistic. For those who do not have money to buy decent clothes to attend church worship, the answer could be that all the members dress in a simple uniform dress which does not separate them on the basis of the "haves" and the "have-nots".

For Bosch contribution to social change is not a secondary task of the church, but an inherent part of its mission. He also endorses the belief that the church should have a bias towards the poor and make a preferential option for them (Nicol 1990:93).

We have to care for the powerless and act in solidarity with them so that we may be able to transform the world with those who feel powerless. Even in the Roman Catholic Church, bishops have felt that lack of power. Bate (1999:151) comments:

When the first Zulu Bishop was appointed in 1954, under pressure of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, to the new Diocese of Umzimkulu there was an immediate outcry from the white Catholics at the inappropriateness of this. The White Catholics of Margate protested most vehemently against having a non-European as Bishop of Europeans.

In the recent past Africans suffered from a lack of identity in the mainline churches and this fact contributed greatly to the rise of the Independent churches where the African could feel more at home. We in the mainline churches need to look at the attraction a uniform might have for African Christians to give them a sense of belonging. Baptism is *the* Sacrament of entry into the Christian Church, the mark of identity. Could we perhaps look on Church uniform as a sacramental, a visible mark of identity within a particular church? Good catechesis needs to be the root of preparation so that these issues can be dealt with and catechumen and the faithful in general can reflect on church membership.

Congregations of Sisters in the mainline churches traditionally wore distinguishing 'habits'. In conversations with some of them, I learned that their habits are not regarded with such honour as in the past. However, though some have gone completely secular in their choice of clothes, most retain a degree of uniformity and simplicity. Their vow of poverty to forego worldly possessions extends to the limited expense allowed on clothing which should signify self-denial, a humble, modest attitude to one's appearance. Personally I appreciate that mission requires this outward appearance of the Sisters who give a good example to those to whom they minister. It is finally always a case of motive and ultimately we cannot judge by appearances.



One may ask: 'What is religion all about, that clothing is regarded as important in how one has to redeem the marginalized?' Advertisement plays a crucial role in today's commerce. Kaiser (1990:433) agrees with this: "I enjoy reading about mass media accounts of what people in the public eye are wearing. It is fun to keep up with fashion". Clothing is the way we package ourselves. It's one way of showing who we are and what we think of ourselves. The salesperson displays the most important aspects of a product on the package. This leads me to ask what our clothes have to say about our identity, ourselves, our faith. It has been demonstrated above that the use of uniform in worship has the advantage of easing and facilitating social interaction. Indeed respondents referred to the uniform as something which gives them a home, and this home feeling gives an individual joy, thus emphasising the notion of belonging. That is why clothing is regarded as indicative of one's identity.

For an African belonging is often of higher value than individualism, and it is sufficient to influence and at times determine behaviour in the congregation. In some of the interviews conducted, I was able to see the value of relationship (a sense of belonging) formed by the way people dressed, which enabled an easy familiarity. Nathan (in Kaiser 1990:362) defines class as regards the wearing of uniform as a metaphor. "A metaphor is a representation of meaning that borrows from another context, so that the qualities associated with one context will be assigned in another context as well". There is an interpersonal interaction among those who dress in uniform. Clothes become a common denominator. When the group or congregation are all similarly clothed, then sharing, showing emotions, praying, and preaching are less demanding.

In an interview with members of St John's Church, one woman said: 'When I wear my uniform, I am wrapping myself in God's love'. Their church uniforms are treated with care, since they are a sign of their holy Baptism and their membership in the Church. Making people feel at home in the Church is an important task for all of us. "The Church has to serve humankind unselfishly, thus making life on earth more human in every respect" (Saayman 1990:100). Thus Christian mission includes involvement in all the structures of society in order to eliminate all that dehumanises people. Uniforms give a feeling of



belonging to a bigger family, the family of God. The Black communities need to take the sacrament of Baptism to heart.

We Catholic pastors instruct the newly baptised that they have become a new creation, 'clothed' in Christ. They are to see in the 'white garment' the outward sign of their Christian dignity within their family and among other Christians:

An individual who wears a uniform tends to be assigned a particular role set. Uniforms not only allow outsiders to identify individuals as members of the organisation, but also allow outsiders to identify individual as members of the organisation, but also enables insiders to interpret their rank, duties and privileges (Kaiser 1999:362).

The baptised are committed to bringing that dignity unstained into the everlasting life of heaven. A church uniform is intended as a reminder to persevere in a changing and often frustrating world. I question whether we in the mainline churches give enough emphasis to the meaning of the white garment in which the newly baptised is clothed.

