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From Clericalism and Passivity to Conscious Stewardship: Towards Responsible Discipleship of the Laity of the Catholic Church of Southern Africa

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DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to the entire People of God, stewards of God's many and varied gifts, in Botswana, Eswatini and South Africa

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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

I, Vincent Brennan, declare that

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ABSTRACT

Jesus instructed His followers to love one another as He loved them. He said they should not lord it over each other like the pagans do (cf. Matt.20:25) but to serve each other as He served.

The church of the Acts of the Apostles is egalitarian. It is a community of disciples (cf. Acts 2:42-47). It is the Body of Christ (cf. 1 Cor:12). The different functions of different members are not intended to divide but to build unity.

By the end of the 1st century, this one Body of Christ had become divided into a privileged, clerical elite and an inferior laity.

In 1156, Gratian's decree said that there are two types of Christians, and in 1906 Pope Pius X said that all Christians are not equal.

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) spoke of the Church in terms of the Old Testament image of People of God and the Pauline image of the Body of Christ. It says that the Church as Communion had its origin in the Holy Trinity, the ultimate communion of love. The Church is an icon of the Trinity. In that Church, all are equal, all are called to be holy, all share in the one priesthood of Christ, all are responsible for the Church's mission.

The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) embarked on a variety of pastoral programmes to ensure that the Vatican II model of Church would become embedded in the life of the local Church in its thinking and practice. A study of the archives indicated that these met with limited success.

This thesis proposes Stewardship as a way to live the Vatican II Community model of Church. God Himself is the Steward of all creation. Man and woman were told to care for this creation in His name (cf. Gen.2:15). As Son of God Jesus is the Sacrament of God's presence. He gives the Stewardship of God a human face. The Church is the Sacrament of Christ, making Christ present for all time. The Church does not have an option to choose or reject Stewardship. It flows from its nature.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1. Documents of Vatican II

AA	Apostolicam Actuositatem (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity)
AGD	Ad Gentes Divinitus (Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity)
CD	Christus Dominus (Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church)
DH	Dignitatis Humanae (Declaration on Religious Liberty)
DV	Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation)
GE	Gravissimum Educationis (Decree on Christian Education)
GS	Gaudium et Spes (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)
IM	Inter Mirifica (Decree on the Means of Social Communication)
LG	Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)
NA	Nostra Aetate (Declaration on the Church's Relations with non-Christian Religions)
OE	Orientalium Ecclesiarum (Decree on Catholic Oriental Churches)
OT	Optatam Totius (Decree on the Training of Priests)
PC	Perfectae Caritatis (Decree on the Up-to-date Renewal of Religious Life)
PO	Presbyterorum Ordinis (Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests)
SC	Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy)
UR	Unitatis Redintegratio (Decree on Ecumenism)

2. Other Church Documents

AAS	<i>Acta Apostolica Sedis</i> (Acts of the Apostolic See)
CCL	The Code of Canon Law

CL	Christifideles Laici (Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful)
EA	Ecclesia in Africa (On the Church in Africa)
EG	Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel)
EN	Evangelii Nuntiandi (Evangelisation in the Modern World)
FC	Familiaris Consortio (The Christian Family in the Modern World)
LF	Lumen Fidei (The Light of Faith))
LS	Laudato Si' (On the Care of Our Common Home) MC Mystici Corporis Christi (The Mystical Body of Christ)
MD	Mediator Dei (The Sacred Liturgy)
MV	Misericordiae Vultus (Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy)
NMI	Novo Millennio Inuente (On the Close of the Jubilee Year 2000)
PDV	Pastores Dabo Vobis (The Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day)
RN	Rerum Novarum (The Rights and Duties of Capital and Labour)
SD	Sacrae Disciplinae (Constitution for the Promulgation of the New Code of Canon Law)
VN	Vehementor Nos

3. Other Abbreviations

Can	Canon
CBCEW	Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales
ETSA	Evangelisation Today in Southern Africa
ICSC	International Catholic Stewardship Council
IMBISA	Inter-regional Meeting of the Bishops of Southern Africa
ITC	International Theological Commission

NCDSP	National Council for Diocesan Support Programmes
NCSC	National Catholic Stewardship Council sa <i>sine annum</i> (date unknown)
SACBC	Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference
SACC	South African Council of Corches
SACOP	Southern African Council of Priests
USCCB	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
YCS	Young Christian Students
YCW	Young Christian Workers

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

1.1 Introduction

The Second Vatican Council was held at St Peter's in Rome from 1962 to 1965.¹ Unlike previous councils, Vatican II did not use the language of censure and condemnation. It did not condemn clericalism or lay passivity except by implication. It spoke in positive terms of the Church as the People of God, a sign and instrument of union with God and communion between people (The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* (LG 1), of the priesthood of all the baptised (LG 10), of equality of all its members (LG 32), of the universal call to holiness (LG 39), and of the right and duty of all the baptised to promote the mission of the Church (LG 31).

It is the contention of this research project that if the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II is received and lived, then both clericalism and lay passivity cannot survive. The fact that they persist means that Vatican II's vision of Church has not been translated into pastoral practice.

Clericalism is based on the assumption that all are not equal but that members are divided into an active ordained elite and a passive, "disengaged" laity (Shaw 2014:20). The clericalist mindset believes that is how it is and that is how it is intended to be (see Shaw 1993:13). It says in effect that there is only one priesthood, that of the ordained; that all are not equal; that all are not called to the same holiness; that the laity do not have direct responsibility, based on baptism, for the Church's mission to evangelise the world.

Communion ecclesiology is basic to Vatican II's vision of the Church as the People of God. The same communion ecclesiology provides the theological foundation for Stewardship. Consequently, this thesis proposes Stewardship as

¹ The Second Vatican Council, from now on referred to as Vatican II, was the 21st Ecumenical Council recognised by the Catholic Church.

an authentic way of translating the ecclesiology of the Vatican II into pastoral practice and a way of combating the two-fold evil of clericalism and lay passivity and their manifestation in the Church of Southern Africa, namely paternalism on the part of the clergy and dependency on the side of the laity.

This chapter now gives an outline of the research: my personal involvement; the research problem; Vatican II and its reception in Southern Africa; the research's theological framework and perspective and Stewardship as a way of living communion ecclesiology.

1.2 Personal Involvement in Church Leadership as Motivation for the Study

I have been directly involved in a leadership role in the Church in Southern Africa for many years: six as Chairman of the Southern African Council of Priests (SACOP) (1993 to 1998 inclusive); six as Associate Secretary General of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC)² (2000 to 2005 inclusive); six years as SACBC Secretary General (2006 to 2011 inclusive); six years as a member of the National Executive of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) (2006 to 2011 inclusive). Currently I am coordinator of Ongoing Formation of the Priests in the SACBC territory. Consequently, I have extensive knowledge of the Church in Southern Africa, of the strengths and weaknesses of the SACBC and of the extent to which the laity are involved in the mission of the Church.

During my time as Secretary General, I was directly involved in the reorganisation and cataloguing of the Archives at Khanya House.³ Through this I became interested in the history of the Catholic Church in South Africa and in the various pastoral initiatives of the SACBC to promote the community model

² A Bishops' Conference is an association of Bishops of a country or a number of neighbouring countries. The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, from now on called the SACBC, includes the 26 Dioceses of South Africa, 2 of Botswana and 1 of eSwatini. When this research speaks of the SACBC it is speaking of all 29 jurisdictions. When it speaks of "Southern Africa", it stands for the three countries, Botswana, South Africa and eSwatini. When it says South Africa, it is speaking specifically of the Republic of South Africa.

³ Khanya House is the Headquarters of the Secretariat of the SACBC and is located in Pretoria.

of Church that emerged from Vatican II. Most of those initiatives involved pastoral consultations with the laity and most failed to achieve their objective of translating the People of God ecclesiology into the pastoral practice of the parishes. I compiled a report of my findings for the Bishops' Conference in January 2009, and in 2010 I went on its behalf to a meeting in San Diego, California, of the International Catholic Stewardship Council. The hope of the SACBC was that Stewardship would provide a way for translating the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II into what Pope John Paul II termed "authentic pastoral practice" (CL 2). The instinct of the bishops was correct: this research says that Stewardship offers all the baptised a way out of clericalism and lay passivity into active and responsible discipleship, a way of living the People of God model of Church that emerged from Vatican II.

During my time working with the SACBC, I have seen many of its leaders retire. Several of them had made significant contributions to the Church in Southern Africa and had gained invaluable experience. As soon as they retired, however, their influence faded very quickly and the value of their experience and wisdom was lost to the Conference. I too have learned much during my many years at the SACBC administrative headquarters. I feel compelled to pass on what I have learned. When I began this study, I found there was a lot of material on the spirituality of Stewardship but I located very little on the ecclesiology that provides a theoretical foundation. I believe this study will make a contribution to filling this *lacuna*.