Even the usual way that Baptism is performed in the mainline churches falls short of the elaborate ceremony of the Indigenous churches. The candidates are immersed in the river or dam or whatever large stretch of water is available. The mainline churches are not paying special attention to baptism by immersion, but they are moving to a simple pouring of water over the forehead. Perhaps by the less dramatic outward symbols, we have lost something of the strength, power and total change that the rite of Baptism is meant to convey.

"As a kind of 'second skin' or extension of the body, clothes represent the nearest aspect of one's environment" (Horn & Gurel in Kaiser 1990:98). This is an apt metaphor for the use of clothing in worship.

People strive for some consistency and continuity in their appearance and perception. Many of those who dress in a certain uniform stress that it prevents their appearance from contradicting their role in any given situation. Clothing has a dual role, as a tangible thing

and also as a sign. As a sign, clothing has a social meaning. It is a powerful product since it is an expressive medium or a concrete way of revealing particular ideas that cannot be articulated. Kaiser (1990:363) noted how "culture tends to entrust clothing with messages that can not be conveyed in other (verbal) ways". Its role is also rooted in a culture which provides the tools of how people have to dress. We carry our culture in our clothes. Thus clothes become crucial non-verbal forms of communication. Communication is not only a spoken language, but is also a sensory verbal language which includes vision, feeling, smell and taste. For this study, vision has been the most fundamental sense. The faithful want to appear to others as holy and religious. Self-identification is a deeply ingrained human value. We have a natural desire to understand ourselves, and to reflect on our identity. The self can become a kind of audience - as when looking in a mirror.

In our journey of faith we are to use all the human aids along our way to God. Where one of these comprises the clothes worn in worship, there should be freedom in a church or church group to choose the option of a uniform when this is believed to be the answer to overcome physical and spiritual obstacles to the individual and group.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

I have inserted myself into the concrete situation to discover the factors which influence churchgoers in their perception that clothing influences their attendance of worship. I have taken this as a very important issue in mission. This issue of dress and especially the use of uniforms, has made me reflect on the theology of our identity and the faith the church. Therefore what I have observed in this section I in turn interpreted in the light of faith.

There has been some conclusion and observation, which I used as criticisms of those churches who dress in certain uniforms and do not look at the other factors which give one a sense of identity. Therefore the use of uniform restores that lost identity which the history of apartheid eroded away. Churchgoers are able to look at themselves as equals. Women in the churches have been marginalised and often not recognised in their churches. The use of

uniform has led to committed and able women in all aspects and positions of church leadership.

The aim here was to examine the relationship between uniform and the church people, especially in the Black congregations. The focus was on how uniforms appeal to them. In the conclusion I address some of the broad findings from the research on the importance of dress on worship.



## CHAPTER FIVE:

### CONCLUSION

I have tried to maintain a scientific approach to the compilation of the knowledge I have acquired directly by means of reflecting on my own past and present activities in the Church, and on the information I have obtained by way of many interviews within my parish and the Aliwal Diocese, and with members of other churches, especially different African Independent churches. I follow the dictum of Karecki (1999:89) 'Mission is rooted in Baptism. We do not journey alone, but as members of the Church'. I have consulted - but only with limited access - local specialists in the fields of religion and of culture, and have taken cognisance of the reality of the political, social and multi-cultural situation of South Africa. Added to my observations and what I have learned from a diverse number of other people is my reflection on the many references made to clothing in the Bible, Church tradition and the body of theoretical knowledge I have obtained by wide reading on the subject. As already mentioned there is not a great deal written on this topic in the Eastern Cape. I have not limited my theoretical study to Africa but have also included books and pamphlets from other continents.

I have found relevant written material with which to compare and contrast my findings and this has helped me to elucidate my opinions. For example, I concur with the judgement of the American Sister Julia Wood mentioned by Esther Rupel (1986:138), who denounces "the turning of a church service into a fashion show". My research has substantiated the opinion that how church-goers' dress influences the Sunday service. The human being is social by nature, thus s/he uses clothing to find his/her position in the community, including the church congregation.

In weighing up the pros and cons I have found that clothing is a salient factor in both attendance at church worship and the quality of the worship. Arthur (1999a:37) reasons: "Because appearance is considered the external manifestation of inner attitudes, visual cues

are analysed for signs of non-conformity". This leads to the conviction that it is very important for church-goers to wear appropriate clothes that will enable them to feel that they belong in the praying congregation, and that will put them in the right disposition to communicate with God, clothes in which they can present themselves to their Creator. I have stressed how uniform has come to play a role especially in the African Independent churches.