1.3 The Research Problem

1.3.1 The Problem in Summary

The problem is the persistence of clericalism and lay passivity in a Church that describes itself as the People of God in which all are equal, all share in the Priesthood of Christ and all are responsible for its mission.

The nature of this problem is described under the following headings:

- Clericalism and passivity.
- The history of clericalism in the universal Church.
- Clericalism and lay passivity in Southern Africa.
- Vatican II ecclesiology.
- Reception of Vatican II in Southern Africa.

1.3.2 The Link Between Clericalism and the Passivity of the Laity

This thesis proposes that there is a causal connection between clericalism and the passivity of the laity. It does not claim that clericalism is the cause of all the ills of the Church. For example, it cannot be the cause, or the only cause, of the recent rapid decline in Church attendance or of the attitude that the Church is simply irrelevant. That calls for a different research. Nevertheless, the link between clericalism and a passive laity does exist, as can be seen in the historical sections of this thesis (cf. Chapter 3). Shaw, himself a lay member of the Church, asserts that the assumption of clericalism as a mindset is that clerics are intended to be an active elite and the laity to be passive subjects (cf. 1993:13). Speaking as one of the laity, he said, “We have clericalised ourselves” and goes on to say “a pastor lords it over his people, consulting no one and habitually making unilateral decisions. His people are a passive dispirited lot, quick to complain and slow to cooperate” (2008:1). Speaking of the clericalisation of the Church, Shaw describes it as a process the effect of which is to isolate clerics from the laity and assign them a superior position in the Church while “encouraging the laity to be passive and more or less disengaged” (2014:20).

Prior, a South African theologian, makes a similar connection between passivity and clericalism. Having pointed out that, theoretically, “there is no such thing as a passive laity” (2013:28), he traces the growth of clericalism throughout history until the stage is reached when the laity are seen as mere helpers of the priest who can dispense of their services when he feels they are no longer needed (cf. :29). He speaks of the need for a new theology that will challenge the clericalism that is an obstacle to living as a Christian community (cf. :46). In that Christian community as promoted by Vatican II all members are equal by virtue of their

baptism. This community model of Church “reverses centuries of clerical power on the one hand and the passivity of the laity on the other: (:27). The argument of this thesis is that the community model has not been fully “received”, and so passivity persists.

Slater, also a South African theologian, says that clericalism “drives a rift between the clergy and the laity” and adds that some laity are more effective promoters of clericalism than the clergy themselves (2019:1). The end result, he says, is a passive and dependent laity, something that is totally contrary to the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II (cf. :2).

The authors quoted above speak about a Church that became clericalised and a laity that has become “disengaged” or “passive”. The model of Church that emerged from Vatican II will be discussed later, especially in Chapter 4. It will speak about two models of Church, Hierarchical and Community. The Hierarchical model emphasises the visible aspects of the Church and its three-fold functions of teaching, ruling, and sanctifying. These three functions were traditionally the work of the clergy. The function of the laity was to accept the teaching, obey the rules, be blessed and prayed for. When people spoke about the central act of Christian worship, the Eucharist, they spoke of “attending Mass”, just being present. If this model is not balanced with a community model, then the Church becomes divided into clerical providers and lay receivers.

Vatican II provided this balancing and alternative model which speaks about the Church as a community that has its origins in the Blessed Trinity. In this community of believers, all are one with Christ, Priest, Prophet and Shepherd (cf. LG 9-13). All are of equal importance and dignity as temples of the Holy Spirit (cf. LG 9). All are called to the same holiness (cf. LG 40). All members are responsible for the mission of the Church (cf. LG 9).

It is the argument of this thesis that if the Hierarchical model remains dominant, clericalism will continue to flourish and people will further divide into an active, ruling elite and a passive, sometimes dispirited, laity.

While this thesis proposes that there is a direct link between a hierarchy that is clericalised and a laity that is largely passive, it also admits that there are clear indications that, in spite of the historical sacralisation and clericalisation of the hierarchy, there have been and are many individual Catholics and many Catholic Movements that were and are active in the life and mission of the Church. We have only to think of Catholic Action at the beginning of the 20th century, of the Young Christian Workers and the Young Christian Students, of the Legion of Mary and the many lay sodalities. This thesis proposes Stewardship as the way forward in which all, and not just a dedicated minority, take responsibility for their Church and its mission.

1.3.3 History of Clericalism and Lay Passivity in the Universal Church

Up to the Edict of Milan in 313, Christians were a persecuted minority, excluded from civil society. In those early centuries the supreme witness to Christian faith was martyrdom: martyrs gave their lives as Jesus had given His (McBrien 1994:1022). With the conversion of Constantine and the conferral of special privileges on the clergy, the distinction between cleric and lay became more pronounced and clericalism was born. With the growth of monasticism and the ordination of most monks, the gap between cleric and lay person widened and the perfect witness to faith in Christ was no longer the martyr but the monk and the consecrated virgin. The way of the monk became the ideal way of giving one's life to God (see Doohan 1984:95). By the Middle Ages, there were two types of Christians, the cleric in a position of power and superiority and living a holy life centred on the things of God, and the lay person in an inferior state, contaminated by a sinful world and hoping to be saved at the end.

The division became even more pronounced after the Protestant Reformation. Catholic ecclesiology emphasised what the Protestants rejected, namely the hierarchical nature of the Church, and neglected its community nature and the priesthood conferred in baptism. Catholic ecclesiology became reduced to what Congar calls "hierarchology" (1957:39).

Change came in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. Pope Leo XIII took the side of the working classes against the industrial barons. In 1891 he published an encyclical called *Rerum Novarum* (RN).⁴ He spoke of the relative rights of all people but especially those of the working class (see Holland 2003:179). John Henry Newman spoke of the need for an educated and vocal laity. In July 1859 he wrote an article in *The Rambler* publication on consulting the laity on doctrinal matters. His argument was based on the “*consensus fidelium*” and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the entire Church, lay and clerical (see Hanna 2006:130; LG 35). There was widespread criticism from both Rome and his native England, and he resigned as editor of *The Rambler*. Yves Congar wrote *Lay People in the Church* (Congar 1957). He spoke about how the laity had come to be excluded from “sacred things” and confined to temporal affairs (:9-10). John O’Malley says that in the years leading up to Vatican II, “new mindsets had taken hold of Catholicism” (2008:27). Kenan Osborne lists the factors and the movements that had led to this new way of thinking about the Church and its mission:

1. The Biblical Renewal
2. The Liturgical and patristic renewal
3. The openness to the modern world
4. The encounter with ecumenism and existentialism”. (1993:521)

1.3.4 Clericalism and Lay Passivity in Southern Africa

The missionaries brought from Europe the Church they knew there together with its history and its divisions, its clericalism and its lay passivity. For many years the small Catholic community was isolated and impoverished. All its clergy and religious came from Europe and America and they provided the finances that were needed for survival and development. While there was no alternative at the time, it gave rise to paternalism and dependency and entrenched clericalism and passivity in the local Church.

⁴ An encyclical is a formal letter written by the Pope to the whole Church and occasionally to the whole world. Each deals with a specific doctrinal, moral or social issue. Some are concerned with problems of society and RN is the first of the social encyclicals. It dealt with the social issues of the time, particularly the rights of workers.

1.3.5 Vatican II Ecclesiology

Before it spoke about either clergy or laity, Vatican II spoke of the entire Church in terms of sacrament, the sign and instrument of “communion with God and of unity among all people” (LG 1). The emphasis was on unity and equality. Chapter 2 of *Lumen Gentium* describes the Church as “The People of God”. Each member of the People of God shares in the common priesthood of all the faithful. This baptismal priesthood and the ministerial priesthood both share in the one priesthood of Christ (see LG 10). All share a common dignity and all are equal. All are one in Christ (see LG 32; Gal.3:28). All are equal members of the one people of God. The “very diversity of graces” bear witness to the unity of the Body of Christ (LG 32). The Vatican II document on the laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (AA), says that the right and the duty of the laity to be apostles does not come from a mandate of the hierarchy but from the Lord Himself (AA 3). The laity do not have to be told to be apostles or wait to be asked. Their right and duty flow from discipleship and baptism.

It is argued in Chapter 4 of this research that this Vatican II communion ecclesiology should have marked the end of both clericalism and lay passivity. For this to happen it had to be received, theologically and pastorally. The research argues that this has not happened (Chapter 5).

1.3.6 Reception of Vatican II in the SACBC

This research will demonstrate that the SACBC made several attempts to introduce a Vatican II community model of Church but with limited success. In 1987, twenty-two years after the close of Council, the “Theme Paper for the Pastoral Plan of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa” spoke of laity as “a mass of individual consumers” (SACBC 1987:15). They are a “mass” of individuals, the opposite of community. They are “consumers”, passively receiving what is given by a clerical leadership. A report on an SACBC Pastoral Consultation that covered all dioceses spoke of the laity as “a sleeping giant” that plays a largely passive role in the life of the Church (see McAleer 2019:32- 36). This provided the motivation for this research. I wanted to find out why, fifty-five years after

Vatican II, and in spite of the repeated pastoral initiatives of the SACBC, the laity of Southern Africa are still “a sleeping giant” and still playing a largely passive role.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 Key Research Question

The key research question is: How can the Catholic Laity of Southern Africa be enabled to change from being passive recipients of the ministry of the clergy to being active missionary disciples, thus translating the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II into authentic pastoral practice?

1.4.2 Research Sub-Questions

The following are sub-questions to the above:

- 1) What are the historical roots of clericalism and lay passivity?
- 2) What does Vatican II reveal about the nature of the Church and the dignity and role of the laity?
- 3) Has the Vatican II model of Church been received theologically and in pastoral practice by the Church of Southern Africa?
- 4) What are the biblical and theological foundations of Stewardship?
- 5) How can Stewardship be an effective way of translating the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II into authentic pastoral practice in the SACBC Church?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

1.5.1 Overall Objective

This study seeks to explore how the Catholic Laity of Southern Africa can be enabled to change from being passive recipients of the ministry of the clergy to

being active missionary disciples, thus translating the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II into authentic pastoral practice.

1.5.2 Research sub-objectives

1. To demonstrate that clericalism and lay passivity are embedded in the history of the Catholic Church.
2. To show that the Vatican II community model of Church is incompatible with both clericalism and lay passivity.
3. To assess the extent to which the Vatican II ecclesiology has been received in Southern Africa.
4. To determine the nature of Stewardship and show how it can be an effective way of turning Vatican II ecclesiology into a way of life.
5. To propose ways of introducing and maintaining Stewardship in the Southern African context.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

1.6.1 Introduction

The theoretical framework is centred on three theological words: *Oikonomia*, *Imago Dei* and *Koinonia*. These words provide the key to an interpretation of the facts revealed in the literature research. The dominant key is *Koinonia*; the other two supplement it and draw out its meaning as shown below.

1.6.2 Koinonia

The English words “communion” and “community” are derived from *koinonia* but there is a danger that the deeper meaning is lost in translation. Avery Dulles says that a communion is more than a community and “cannot be understood in merely sociological or psychological terms” (2000:94). As a spiritual and theological concept, *Koinonia* has its origin in the Trinity, itself a community of persons. Speaking of God as a community, Brian Gaybba says that, “In the Trinity, the one and undivided Godhead is shared in such a way that it exists

only in a network of relationships” (1991:21). This dynamic of intertwined relationships, traditionally called *circumincessio*, is the source of God’s infinite happiness.

As with the Trinity, the idea of the Church as communion cannot be understood in a merely sociological or psychological way. It is a network of interpersonal relationships with God and with each other, made possible through the Holy Spirit who lives in each one and in the entire community. This is the source of the dignity of each disciple, of the basic equality of all believers and of the call to each to be holy as God is holy. Dulles points out that the basic relationship is vertical, with God. The horizontal, inter-personal relationship flows from this (see Dulles 2000: 96).

Vatican II speaks of the Church as “Mystery”. As such, it is a sign and instrument of the saving work of the Father who has called it into communion through Christ; of the Son who has joined it to Himself as His mystical Body; and of the Holy Spirit who dwells in the hearts of each one and binds all in communion and service (see LG 2-4).

The concept of *Koinonia* is fundamental to the ecclesiology of Vatican II. It speaks of the Church as the People of God, as a communion. All members are equal, and all are responsible for the Church’s mission. *Koinonia* is also basic to an understanding of Stewardship. The study will present Stewardship as a way of living the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II.

1.6.3 *Imago Dei*

In the words of Gerald Manley Hopkins’ poem, God’s Grandeur, “The world is charged with the glory of God” (God’s Grandeur line 1). The Psalmist expresses the same truth: “The heavens are filled with the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims his handiwork” (Ps.19:1).

All creation reveals something of this grandeur and glory of the God who made it and who cares for that creation like a good steward. The birds of the air and the

lilies of the field are objects of that care (see Matt.6:25-33). Human beings in particular are the objects of God's love and care: each is intimately known (see Ps.139) and each is held in the palm of the Divine hand (see Is.49:16).

Genesis points to the origin of human dignity and grandeur: man and woman are made in "God's image" (Gen.1:26). The International Theological Commission (ITC 2004)⁵ emphasises that it is the complete human being that is the image of God. This includes their intellectual, physical, emotional, social and historical dimensions (see ITC 2004:1). Being made in the image of God, they are made for relationships (see Gen.1:27) and the human community reflects the community that is God. Again, being in the image of God, they become God's co-workers in the stewardship of all created things. As the International Theological Commission points out, those created as the *Imago Dei* are "called to enjoy communion and to exercise stewardship" (ITC 2004: 26).

Because humankind is made in God's image and because God is a community, human beings are made for communion with God, with one another and with all creation (see LS 66). Stewardship is a conscious acceptance of the obligations that flow from this three-fold communion. God the Creator takes care of all creation. Because we are made in God's image, we share in that duty of care, a duty of Stewardship.

1.6.4 *Oikonomia*

The "imminent" Trinity, God's inner nature, is revealed in creation, and especially in human beings who bear God's image. It is further revealed in the "economic" Trinity, in the *oikonomia* of salvation. This *oikonomia* speaks of God's saving power at work in the People of God in the Old Testament. The word "of" is important: they are God's people, belonging to and revealing God.

⁵ The International Theological Commission (ITC) is a group of theologians from different disciplines and from different parts of the world who dialogue on current theological and sometimes controversial issues. They try to reach a common understanding and advise the Pope and the Vatican Departments, especially the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The revelation reaches its climax in Christ, the perfect *Imago Dei*, the ultimate sign and instrument of God's saving presence in the world. The Church, one with Christ, continues the saving work of Christ in space and time. It is the icon of the Trinity. It is the New People of God – and again the word “of” is important, the People of the Father, the People of the Son, the People of the Holy Spirit (see LG 2-4). Each member is a recipient of God's saving grace and a bearer of that grace to others. All are co-workers with Christ the Redeemer (see 1 Peter 4:10). All are stewards of God's saving grace at work in and through the Church (see 1 Cor.3).

1.6.5 In Summary

God is a community of interpersonal relationships. The whole world reflects God and is the object of God's caring Stewardship. Human beings reflect God in a special way. As images of God, they are called to communion and Stewardship.

The Church is the People of God. Each baptised person is the Image of Christ, Himself the perfect image of God. By baptism, each becomes a member of the Body of Christ. All form the one Body of Christ and each has an indispensable role to play (see 1 Cor.12:27). Each and all are called to community and Stewardship of and within that community. This image of the Church as the icon of the Trinity and as the People of God, does not allow for clerical elitism or lay dependency or passivity.

1.7 Research Methodology

1.7.1 Literary Research

The methodology is a combination of literary and qualitative research. The literary analysis will examine the inter-linked problem of clericalism and lay passivity from three perspectives, namely historical, theological and practical. The qualitative element will be through an examination of SACBC documentation in the Archives at Khanya House.

The literary research method is particularly suited to this research. The thesis examines the passivity of the laity in history, searching for the facts and interpreting them in the light of the problem of persisting clericalism and lay passivity.

It also examines the ecclesiology of Vatican II and subsequent official documents and, in the light of these, examines the role of the laity in a community model of Church.

The qualitative element of the research involves an examination of the initiatives undertaken by the SACBC to introduce a Vatican II model of Church in Southern Africa. The source for this section is the Archives of the SACBC. The research will determine the facts as revealed in the archives and evaluate the effectiveness of the different initiatives.

The practical element of the research involves an investigation of the nature of Stewardship, what are its scriptural and theological foundations, and how it can be an effective way of receiving Vatican II ecclesiology, a way out of both lay passivity and clericalism.

The research is conducted from the viewpoint of the SACBC, not the individual diocese. The latter would be a valuable but different study. I acknowledge a weakness of this study: what happens at SACBC level is not always reflected in the pastoral life of a diocese or vice-versa. But the approach of this study remains valid. The SACBC takes a global view of the Church in Southern Africa. It sets general policy, produces a pastoral plan, sets priorities, and discusses the role of the Church in the light of prevailing religious, social and political circumstances. Its policies and decisions inform what happens at diocesan and parish level. If the Conference is not functioning efficiently, if decisions are not implemented, if there is a disconnect between what happens at Conference level and what happens in the local Church, then the SACBC itself becomes ineffective. These are issues that need to be examined and that provide validity for this research.

The following, 1.7.2 to 1.7.4, is the step-by-step process of gathering the data of the study.