The mainline churches, on the other hand, heavily influenced by the traditions inherited from the West, do not see the need of giving much consideration to church uniform and I even found some opposition to the idea. Propagation of the Faith requires continual seeking for new and better ways of reaching peoples of all cultures and social standing. Liturgical renewal is an ongoing process in our ever-changing world so as to ensure total participation by all the members of the Church.

One of the areas to examine is the implications of dress in worship. In the present situation of post-colonial and post-apartheid South Africa there is suffering and struggle because of the loss of identity which has to be recovered. I have considered how far clothing can be a medium in transmitting the Gospel message in this environment. It has been noted by Karecki (1999:97) that:

No matter what religion tradition you come from it is important to realise that every pattern of mission praxis must be contextualised otherwise its effectiveness is compromised because it does not connect to the realities of people's lives.

Dress is a human contribution in worship. Our disposition is never neutral; the manner in which we present ourselves externally often heightens or lessens the quality of our spiritual homage. This is especially relevant in the holistic approach that pertains to the African mind. I have found that wearing of a uniform indicate the intensity of a person's religious participation. This lead to a sense of mission among Christians since ones self-adornment may reflect affiliation with a religious sect or denomination. Their spirituality involves the whole person - intellect and emotions, spirit and body, action and

contemplation, individual and community, secular and sacred. The uniform or the manner of dress chosen by the church-goer acts as a sign which portrays the wearer's attitude and reflects his/her invisible devotion to God. Arthur (1999a:41) writes about a minister's daughter who left her church at nineteen:

If you are straight down the line as to the rules of the group, then everyone can see that you are submitting your will to the church. The Mennonite dress is like a uniform - it indicates that you are keeping everything under control. When you are having trouble with the church rules your clothing can show it. This is why everyone watches what everyone else is wearing and how they are wearing it, because clothing shows acceptance of all the rules of the church.

Similar clothing in worship helps to stimulate the mind towards contemplation of the hidden realities without fear that the one next to me is better off than I am. In this way the use of uniform in worship gives a sense of community, a unity of the faithful. Dress in the form of a uniform can be seen as a second form of speech. The faithful verify through their dress the spoken words. They express their inner feelings with or without words but also by what they have externally put on.

The Nigerian, Oduyoye, decries African traditional patriarchy, which the church has adopted to a large an extent. It is only the women who can liberate themselves. She urges them to work together to share their potentials and problems so as to meet the challenges in the society and the Church. Women should support one another and not wait for the men to come to their aid:

In a conflict the woman becomes a sacrifice, in a crisis she is the one who risks being thrown out to be replaced by another woman. This domestic picture is seen in employment, politics and in the Church" (Oduyoye 1995: 203).

In my work as pastor I am concerned about the effect of traditional Church patriarchy added to the African mentality that relegates women to a lower place in the community. I can understand how people, and especially women, who are often themselves abused in their own churches tend to go out and seek another home where they can feel important and respected. In their new spiritual home they accept its uniform as a way of gaining



recognition and equality. In the absence of hostility, oppression and suppression they feel free and encouraged to develop their God-given talents to improve their own lot and that of their family and the community. It helps increase their faith, hope and charity.

By inserting myself into the realities of the church in South Africa and using the method of social analysis in the light of biblical and traditional church teaching I have been able to study mission in a critical way as regards the use of clothing in worship. Faith is influenced by the society and, in turn, influences the society. The structure of our multi-cultural, post-colonial and post-apartheid society has both positive and negative aspects. The church should work with the positive element to help its people towards ever greater development and endeavour by every means to help the people overcome the evil and all that obstructs true human growth. The church has to maintain the dignity of the individual and the one place where this is obvious is in the stance of each member as s/he assembles with the other worshippers for the liturgical service.

I have observed a practical approach in the context of different churches, those who have introduced uniform as a means of maintaining greater equality among worshippers, and those who do not see the need for a uniform. I have looked at the obvious benefits a uniform has for church groups and how the wearing of certain insignia distinguishes those who have certain roles within the group or society. In coming to a conclusion it has been necessary to examine the purpose of a uniform or of the choice of dress against the background of the present economic situation. Written studies of how the church regards dress in other parts of the world, especially the developing world, and how the church handled problems of a like nature in the past has helped me probe more deeply into the present and to be more open to its realities. Holland and Henriot (1983:96) stress that the analyst of a given social situation has to ask the primary question: "What is happening to people"?