1.7.2 Historical Perspective (See Sub-Question 1)

Vatican II says the Church is pilgrim, on its way to complete fulfilment in the fulness of time (see LG 8; DV 8). Dulles describes Christians as “living stones of a temple still under construction” (1987:113). But even as a pilgrim Church is not “of the world” (Jn.17:16), it is nevertheless part of that world, sharing its “joy and hope, grief and anguish” (GS 1). Thomas O’Meara says history is “the blood of the Church” (1999:82). The pilgrim Church becomes incarnate in each period of history and in each culture, influencing and being influenced by the historical and geographical circumstances in which it is present. O’Meara reminds us that later times are not better or worse than former ones (see 1999:82). Each age has to discern what the Spirit is saying to the Church and read the signs of its own time. This research makes its own the words of Yves Congar: “There is no question of disparaging the generations that have gone before us, but at any given time, there are special circumstances and needs, and these are better understood if attention is paid to those of other times” (1960:35).

The historical section of this research will involve an examination of the emergence of clericalism and consequent lay passivity as early as 100AD and how it became entrenched in Church culture as a hierarchical model of Church dominated all others. It reached its climax when the saintly Pope Pius X, who died in 1906, could say, “The Church is essentially an unequal society. The one duty of the multitude is to allow itself to be led” (VN 8).

The research will also examine why clericalism and lay passivity are evident as paternalism and dependency in the Church of Southern Africa.

1.7.3 Theological Perspective (See Sub-Question 2)

This component will trace the emergence of a new model of Church in the years preceding Vatican II and most especially during the Council itself. *Lumen Gentium* speaks first of the Church as Mystery, the effective sign of union with God and communion among people (Chapter 1). Chapter 2 describes the Church as the People of God in which there are no distinctions. Only then does it speak of the hierarchy (Chapter 3) and of the laity (Chapter 4). The implication of the sequence is of the utmost importance: the role of the laity and of the clergy must be understood in the context of the entire People of God.

Key texts in this section are the 16 documents of Vatican II, especially the Pastoral Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* (LG); the Constitution of the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*(GS); and the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (AA). A major post-Vatican II document is Pope John Paul II's *Christifideles Laici* (CL) which speaks of the dignity and role of the laity in a Vatican II model of Church.

Among the many commentaries on Vatican II that will be used are two volumes by John O'Malley: *Did Anything Happen at Vatican II?* (2007) and *What Happened at Vatican II?* (2008). Another key text is Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church, Expanded Edition* (1987).

1.7.4 The Qualitative Component (See Sub-Question 3)

Vatican II is the most recent and authoritative self-awareness of the Church of what it is and what is its mission. It is essentially the People of God, a Community of Disciples that exists for mission. That model automatically excludes both clericalism and lay passivity. To the degree that these persist, to that extent the ecclesiology of Vatican II has not been received in theory or practice or both.

The SACBC made many Conference-wide attempts to affect this reception. The qualitative element of this research will involve an examination of the

records in the SACBC archives, especially the Minutes of SACBC meetings, the Pastoral Plan, *Community Serving Humanity* (1989) and the documentation related to a series of Pastoral Consultations between bishops and laity from 1975 to 2014. An attempt will be made to interpret why many of these consultations did not lead to real change. The answer will demonstrate to what extent the ecclesiology of Vatican II has been received by the Church in Southern Africa.

1.7.5 The Practical Element (See Sub-Questions 4 & 5)

What this research calls the “practical” dimension will involve a literature study of Stewardship, its history and spirituality and how it offers a way of living discipleship not just in the life of the Church *ad intra* but in the whole of life. It will be offered as a way of life that will transform the life of the parish and as a spirituality that each will take home and into the workplace (Anslinger & Shepp 2007:88).

A basic text for this section is John A. Reumann’s *Stewardship and the Economy of God* (1992). It traces the history of the word from Greek through German to modern English and links it to the concept of the economy of salvation history. Reumann is from the Lutheran tradition. Most of the Catholic Church literature consulted is from the United States. *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response* (2002A) is particularly informative. *Making Stewardship a way of Life* (Kemberling & Glodava 2009) provides both theory and practical advice on the introduction and maintenance of Stewardship. The research found no material on Stewardship by Southern African theologians.

The Final Report of the 1985 Synod⁶ said that communion ecclesiology is the central and fundamental idea of the documents of Vatican II (C.1). The International Theological Commission’s document, *Communion and Stewardship* (2004) maintains that communion ecclesiology provides the

⁶ In 1965, Pope Paul VI established the World Synod of Bishops as a practical expression of episcopal collegiality. It meets in Ordinary or Extraordinary General Assemblies. The structure itself is permanent but members are elected prior to each assembly.

theological foundation for Stewardship (see ITC 2004:25). Taken together, the conclusion is that Stewardship is an authentic way of living the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II.

1.8 Outline of Chapters

The following is a brief outline of the content of each of the eight chapters of the thesis.

Chapter One: General Introduction and Outline of the Research Project

This chapter speaks about the background to the research and the motivation for undertaking it. It clarifies the research problem and outlines its theological framework.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The research is literature-based. The Literature Review falls into four distinct but over-lapping categories:

- Historical Works, outlining the role of the laity at different stages of history and the factors that gave rise to clericalism and lay passivity.
- Works on Clericalism, discussing its nature and origin, how it developed in history and how it is related to lay passivity.
- Theological works, especially pre-Vatican II writings, the documents of Vatican II, official post-Vatican II publications and works on the emergence of the laity in a community model of Church.
- Practical Works, including records in the SACBC archives of pastoral initiatives to introduce a community model of Church and to involve the laity. An assessment will be made of the effectiveness or otherwise of these to eradicate lay passivity and clericalism. Practical works will also include works on Stewardship and how it involves all the People of God in the mission of the Church.

Chapter Three: Clericalism and the Role of the Laity in the History of the Catholic Church

This Chapter demonstrates how the passivity of the laity is rooted in history and in a hierarchical model of Church. It also examines the implantation of this model of Church in Southern Africa and how it resulted in dependency on the side of the laity and paternalism on the part of the clergy.

Chapter Four: The Teaching on the Laity in Vatican II and Post-Conciliar Documents

The ecclesiology of Vatican II is examined, an ecclesiology that is based on communion theology. It speaks of the Church as the People of God in which all are equal and for each is responsible. It speaks too of the one priesthood of Christ, of the priesthood of all the baptised and the ministerial priesthood of the ordained. In that Church, all are equal and all are missionary disciples.

Chapter Five: The Reception of Vatican II in Southern Africa

The Chapter examines the theological idea of "Reception". Because Vatican II was pastoral in nature, its reception in Southern African is assessed through an examination of the pastoral initiatives of the SACBC to involve the laity in the life of the Church. The defects of the SACBC pastoral planning are examined.

Chapter Six: Stewardship as a Way of Living Communion Ecclesiology

This Chapter examines the origins and the nature of Stewardship and how it has developed as a way of living discipleship since the beginning of the 20th century. As a modern movement, it has its roots in the Protestant Churches of the United States of America and was gradually taken on by the Catholic Church. The Chapter presents Stewardship as a way of life, a way of translating the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II into practical living.

Chapter Seven: Introducing and Maintaining Stewardship in the Church of Southern Africa

The Chapter discusses and offers suggestions for the introduction and maintenance of Stewardship at SACBC, Diocesan and Parish level. It emphasises the need for conversion of the heart and of the mind and the need for a Parish Pastoral Plan. It offers suggestions for the introduction of Stewardship of Time, Talent, Treasure and Testimony. It speaks too of the need for the new style of leadership required by a community model of Church and by a parish that adopts the Stewardship way.

Chapter Eight: Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

The final chapter summarises the findings of the research and proposes Stewardship as a way of life for both clergy and laity, a way out of historical clericalism and lay passivity into a way of being, in reality and not just in theory, the People of God.

1.9 Limitations of the Research

The objectives of this study are summarised in 1.3. It has definite limitations which I wish to clarify. The first concerns the historical sections of the thesis. Even though it has a significant historical component, this thesis is essentially pastoral in nature. It is not an historical work. That would be contrary to my purpose in undertaking it and beyond my competence. Historical sources are drawn on to advance the claim that clericalism and lay passivity were present in the Church since the end of the third century (cf. 3.3). This thesis examines the past to help us understand the present and to plan a different future.

A second limitation is mentioned in 1.7.1. The thesis examines the problem from the viewpoint of the SACBC, not that of individual dioceses. It examines the efforts made to introduce a Vatican II community model of Church by the Bishops' Conference and what became of those efforts. Once again, the purpose is pastoral and practical in nature, demonstrating that the genuine and repeated

efforts at national level to involve the laity in the life of the Church were, to a large extent, ineffective. A different and equally valid approach would have been to examine the same problem by means of research of how the Community Model of Church of Vatican II took flesh in a selected number of dioceses. My research is limited by the decision to examine the problem through an SACBC “lens”.