By observing and speaking with various people in different church contexts I have gained an overall picture of the present situation as regards the use of clothing in worship. The general impression I now have is that there is a place in some church contexts for the use of

a uniform. This applies also to groups within a church and to those who perform a certain church or group function. There is a value in clothing both for the wearer and the community. "On the daily basis, individuals use clothes to communicate desired aspects about the self to others, and those others, in turn, respond to this self-symbolizing and provide new insights to others about themselves" (Kaiser 1990:146). The way we clothe ourselves for church affects the way we see ourselves, and this can lead others to give us feed-back. One is able to answer the questions: 'Who am I?' and 'How do I appear before others?' The impression I make on others is important for my own image of myself: "Humans have a basic need to compare themselves with others, for purposes of self-evaluation" (Festinger in Kaiser 1990:171).

As a result of the empirical component of my study, I have been reflecting on how far South Africa is a secularised society. I have found that many people want to display their religious symbolism, and one way of doing that is their use of clothing. Christians often see a crucifix or cross as sufficient identification. Religions other than Christian have striking distinctive regalia – Islamic headscarves, Buddhist robes, Hindu colourful drape, etc. Religious pluralism calls for tolerance; we have to accept religious diversity and give due recognition to African Christian churches who choose to be recognised at least in part by their clothing. Pauw (1975:42) describes the so-called 'Red People' of the Transkei, and Ciskei, who dress in distinctive fashion:

shown in dress and other items of material culture. Red women wear red skirts - long ones if they are married, short ones if unmarried, characteristic turbans, and traditional bead decorations. ... They smear themselves with red ochre.

The Methodist Church seems to have no problem with the reality of one branch opting for the distinguishing feature of a simple uniform. Where dressing as a church, sodality or other religious group, a uniform gives the individual a sense of holiness, of belonging to a church institution, of moving from the ordinary occupation of the day to partake in a divine rite or to perform a role. Then there is value and meaning to be considered. As indicated in the process of analysis of the context, the quest for meaning and belonging is an urgent

concern in this time of transformation and a challenge for the church even to the point of survival.

The old adages may be true – clothes don't make the man; the habit doesn't make the monk. However, in the situation of twenty-first century South Africa (as in other post-colonial societies) we have to look at the church objectively. Mission has to translate the message of the Gospel in the context of the reality of the majority of the people who are poor, struggling for a better position in the modern world, seeking for a new identity as liberated people. The messengers of the Gospel have to dialogue with the people they preach to, in order to discover all the human means of bringing these people to the true faith. We search the Bible and study the instructions of our Christian Church. We look at the traditions of the church and employ traditions within the culture that can help a people to come to terms with the reality of their situation. We do not try to inculturate Christianity (which is the property of no people, no culture or age) so much as to inculturate society with the everlasting truths of Christianity contained in the Bible and church tradition as handed down by Christ to us through the apostles and their successors. The question of dress as related to identity is then an important missiological concern.



## APPENDIX I

### QUESTIONNAIRES FOR INTERVIEWS

1. What is your view/opinion on the use of a church uniform in your Church?
2. From the Christian point of view don't you think that Baptism is a sufficient sign of our identity?
3. I understand that there are some problems in churches about the code of dress. How would you describe this situation in your church?
4. Christians believe in dressing well. In your view what about those who cannot afford decent clothes in order to attend church?
5. According to your understanding, is there anything the Mainline Churches can learn in the matter of dress from Independent Churches?
6. It is said that most of the people who use uniforms lack a sense of self-esteem? What is your view?
7. What role does dress/uniform in church worship play in your congregation?
8. How does the use of clothing manifest your feeling of being saved in Christ through Baptism?
9. If the use of uniform does not fulfil a function, is there anything that you substitute for it in your Church?
10. As a Zionist (or ...) explain how you see the life of other churches that do not use any kind of uniform for their worship? What can you tell me about the belief that people use a uniform to mask a sense of inferiority?
11. Can you tell me why mainly White people do not use uniform while Blacks are very much for the use of uniform in church?
12. Is there a biblical meaning attached to your church uniform?
13. Do people believe in the use of uniform for a Christian?

## **APPENDIX II**

### **INTERVIEWS AND DISCUSSIONS:**

(arranged according to dates)

Tihoriso , M. Intensive interview on 20 July 2000 in Aliwal North.

Kewu, L (Revd) Personal conversation on 15 Sept. 2001 in Queenstown.

Pitso, G (Revd) Intensive interview on 05 Oct. 2000 in Sterkspruit

Boboshane, R Personal conversation on 11 Oct. .2001 in Mhlanga

Zimbaya, L. Interview on 20 Oct. 2001 in Mhlanga.

Mphozo, N. Intensive interview on 06 Nov. 2001 in Elliot.

Poto, T. Intensive interview on 20 Nov. 2001 in Indwe.