A third limitation is related to structural analysis. My contention is that because the thesis is practical and ministerial in nature, a detailed analysis of the structure of the Church and its governance would change the nature and purpose of the study. It is not that structural analysis is unimportant but that it is relatively unimportant because of the pastoral and practical nature of this thesis. Nevertheless, it is dealt with in summary in 3.8.

A fourth limitation is related to the intended “audience” to which it is addressed. It is addressed primarily to clerics, namely bishops, priests and deacons. The hope is it will help them to look at the Church in a new way, help them learn from the history of the Church and the pastoral initiatives of the Bishops’ Conference and to see Stewardship as a practical way of living as a community of disciples of Christ, and introducing Stewardship as a way of life in the parish and diocese.

A final limitation is that the research does not deal with the debate on the ordination of women. It is a major issue that affects a great number of concerned and active lay members of the Church. However, it is beyond the scope of this research which focuses on one way, namely Stewardship, of involving the laity in the life of the Church.

1.10 Conclusion

Chapter One has introduced the Research Project. It spoke about the inter-connected problems of clericalism and lay passivity, how both are embedded in the history of the Catholic Church and how they are incompatible with the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II. It proposes Stewardship as a way of

receiving Vatican II and ensuring that its ecclesiology is translated into the pastoral practice of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa and, in particular, in the life of the People of God.

The problem, as outlined in this chapter, has different dimensions, the main ones being the historical, theological and practical. Chapter Two will review some of the literature that is relevant to each of these three main dimensions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter One stated that this research is in the form of a dialogue between the historic passivity of the laity and their role as outlined in the documents of Vatican II. It is also a dialogue between the teaching of Vatican II and the theory and practice of Stewardship. This Literature Review is constructed around the elements of this dynamic dialogue: the lessons of history; the ecclesiology of Vatican II and its reception by the local Church; the practical living of that ecclesiology in a life of Stewardship.

2.2 Historical Sources

2.2.1 With Reference to the Universal Church

In an examination of the historical role of the laity, the work of Yves Congar (1904 – 1995) is pivotal. McBrien calls him “the greatest ecclesiologist in the history of the Church” (2008: xxii). In 1937, Congar started the *Unum Sanctam* series, a study of historic themes in ecclesiology. He promoted ecumenical dialogue and appealed for openness to what Protestant and Orthodox Churches had to offer. He wrote extensively on the role of the laity and was critical of what he considered clerical pomp in the Vatican.

Congar’s volume *Lay People in the Church* (1957) is a landmark study that is quoted by most subsequent Catholic ecclesiologists. It traces the role of the laity, in large part a passive one, from Apostolic times to the 1950s. He insists that previous ages should not be disparaged but cannot be ignored: the Church must be willing to learn from its history, acknowledge mistakes and be willing to reform. He speaks of a theology of the laity as “a void clamouring to be filled” (1957:xxv), but it must be integrated into “a total ecclesiology” (:xxvii).

The story of Congar's life demonstrates the journey the Catholic Church made in a very short period of time. He was forbidden to teach or publish any work from 1954 but Pope John XXIII made him a member of the Commission preparing for Vatican II and he later became a Council *peritus* (expert). McBrien lists six themes that run through Congar's writings and that found their way into the documents of Vatican II (2008:140):

- the Church is the People of God,
- the hierarchy exists to serve the Church,
- the Church itself is a minority in the service of the majority, preparing the way for the kingdom of God,
- the Church is a communion and its structure exists to enable it to fulfil its mission,
- the Church must always be engaged in renewal and reform,
- the Church is ecumenical in nature and scope.

Congar spoke at length on the priesthood of the faithful and the laity's part in the Church's priestly, kingly and prophetic functions (1957:112-308). He speaks about the two elements of Christian priesthood: "the sacramental celebration of the covenant in Christ's blood and that of ministry or loving service" (:165). He speaks about Jesus at the Last Supper saying two things: "Do this as a memorial of me" (Lk.22:19) and "you also are to wash one another's feet" (Jn.13:15). This, he says, points to the two elements of Christian priesthood, namely, "the sacramental celebration of the covenant in Christ's blood and that of ministry or loving service" (:165).

A basic principle of Congar's theology and of this study is that a theology of the laity cannot stand alone but must be integrated into what he calls a complete ecclesiology (1957:vii & xxvii). The same is true of stewardship: it too must be an integral part of a complete ecclesiology.

Following Congar, Alandre Faivre (1990) speaks of the egalitarian nature of the early Church and the changing meaning of *Kleros* and *Laos*. The growing distinction between clergy and laity in the 2nd and 3rd centuries is linked to what

happened when revelation came into dynamic contact with the culture and the governance systems of Greece and Rome. The Church needed to define what it meant by bishop, priest and deacon and to decide on their functions *vis-à-vis* those of the laity. Faivre also speaks of the growth of monasticism and the further division of the faithful into cleric, monk and lay.

The retired Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, says McBrien's *The Church* is "a must for all Christians" (McBrien 2008: Back Cover). McBrien traces the development of the Church over the centuries and of advances made in ecclesiology before, during and after Vatican II (1994:607–738).

McBrien's volume *The Church* (2008) is an account of the history of the Catholic Church and of ecclesiology from New Testament to modern times. It is particularly enlightening on the developments in ecclesiology between Vatican I (1869 – 1870) and Vatican II (1962 – 1965). McBrien speaks about the twin pillars of the ecclesiology of Vatican II, the Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* (LG) and the Constitution of the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* (GS) (2008:182ff). The first speaks of the nature of the Church and its mission *ad intra*; *Gaudium et Spes* deals with the relationship of the Church to the world in which it is part and of its mission *ad extra* to that world. The role of the laity must be seen in the context of that two-pronged mission of the People of God.

Tony Hanna (2006) relies heavily on both Congar and Faivre in his examination of the role of the laity in history. He speaks of their emergence in the years preceding Vatican II and in the Lay Ecclesial Movements that flourished in the years following the Council. Hanna examines three of those Movements (Communion and Liberation, the Neo-Catechumenate and the Charismatic Renewal) in the light of the history of charism, "a history that is indissolubly intertwined to the history of the Church itself" (:161). These lay Ecclesial Movements are a practical expression of Communion and an organised way of assuming stewardship responsibility for the mission of the Church *ad intra* and *ad extra*.

While Hanna speaks of the history of charism and the growth of Lay Ecclesial Movements, O'Meara (1999) deals with the growth of lay ministries in the years following Vatican II. Tracing the history of ministry from the earliest days he speaks about the interfacing of faith and culture that began when the young Church was still considered a sect of Judaism until today when it now interfaces with a secular and indifferent society. This constant interfacing makes the Church "eminently historical" (O'Meara 1999:82). That historical nature was recognised in the opening paragraph of GS: "Christians cherish a feeling of deep solidarity with the human race and its history" (1) and in LG, Chapter VII which speaks of "The Pilgrim Church" (LG 48-51).

Having traced the history of ministry through the centuries, O'Meara speaks of the sources of ministry: Baptism as the entry point, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the vocation and the gifts of each person and the particular circumstances of the local community (1999:199-212). Finally, he speaks of spirituality as a bridge between the baptised and their services, what he calls "doctrine in practice" (:231). This research speaks of Stewardship spirituality in similar terms, theology in practice.

Osborne (1993) also emphasises the history of ministry. He describes two major periods: 30AD to 1000AD which he calls the establishment of the clerical and the disestablishment of the lay positions; and 1000AD to 2000 AD as the rise of lay movements in the Catholic Church and the decline of clerical dominance. For the purpose of this research, Osborne's discussion on discipleship in New Testament writings is particularly relevant (1993:48-109). Also useful is his discussion on the spirituality of non-ordained ministers, a spirituality centred on four things: on the God who loves all his creation; on Christ, the true "*Lumen Gentium*"; the word of God; and the vocation of the individual (:596-603).

William R. Burrows (1980) also explores the history of ministry but he adds an important missionary dimension based on his work in Papua New Guinea. He speaks of the "one-stop" mission station where everything was provided to the new converts (:93-108). He advocates a transition from this model to a re-

structuring of ministry around Small Christian Communities, the basic building blocks of a world Church (:138-145).

The final work I wish to mention in this section is *From Trent to Vatican II*, a compilation of historical and theological essays edited by Bulman & Parrella (2006). It deals with what happened before and after the Council of Trent and before and after Vatican II. Of particular interest to this research is Paul Lakeland's article on The Laity (Chapter 11). Lakeland asserts that the development of lay ministries in the Catholic Church "is not matched with a concomitant level of theological reflection" (Lakeland 2006:196). This research offers such a reflection in relation to Stewardship.

2.2.2 With Reference to the Catholic Church in South Africa

There is no comprehensive systematic account of the growth and development of the Catholic Church in South Africa available, although many religious congregations and missionary groups have written accounts of their own stories.⁷ The late Professor Joy Brain was particularly active in this regard. The only comprehensive work is that of William E. Brown (1960). He traces the history of the Catholic Church in South Africa from the appointment of the first resident bishop to the Cape in 1837 to the appointment of the first Apostolic Delegate in 1922.⁸ Brown died before he could complete the work and the editor of the work, Michael Derrick, added a Prologue, a summary of the history before 1837, and an Epilogue, summarising the events from 1922 to 1960.

Brown described the early Catholic community as a small, impoverished and scattered group of European settlers. The primary function of the missionary priests and bishops was to take care of "the children of the faith" (1960:194). From the outset, the Catholic community was not only impoverished but it was also unwelcomed. Even with their growth in numbers, they remained dependent on resources and personnel from Europe. They also remained on

⁷ For example, Rocchiccioli W 2015. *A History of the SMA Fathers in South Africa*. Bufflesfontein, South Africa: Society of African Missions.

⁸ An Apostolic Delegate is the representative of the Pope in a country or a region. In South Africa he enjoys diplomatic status.

the fringes of the larger settler society and developed their own sub-culture. Brown traces the development of schools and hospitals and suggests that “the informed Catholic of the 1920s would have chosen the work of the nuns as the best example of what the Church had been doing for ‘White’ South Africa” (:298). These institutions were staffed by missionaries who did not have to be paid normal salaries, and when eventually they were paid, the money was ploughed back into the institution. The system worked well and many people of all faiths benefitted, but it had the effect of creating the impression that the Catholic Church was rich and would provide all the human and material resources needed.

The foundations for the education of African children were laid at the end of the 19th and first quarter of the 20th centuries, but the major emphasis was in the second quarter of the 20th (Brown 1960:339). The great blow to Catholic education came with the 1953 Bantu Education Act. The Act was, in essence, an instrument for maintaining and legitimising Apartheid. It aimed at organising all schools along racial lines, limiting the level of education available to the black population and controlling the right of admission to all schools (see Verryn 1982:57). Sister Brigid Flanagan says that it sought to guarantee the continuance of Apartheid by protecting the rights of the white population and ensuring that there would be no mixing of races, languages or cultures (see Flanagan 1982:85). In 1957 the SACBC labelled the entire Apartheid System as “intrinsically evil” (Brown 1960:349).

Brown ends his narrative in 1960. In August 1995 the SACBC decided that a new and up-to-date history of the Catholic Church in South Africa was needed. A resultant committee decided on a thematic rather than a chronological approach and a group of writers produced *The Catholic Church in Contemporary South Africa* (Brain & Denis (eds) 1999).

Bate writes on “One Mission, Two Churches” (Bate 1999A:5-36). He speaks of the development of the Catholic Church in a divided society and how the Church itself was divided into urban, largely white, “parishes” and rural and black “missions”. Chapter 7 on Catholic Education by Chamberlain et al speaks of a dual system of well-resourced city schools and impoverished rural ones

(Chamberlain et al 1999:187 -212). Chapter 9, on Catholic Laity written by Alan Henriques, speaks of the influence of lay movements such the Young Christian Workers (YCW), Young Christian Students (YCS), and the Knights of Da Gama. It speaks of the changes that followed Vatican II, marked by a training of the laity rather than providing for them, and of the transition from dependence on salaried catechists to a community model of Church that was intended to be self-ministering. Of particular interest is his assertion that the existence of a Laity Council perpetuates the division of the Church into “two separate parties” (Henriques 1999:262). In a 2014 restructuring of the SACBC, the bishops re-introduced what they call the “Department of the Laity”. I suggest the wisdom of this is questionable.

As said above, the Catholic Church from the start was an unwelcome minority, existing on the fringes of the larger settler community. It later became the *roomse gevaar*, the Roman Danger. Bonaventure Hinwood traces the change in attitudes and the development of ecumenical dialogue and cooperation (Hinwood 1999:349-385). Several factors combined to bring the Churches together: the developments in ecumenism around the world and the pioneering work of people like Congar; the new thinking that emerged from Vatican II, elaborated especially in the Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio* (UR) and the Declaration on Non-Christian Religions, *Nostra Aetate* (NA); the coming together of the Churches against the common enemy, Apartheid.

In 1997, Elphic & Davenport compiled *Christianity in South Africa*, subtitled A Political, Social and Cultural History. Brain contributed the section dealing with the Roman Catholic Church. She speaks of the influence in South Africa of the East India Company and the then disarray of the Catholic Church in Europe as a result of the nationalist movements, the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars (:195). She recalls the poverty of the early Catholic settlers and their dependence of their Church on personnel and resources from Europe. Even with the coming of a new wave of Catholic immigrants that followed the discovery of gold and diamonds in the 1870s and 1880s, many of whom were “struggling artisans and blue-collar workers” (:196), the dependence on Europe continued. Brain, like Brown, speaks of the early Catholic Church as being largely a settler

Church and of the largely chaplaincy role of the missionaries.

Of particular importance for this research is Brain's account of the developing role of the laity through Catholic Action groups under the umbrella body, The Catholic Federation. She recalls the work of the Catholic African Union, founded by Bernard Huss CMM, whose motto was "Better fields, better homes, better hearts"; of the Legion of Mary and its two-fold arm of personal holiness and weekly apostolic work; of the Women of St Anne and the Sacred Heart sodalities, both of which remain active in most parishes of the country. She suggests that the Church's concentration on schools may not have been the best policy. She agrees with Hastings that the family, not the school, should have been the focus (Elphic & Davenport 1997:205).

In 1984 the SACBC published what it called the *Pastoral Plan Working Paper* (SACBC 1984A). Chapter 1 says the guiding vision of any pastoral plan must be the vision of Vatican II applied to the local Church. It speaks of the values of creation as integral to the Kingdom of God, of the disruption caused by sin and of redemption in Christ (SACBC 1984A:8-9). It recalls the work of the Catholic Church as a visible and invisible reality that continues the prophetic, priestly and kingly mission of Christ, and of the scandal of division (see SACBC 1984A:9- 10). The remainder of the publication is a summarised history of the Catholic Church in South Africa, of the growth of segregation and the part played by the Catholic Church in the struggle against Apartheid.

2.3 Theological Sources: Paving the Way for Vatican II

2.3.1 The Papal Encyclicals

Joe Holland (2003) traces the development of Catholic Social Teaching as articulated in the papal encyclicals from 1940 to 1958. Of special interest to this research is the increasing emphasis on the position of the laity and their role in a changing world.

From the time of Constantine, the Church leadership relied on political leaders, on emperors, kings and feudal lords, to promote the interests of the Catholic Church in society. This tradition made possible the agreement reached in the Peace of Augsburg (1515) with its policy of *Cuius Regio, Eius Religio* (The one who rules determines the religion). The early encyclicals (1740-1878) spoke against the liberalism and capitalism that emerged from the Enlightenment and supported the traditional power structures. With growing industrialisation and of a large working class and with the emergence of atheistic Communism, the Popes came to realise that the future no longer lay with the old aristocrats but in a Christian response to the new democracies. The response was not to replace the old aristocrats with the new industrial barons through whom the workers and the new social order would be Christianised, but rather to Christianise the new order and the new world of work through the workers themselves. The Popes took the side of the workers, defending their rights and supporting their struggles. This historic change began with Pope Leo XIII (1873-1903).

Leo XIII published *Sapientiae Christianae* in 1890. He spoke of the need to promote Christian principles in the family which he called the cradle of society. He called on the laity to resist the privatisation of religion and to openly and fearlessly profess their Christian faith (see Holland 2003:170-171).

In 1891 Pope Leo XIII published *Rerum Novarum*. He defended the right to private property, to organised labour and the right to strike and emphasised the duty of employers to respect these rights. He spoke against joining non-Christian unions and encouraged Christian workers to organise their own associations. The over-all emphasis was on the workers and the poor rather than on the captains of industry. Often referred to as the manifesto for Catholic social teaching, it was not universally accepted. Michael Glazier says that both Church leaders and Catholic employers “were slow to accept the implications of Leo’s social manifesto” (1994:503).

Pope Pius X (1903-1914) issued sixteen encyclicals. He called for the promotion of religious instruction and of lay associations. He promoted the role of the laity but within clearly defined limits: “All the faithful must concern themselves

with the interests of God and of souls but always under the direction and orders of the bishops” (Quoted by Holland 2003:231). The Catholic Church, he taught, is an essentially unequal society, “a society comprising two categories of persons, the pastors and the flock” and he added, “The only duty of the multitude is to allow themselves to be led, like a docile flock, to follow the pastors” (Quoted by Nilson 2000:398).