Lobinger, F. (Bishop) Personal conversation on 24 Nov. 2001 in Aliwal North

## **APPENDIX III**

### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

1. Young ladies of the Sacred Heart Sodality in their uniforms which gives them a feeling of equality among themselves.
2. Xhosa couple in their traditional clothing which gives them a unique feeling of being Xhosa.
3. Women who belong to the Sodality of St Anna in their membership uniforms.
4. The male youth of the Sacred Heart Sodality seen in their uniforms.
5. Men of the Zionist Church in their khaki uniforms which distinguishes them from other churches.
6. Zionist performing a baptismal ritual dressed in white robes which gives them a self-definition of new life and purity.





PHOTO 1) Young ladies of the Sacred Heart Sodality in their uniforms which gives them a feeling of equality among themselves.



PHOTO 2) Xhosa couple in their traditional clothing which gives them a unique feeling of being Xhosa





PHOTO 3) Women who belong to the Sodality of St. Anna in their membership uniforms.

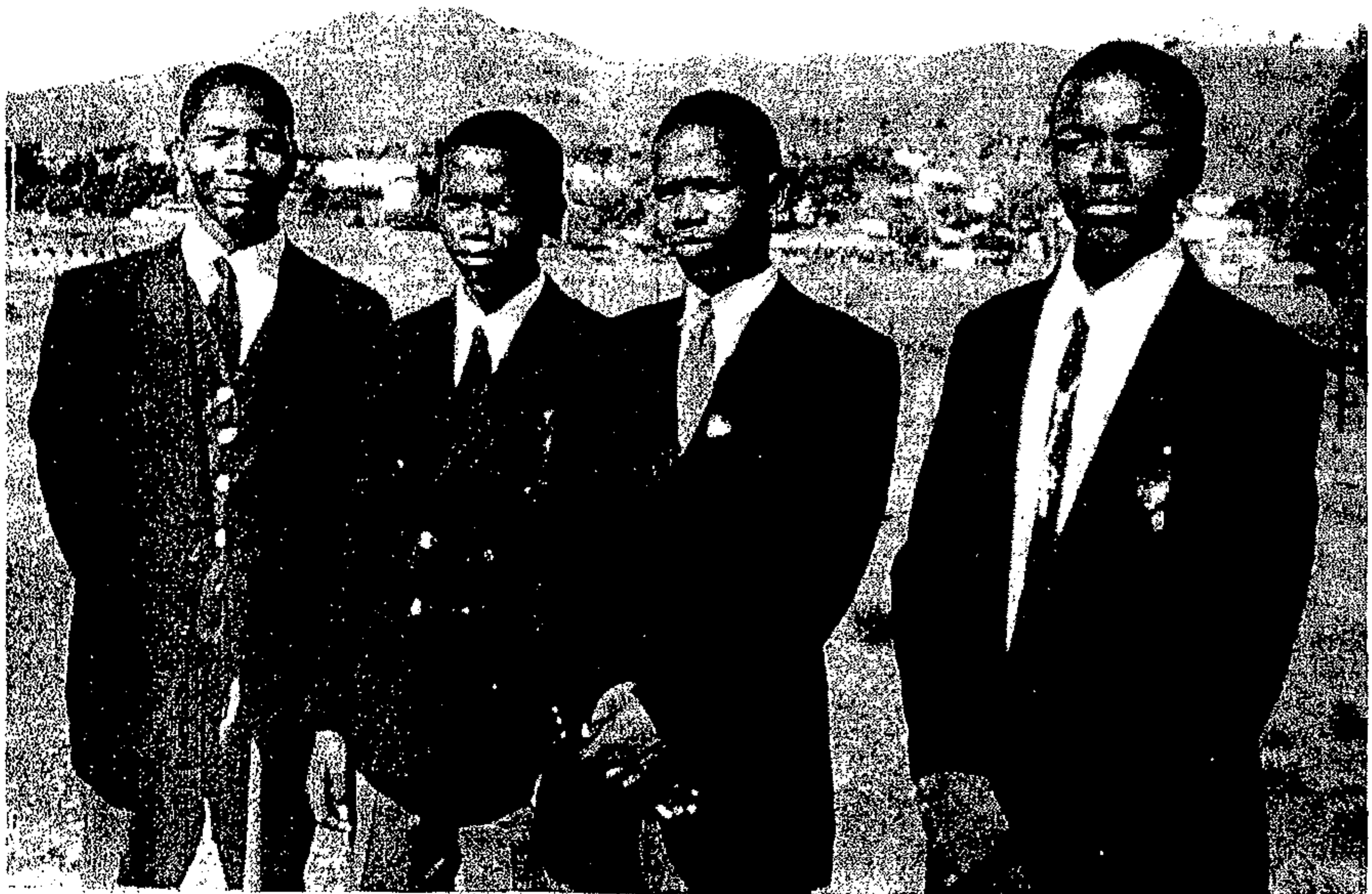


PHOTO 4) The male youth of the Sacred Heart Sodality seen in their uniforms.





PHOTO 5) Men of the Zionist Church in their khaki uniforms which distinguishes them from other churches



PHOTO 6) Zionists performing a baptismal ritual dressed in white robes which gives them a self-definition of new life and purity



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arbuckle, Gerald A. 1985. Dress and worship: Liturgies for the culturally dispossessed. *Worship* 59 (No.5, Sep.): 426-435.

Arthur, L. B. 1999a. Cloth, constraint and creativity: the engendering of material culture among the Holdeman Mennonites. *Conrad Grebel Review*. 17 (No.3): 32-51.

Arthur, L. B. 1999b. Clothing matters: Dress and identity in India. *Journal of Developing Societies* 15 (No.2): 251-253.

Bate, Stuart C. 1999. The church under apartheid, in *The Catholic Church in contemporary Southern Africa*, edited by J. Brain and P. Denis. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster: 151-186.

Bevans, Stephen B. 1992. *Models of contextual theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Bible. 1974. *The Jerusalem Bible*. Edited by J. Alexander. London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Bosch, D. J. 1991. *Transforming mission: paradigm shifts in theology of mission*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Boff, C. 1987. *Theology and praxis: epistemological foundations*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Boynton, A. L. 1999. Cloth, constraint and creativity: The engendering of material culture among the Holdeman Mennonites. *The Conrad Grebel Review*. 17 (No.3): 32-51.

Brain, Joy and Denis, Philippe. 1999. *The Catholic Church in contemporary southern Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster.

Broster, Joan and Bourn, Herbert C. 1981. *Amagqirha: religion, magic and medicine in the Transkei*. Cape Town: Via Afrika.

Brown, Karen H. 1995. *The function of dress and ritual in the Nazareth Baptist Church of Isaiah Shembe (South Africa)*. Bloomington, Indiana University (D Phil thesis).

Buhlmann, W. 1977. *Forward church: an analysis of the present and future of the church*. Slough : St. Paul.

Cazziol, R. J. 1988. The red-dressed Zionists, symbols of power in a Swazi independent church. *Journal for the study of religion*, 1(1): 79-80.

Ciferni, Andrew D. 1991. Overview of environment and art in Catholic worship, in *The Liturgy Documents* edited by E. Hoffman, Chicago: LTP: 313-339.

Cochrane, J. R., De Gruchy, J. W. & Peterson, R. 1990. *In word and deed*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster.

Daneel, I. 1987. *Quest for Belonging*. Gweru: Mambo Press.

De Gruchy, J. W. 1990. Towards a constructive South Africa theology: a revisionist confessing perspective, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 61-74.

De Vos, A.S. 1998. Professional research from a qualitative approach, in *Research at grassroots: A primer for the caring professions*, edited by A.S. de Vos. Pretoria: Van Schaik : 242-314.

Dudzinski, Joseph. 1992. Vestments: for all? some? none? *Modern Liturgy* 19 (No.1): 14-15.

Du Plessis, J. G. 1990. For reasons of heart: A critical appraisal of David Bosch's use of Scripture in the foundation of Christian mission, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 75-85.

Edwards, Gene. 1989. A plea for church life: Getting to the bottom of church problems. *Searching Together* 18 (No.1/2): 9-32.

Epp, Marlene. 1990. Carrying the banner of nonconformity: Ontario Mennonite women and the dress question. *The Conrad Grebel Review* 8:237-257.

Flannery, Austin. OP (ed.). 1981. *Vatican Council II – The conciliar and post conciliar documents*. Leominster, Herefords, England: Fowler Wright Book Ltd.

Froise, Marjorie (ed). 1996. *South African Christian handbook 1996/7*. Welkom: Christian Info.

Gaines, A. D. 1985. Faith, fashion and family: Religion, aesthetics, identity and social organisation in Strasbourg.. *Anthropological quarterly* 58 (No.2): 47-62.

Gill, David W. J. 1990. The importance of Roman portraiture for head-coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. *Tyndale bulletin* 41 (No.2): 244-260.

Haddad, B. 2001. Theologising development: A gendered analysis of poverty, survival and faith. *Journal of theology for southern Africa* (No.110): 5-11.

Hendrikson, Hildi (ed). 1996. *Clothing and difference*. London: Duke

Holness, Lyn H.1996. Women's piety and empowerment. *Journal of theology for southern Africa* (98 July: 21-30).