In his 1922 encyclical, *Ubi Arcano* Pope Pius XI (1922-1929) wrote about the disruptions in the world after the 1914-1918 World War, disruptions that affected nations, classes of society, the family and the Church. He expressed his concern about growing materialism and the rejection of God (see Holland 2003:245). He believed society would recover its roots if the Catholic Church regained its position of moral authority in society. This, he believed, could be achieved through the organised work of the laity through what he called Catholic Action, defined as the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy (see Doohan 1984:140).

In 1931, on the 40th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, Pope Pius XI reiterated the teaching of Pope Leo XIII in the context of rising liberalism and socialism (see Holland 2003:253). Liberalism, he said, had failed to solve the problems of society and socialism offered a remedy “far worse than the problem itself” (QA 10).

Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) issued forty-one encyclicals. Three are of special importance to this research and each of these three indicate a development in theology that will reach fruition in Vatican II. *Mystici Corporis Christi* (1943) restored a biblical sense to theology, after centuries, since Robert Bellarmine, of emphasising the Church as a perfect society. It says that the Catholic Church is both a legal and institutional entity governed by a hierarchy and a communion, a body in which the Holy Spirit dwells. The Spirit animates the whole body and acts in all members of the body, lay and clerical (see Holland 2003:276). The second encyclical that helped prepare for Vatican II was *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943). It gave official approval to modern biblical scholarship, acknowledged the fruit of archaeological findings, supported textual and form criticism and encouraged

the reading of the bible by individuals and in families (see Doohan 2003:277). The encyclical provided a major impetus to a revival of biblical theology in the Church.

Mediator Dei (1947) approved and encouraged liturgical reform. It spoke of the Eucharist as “the fountain-head of all Christian devotion” (MD 5) and it emphasised the active participation of the laity (see Holland 2003:278). Vatican II would later call for “full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations” (SC 14).

2.3.2 The Work of Pre-Vatican II Theologians

Saint John Henry Newman (1801-1890) was a contemporary of Pope Leo XIII. In 1845 he published his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, arguing that the teachings of the Catholic Church are legitimate developments of the Church of the New Testament. He became editor of *The Rambler*, a journal started by Catholic laity and dedicated to debate on theological and ecclesiastical issues. For this research, his essay “On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine” is particularly relevant. He was denounced to the Vatican and removed from his position of editor of *The Rambler*. Newman’s argument was based on the presence of the Spirit in the body of the faithful, something accepted later by *Mediator Dei*, as seen above, *Mystici Corporis* (1943) and by Vatican II in LG 12.

McBrien (2008) traces the work of other theologians, Protestant, Anglican and Catholic, whose works prepared for Vatican II (:131-150). The non-Catholic theologians include John A.T. Robinson and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Robinson spoke of Christ as God with a human face. He said the Church is at the heart of the world, not looking down on it or separated from it (see McBrien 1994:89). This way of viewing the relationship of the Church and world is reflected in the opening paragraph of *Gaudium et Spes* which says the joys and griefs of the world are the joys and griefs of a follower of Christ (see GS 1). Bonhoeffer was executed by the Nazis in 1945. In *Letters and Papers from Prison* he says Christians must see themselves as “wholly belonging to the world” and that “the Church is her true self only when she exists for humanity” (Quoted in McBrien 2008:131).

Vatican II will speak of the Catholic Church being immersed in the joys and problems of all people and of the sacramental nature of the Church, a sign and an instrument of God's saving work in the world (see LG 1).

The Catholic theologians listed by McBrien include Congar, Karl Rahner, Edward Schillebeekx, Henri de Lubac and Hans Küng. I have spoken above about the influence of Congar and his contribution to ecclesiology. In 1963 Rahner published *The Church and the Sacraments*. He called the Church "the primal and fundamental sacrament" (:23), an insight that is reflected, as observed above, in the first paragraph of *Lumen Gentium*.

McBrien defines the sacramental principle as "the embodiment of the spiritual in the material and the communication of the spiritual through the material" (2008:136). Christ himself is the basic sacrament, the revelation of God; the Church is the sacrament of Christ. Schillebeekx says that "the final good of grace is achieved by Christ becoming visible in the whole Church as a visible society" (1963:56).

In *Catholicism: A Study of Dogma in Relation to the Corporate Destiny of Mankind*, de Lubac speaks of the importance of the community aspect of the Church. He says that while the hierarchical element of the Catholic Church is of divine origin and must be maintained, it is "through union with the community that the Christian is united to Christ" (Quoted by McBrien 2008:157).

The year before the opening of Vatican II, Hans Küng spoke about the Church as the People of God, the Mystical Body of Christ and as having a hierarchical structure. Because that Church is made up of sinful people, it is always in need of reform (see 1961:17).

2.4 The Documents of Vatican II

2.4.1 Ressourcement and Aggiornamento

The words that have become associated with Vatican II are *Ressourcement* and *Aggiornamento*. The French word *Ressourcement* stands for a return to the sources, a theme that ran through the works of Congar and in the pre-Vatican II writers and liturgical reformers. In his address at the opening of the Council, Pope John XXIII said that “the Church should never depart from its sacred patrimony” (Quoted in O’Malley 2008:38).

While *Ressourcement* looks towards the past, the Italian expression, *Aggiornamento*, looks to the present and the future, to the renewal and reformation that must be perennial. In the same opening speech quoted above, the Pope said the Church “must ever look to the present, to the new conditions and the new forms of life introduced into the modern world that have opened up new avenues to the Catholic apostolate” (Quoted in O’Malley 2008:38). All of what Newman called “development in doctrine” involves, as does this research, both *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*.⁹

2.4.2 The Sixteen Documents

Vatican II (1962-1965) produced a total of sixteen documents. Each is referred to by the opening two words in the Latin original.¹⁰ In the publication used throughout this research (Flannery 2004), they are listed according to the dates of promulgation, not in the order of importance or rank. From the point of view of rank, there are, in the first place, four “Constitutions”. These are followed by nine “Decrees” and then by three “Declarations”.

⁹ Pope Francis in his morning homily of 29 April 2015: “The Christian life is not a museum of memories. [...] To do what you’ve always done is an alternative death” (Zenit 25 April 2018).

¹⁰ See Page i for list.

Two of the Constitutions form what McBrien call the Twin Pillars of the Council on which rest all the others (McBrien 2008:182). The first pillar, *Lumen Gentium* (LG) deals with the nature of the Church, its structure and its inner life. This is the Church “*ad intra*”. The second pillar, *Gaudium et Spes* (GS) speaks of the relationship of the Church to the whole world and to all peoples and cultures. This is the Church and its mission “*ad extra*”. The remaining fourteen documents are related to one or other of these two pillars. All sixteen speak in one way or another of the mystery of the Church as a community that exists for mission.

LG speaks of the Church as a community of disciples with a mission “*ad intra*”; GS speaks of the whole world as a community of people made in the image of God and so made for community (see GS 24), and of the Church’s mission “*ad extra*” to this world family. A key hermeneutical tool, therefore, to the interpretation of the documents of Vatican II can be stated thus: the Church is a community of disciples sent on mission.

2.4.3 An Alternative Arrangement

Flannery (2004) presents the documents as they were promulgated by Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI. McBrien (1994) rearranges them as follows:

The Church in General

1. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (LG)

The Inner Life of the Church

2. Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (DV)
3. Declaration on Christian Education (GE)

Worship

4. Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (SC)

Ministries and Forms of Christian Existence

5. Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (PO)
6. Decree on Priestly Formation (OT)
7. Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office (CD)
8. Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of Religious Life (PC)
9. Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (AA)

Interrelationship among Churches

10. Decree on Ecumenism (UR)
11. Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches (OE)

The Church and the World Beyond the Church; other Religions

12. Declaration on non-Christian Religions (NA)

The World at Large

13. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (GS)
14. Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (AGD)
15. Declaration on Religious Freedom (DH)
16. Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication (IM)

Congar said that any theology of the laity must be part of a complete ecclesiology (1957: xxxviii). Vatican II is the Church's present-day self-awareness of what it is, the entire People of God on mission. For the purpose of this research, the four pivotal documents are LG, GS, AA and SC. As seen above, SC 14 calls for "full, conscious and active participation" in the Liturgy. This could be extended as a call to the laity to play their God-given role in the life of the Church in a full, conscious and active way of stewardship. Pope Francis says that the work of evangelisation is not confined to the professionals but that all the baptised are "missionary disciples" (EG 67).

The Church has a message to transmit to the world, but GS says the Church must also listen to that world and to the signs of changing times (:4).

2.5 Post-Vatican II Documents

A variety of documents have been issued by the Holy See since Vatican II. Many are quoted throughout this research but in this review I will speak of four pivotal ones, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975); The Code of Canon Law (1983), *Christifideles Laici* (1988) and *Ecclesia in Africa* (1995).

2.5.1 *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN)

Vatican II spoke of the bishops as a College (LG 23). The head of this College is the Pope and the College acts “in union with its head and never without him” (CCL 336). In 1965 Pope Paul VI set up the Synod of Bishops. It is a permanent structure, but its members are elected ahead of each Assembly. It meets in Ordinary or Extraordinary General Assembly (see CCL 345) and it is intended to be a practical expression of collegiality.