Holland, J. & Henriot, P. 1983. *Social analysis: linking faith and justice*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

IMBISA Study Document: 1996. *Inculturation: the faith that takes root in African cultures*. Gweru: Mambo Press .

Jenkinson, W & O'Sullivan, H. (eds).1991. *Trends in mission towards the 3rd millennium*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Kaiser, S. B. 1990. *The social psychology of clothing, symbolic appearances in context*. New York: Macmillan.

Karecki, M. 1999. *Patterns of Mission Praxis*. Department of missiology. Pretoria: University of South Africa. (CMM 112-Q)

Keteyi, Xolile S.J. & Maluleke, Tinyiko. 1998. *Inculturation: as a strategy for liberation*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster.

Kiernan, J. P. 1979. The weapons of Zion. *Journal of religion in Africa* 10 (No.1): 13-24.

Kretschmar, L & Van Schalkwyk, A. 2000. *Women, society and church*. Pretoria: University of South Africa. (Tutorial Letter: TIC 301-B/501/2001).

Kritzinger, J. J. 1990. Mission and evangelism: A critical appraisal of David Bosch's views, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 140-155.

Kritzinger, J. N. J. 2000. *Missiology: To all students enrolled for the structured MTh programme*. Pretoria: University of South Africa. (MTHMS 1-5/101 Tutorial Letter).

Kritzinger, J. N. J. 1990. Liberating mission in South Africa, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 34-50.

Kritzinger, J. N. J. and Saayman, W. A. (eds.) 1990. *Mission in creative tension : A dialogue with David Bosch*. Pretoria: Gutenberg.

Krueger, . 1998. Professional research from a qualitative approach, in *Research at grassroots: a primer for the caring professions* , edited by A.S. de Vos. Pretoria: Van Schaik : 242-319.

Langa, C. 1999. The Prayer of the people, in. *The Catholic Church in contemporary Southern Africa*, edited by J. Brain & P. Denis. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster: 294-313.

Larson-Miller, L. 1992. Body, clothing and ritual activity. *Modern Liturgy*. 19(1):6-7.

Livingston, K. 1990. David Bosch: an interpretation of some main themes in his missiological thought, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 3-19.

Luzbetak, L.J. 1988. *The Church and cultures: new perspectives in missiological anthropology*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.

Macquarrie, J. 1977. *Principles of Christian theology*. London: SCM Press.

Mason, Jennifer. 1996. *Qualitative Researching*. London: Sage Publications.

Matthews, V.H. 1995. The anthropology of clothing in the Joseph narrative. *Journal for the study of the Old Testament* (No.65): 25-36.

Mbiti, S.J.1971. *The crisis of mission in Africa*. Mukono: Uganda Church Press.

- Melia, Julie. 1995. An honest human body: sexuality and the continuum of resistance. *Women's Studies International Forum* 18 (No.5/6): 547-557.
- Mia, B. S. 1963. The black woman and God. *Hibbert Journal* (No.61): 166-169.
- Milgrom, J. 1983. Of hems and tassels. *Biblical Archaeology Review* 9 (No.3): 61-65.
- Miller, Charles E., CM. 1992. Albs and the assembly. *Modern Liturgy*.19 (No.1):16-17.
- Miller, Terry E. 1989. Familiar hymns in an unfamiliar context. *The Hymn* 40 (No.1): 15-19.
- Mitchell, Ella P. 1990. The middle-class captivity of African American Churches. *The Other Side*.26 (No.4): 44-47.
- Mofokeng, T. A. 1990. Mission theology from an African perspective, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 168-180.
- Mogabgab, J.S.(ed). 1996. Clothed with Christ. *Weavings*. 11(1):2-42.
- Mugambi, J. N. K. & Magesa, Laurenti (eds). 1989. *Jesus in African Christianity. Experimentation and diversity in African Christology*. Nairobi: English Press.
- Nathans, J. 1986. *Uniforms and non-uniforms: communication through clothing: contributions in sociology*. London: Westpart.
- Nevadomsky, J. and Ekhaguosa, A. 1995. The clothing of political identity: costume and scarification in the Benin kingdom. *African Art* 28 (Winter): 62-73.



Newbiggin, Lesslie. 1989. *The Gospel in a pluralistic society*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

Ngada, N.H. 1991. Singing the songs of Zion. *Challenge* (August): 18.

Nicol, W. 1990 The cross and the hammer: Comparing Bosch and Nolan on the role of the church in social change, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 86-98.

Nolan, A. 1988. *God in South Africa: the challenge of the Gospel*. Gweru: Mambo Press.

Nürnberg, Klaus. 1990. Salvation or liberation?. The soteriological roots of a missionary theology, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 205-219.

O'Connell, J.B. 1964. *Active sharing in public worship: a commentary on the chief purpose of the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. London: Burns & Oats.

O'Reilly, G. OFM (ed.). 1983. *Towards Christian unity*. Pretoria: Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (S.A.C.B.C. Pastoral Action Series ; No.30).

Oduyoye, Mercy Amba. 1995. *Daughters of Anowa. African women and patriarchy*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Osthathios, Geevearghese M. 1980. *Theology of a classless society*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Ostler, Blake. 1982. Clothed upon: A Unique aspect of Christian antiquity. *Brigham Young University Studies* 22 (No.1): 31-45.

Pauw, B.A. 1975. *Christianity and Xhosa tradition*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Piepkorn, Arthur Carl. 1959. What about vestments for pastors? *Concordia Theological Monthly* 30: 582-594.

Piepkorn, Arthur Carl. 1966. Lutheran and Protestant vestment practices in the United States and Canada: A Survey. *Concordia Theological Monthly* 37 (No.10): 645-655.

Poll, S. 1962. The Hasidic Community of Williamsburg, in Roach, M. E. and Eicher, J. B. 1979. *The Language of Personal Adornment*, in *Fabrics of Culture*, The Hague:Mouton. (7-12).

Pretorius, H.L. [et al.]. 1996. *Reflecting on mission in the African context*. Bloemfontein: Pro Christo.

Ramshaw, G. 1996. Richly clad, in *Clothed with Christ*. Edited by Mogabgab, J. S. *Weavings* 11 (1): 28-32.

Roach, M. E. and Eicher, J. B. 1979. The Language of personal adornment, in *Fabrics of culture*, The Hague: Mouton :7-12.

Robinson, P. J. 1990. Mission as ethos/ Ethos as mission, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 156-167.

Rodriguez, Arlinda M. 1991. Living with the poor in Brazil. In Jenkinson, W & O'Sullivan, H. (eds). *Trends in mission towards the 3rd millennium*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Ross, Olivier. 1996."Journey to the New land, in Holness, L.H. Women's piety and empowerment. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*. (98), July: 21-30.

Rupel, Esther F. 1986. The Dress of the Brethren (and Church of the Brethren). *Brethren Life and Thought* 31 (Summer): 135-150.

Rushby, W. F. 1986. A comparative study of plain garb in the Religious Society of Friends and the Mennonite Church. *Brethren Life and Thought* 31 (No. 3): 180-188.

Russell, Lettie. 1993. *Church in the round: Feminist interpretations of the church*. Westminster : John Knox Press.

Saayman, W. A. 1991. *Christian mission in South Africa*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Saayman, W. A. 1990. Bridging the gulf: David Bosch and the ecumenical/evangelical polarisation in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 99-108.

Scherer, James A. & Bevans, Stephen B. (eds). 1994. *New directions in mission and evangelization, 2. theological foundations*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Schmaus, Michael. 1975. *Dogma 5, The church as sacrament*: London: Sheed & Ward.

Schmidt, L. E. 1989. "A Church-going people are a dress-loving people": Clothes, Communication, and Religious Culture in Early America. *Church History* (No.58): 36-51.

Shorter, Aylward. 1973. *African culture and the Christian Church: An introduction to social and pastoral anthropology*. London: Geoffrey Chapman.

Shorter, Aylward. 1998. *African culture: An overview of social cultural anthropology*. Limuri: Kolbe Press.

Snyder, A. S. (ed). 1990. Woman in the church. *Conrad Grebel Review* (No.8): 235-323.



Sundermeier, Theo. 1990. Missiology yesterday and tomorrow, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 259-269.

Ter Haar, G. 1990. Power and Powerlessness in Medical Mission, in *Mission in creative tension : a dialogue with David Bosch*, edited by J. N. J. Kritzinger and W. A. Saayman. Pretoria: Gutenberg: 51-60.

Venter, Dawid. 1998. Understanding urban congregations: Workbook three: Advanced certificate in urban ministry. (Unpublished work).

Vevadomsky, J. & Ekhaguosa, A. 1995. The clothing of political identity. *African Art*. 28 (winter): 62-73.

Wentz, R. 1994. Clothed in the beauty of possibility. *Parabola* 19 (Fall): 80-81.

West, Martin and Morris, Jean. 1976. *Abantu: an introduction to the black people of South Africa*. Cape Town: Struik.

Wright, Wendy, M. 1996. Making things new: Thoughts on being stripped, naked, and clothed, *Weavings* 11 (No.1): 7-13.

Zwane, M. 1983. *A man for all people: The message of Bishop Mandlenkosi Zwane*. London: The Catholic Institute for International Relations.