In the wake of Vatican II and its teaching on religious liberty, on ecumenism and on relationships with non-Christian religions, there was widespread questioning on the right, and even the need, to evangelise. In 1974 Pope Paul VI convened an Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on evangelisation. In 1975 he published his Apostolic Exhortation called *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, his reflections as Pope on the Synod and its recommendations. He emphasised that evangelisation is the vocation of the Church, its deepest identity, the reason for its existence. The Church “exists to evangelise” (EN 14). The work of evangelisation is the work of “the entire people of God” (EN 59). The laity, living in the midst of the world, has an indispensable part to play (EN 70).

2.5.2 *The Code of Canon Law*

The first complete Code of Canon Law was promulgated in 1917. It was revised in the 1980s in the light of the new thinking of Vatican II and, in the words of Pope Paul VI, “translates the conciliar ecclesiological thinking into canonical terms” (Coriden et al 1998:5).

The Code of Canon Law contains 1752 Canons divided into seven books. Book Two is titled “The People of God”, as is Chapter Two of LG. It speaks of the baptised as “Christ’s faithful” and outlines their rights and obligations (see CCL 204-223). It then speaks of “The obligations and Rights of the Lay Members of Christ’s Faithful” (CCL 224-231) and then of those of clerics (CCL 232-293). Canon 225 says that the laity, “like all Christ’s faithful, are deputed to the apostolate by baptism and confirmation” and so have the right and obligation “to strive so that the divine message of salvation may be known and accepted by all people throughout the world”. The laity are in a privileged position to bring Gospel values into public life and secular business (see CCL 225§2).

2.5.3 *Christifideles Laici* (CL)

In 1987 an Assembly of the Synod of Bishops discussed the role of the laity in the Mission of the Church and a year later Pope John Paul II issued the Apostolic Constitution *Christifideles Laici*. It is, as it were, the *Magna Carta* of the rights, the dignity, the obligations of the laity in today’s Church. It points to ways of translating the theory of Vatican II into “authentic pastoral practice” (CL 2).

The ecclesiology is that of the Council: God is a Communion, the source of the communion that is the Church; baptism is the source and foundation of ecclesial communion; the identity of the lay faithful, the *Christifideles Laici*, is revealed in the Church as the mystery of communion (see CL 8 &14). The laity do not just belong to the Church (CL 9); they are one with the Church as the branches are one with the vine (see CL 8). They enjoy communion with God and in God as the same life flows through the vine and each branch.

The Pope combines the image of the vine of John 15:5 and that of the vineyard in Matthew 20: the lay faithful are branches of the vine, are part of the vineyard, and labourers in the vineyard (see CL 8). Filled with the Spirit, they share in the priestly, prophetic and kingly mission of Jesus (see CL 14).

Communion with Jesus brings with it the responsibility to bear fruit and this fruit is seen in a life of communion with others (see CL 32) and in a proclamation of the Gospel (see CL 33). As labourers in the vineyard, they are “good stewards of God’s varied gifts” (see sub-title to CL Chp.4). Stewardship of God’s gifts is not optional for one who has received them. However, it is not enough simply to remind stewards of their obligations; they must also be offered the necessary ongoing formation (see CL 57ff).

Pope John Paul II lamented the fact that the grand theory of Vatican II regarding the role of the laity had not led to authentic pastoral practice (see CL 2, par.9). The problem now is that the fine theory of *Christifideles Laici* itself remains in the realm of theory. This research offers a vehicle for translating it into practice.

2.5.4 *Ecclesia in Africa* (EA)

A Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of *Bishops* was held in April 1994 and Pope John Paul II published the Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, the following year. He speaks of the need for inculturation (see EA 41-55), and of the role of the family in the evangelisation of Africa (see EA 63). The Exhortation emphasises the importance of the Small Christian Communities and the role of lay people as agents of evangelisation (see EA 67-77).

2.6 The Work of Post-Vatican II Theologians

2.6.1 Introduction

Since the close of Vatican II in 1965, a wide variety of commentaries has been published on the work of the Council, its ecclesiology, what it said about the hierarchy and about the laity. For the purpose of this literature review I have selected those that are most relevant to the research. While acknowledging that a particular work cannot be kept within the confines of a particular category, I have arranged them under five headings: The Spirit of Vatican II; The Ecclesiology of Vatican II; the Spirituality of Vatican II; Vatican II and the Laity; Vatican II and Lay Ministry.

2.6.2 The Spirit of Vatican II

John O'Malley was one of the authors of *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen* (O'Malley 2007) and in 2010 he published *What Happened at Vatican II* (O'Malley 2008). In his 2007 work O'Malley speaks about the style and what became known as the spirit of Vatican II. He says the spirit of the Council is found first of all in its pastoral rather than dogmatic approach and in its optimism about the Church and the world. Secondly, it is found in what he calls its "epideictic" style (2007:74), a style that seeks to touch the heart, to lead into mystery, to lead beyond definition to wonder and admiration. Thirdly the "spirit of Vatican II" is in the absence of the word anathema and in the use of words like cooperation, dialogue, collegiality, partnership, and pilgrim (:79).

2.6.3 The Ecclesiology of Vatican II

Lumen Gentium speaks of the Church as Mystery, as People of God, as Sacrament. *Gaudium et Spes* speaks of the mission of the Church to the world. Richard Gaillardetz's *Ecclesiology for a Global Church* (2010) is sub-titled "A People Called and Sent". Christ calls all to discipleship and sends all on mission. Of special interest for this research is Gaillardetz's discussion on the emerging ecclesiology of the global South and East, and the African discussion on the Church in terms of family (:145ff).

Joseph Ratzinger, a theological expert at Vatican II and later Pope Benedict XVI, wrote *Called to Communion* (1991). He too speaks of disciples called and sent as Jesus called the twelve "to be with him" and "to be sent out" (:25; Mark 3:14). Ratzinger speaks of the Church as the *Qahal*, the *Ecclesia*, the gathering of God's people (:29-33). Even if it is God's holy people, this *Ecclesia* is in constant need of reform and renewal (:133-152).

In 1974 Avery Dulles introduced models as a hermeneutic tool in theology and, in particular, as a way of speaking of the nature and mission of the Church. Instead of giving a definition of the Church, Vatican II spoke of it in terms of mystery and used biblical images like people of God, Body of Christ, temple of

the Holy Spirit, to speak of that mystery. Dulles expanded on the use of images or models. He says there can be any number of models but he confined himself to five in the first edition of his book: Institution, Mystical Communion, Sacrament, Herald and Servant (Dulles 1974). In his 1987 expanded edition he added a sixth, namely, "Community of Disciples" (Dulles 1987). He insists that no one model can give a complete picture of the mystery that is the Catholic Church. A balanced ecclesiology must draw on the positives found in each and be aware of the negatives and limitations of each. Keeping this in mind, the model that speaks most clearly to this research is the final one, the Church as a Community of Disciples. But it must be supplemented with the positives of his Herald model: the community of Christ exists for mission, ultimately for the Kingdom of God.

This way of understanding the Catholic Church was taken up by John Fuellenbach in *Church: Community for the Kingdom* (2002). In 1991 Ratzinger had emphasised that "what Jesus' message immediately announced was not the Church but the Kingdom" (:21). Fuellenbach says the Church Christ founded exists for the Kingdom. He points out that God's saving work is historically bound up with community, a fact that has its source in the Triune nature of God (:5). All called to this community become active agents in God's saving plan: they are called in order to be sent and baptism is more a call to mission than a pre-paid ticket to heaven (:5).

He speaks of the effectiveness of Dulles' models: they not only sum up but also dramatise a truth about the Church (Fuellenbach 2002:109). Dulles spoke about explanatory and exploratory models of Church (see Dulles 1987:24). Fuellenbach expands on this: explanatory models are "models of", symbolising what a reality is; exploratory are "models for", "a blueprint for a new construction" (:109). He then proposes two new models for moving into the future: the Church as Basic Community and the Church as Contrast Society. The latter speaks of the Church as "a community based on a different set of values that it must live and uphold over against a society that does not share these primary values" (:197). The Church must always be a "sign of contradiction" (Luke 2:34).

2.6.4 The Spirituality of Vatican II

While much has been written on the ecclesiology of Vatican II, little has been said about its spirituality. In the preface to his 2014 book, *The Spirituality of Vatican II*, Gerald O'Collins speaks of the *lacuna*: "Little interest seems to have been shown in the contribution the Council made to the spirituality of all Catholics, and not simply to the spiritual life of priests and religious" (2014:1). He speaks of all the baptised sharing the Christ's priestly, prophetic and kingly role, a fact that is mentioned in six of the sixteen Vatican II documents (:ix, 29ff).

While it is true that little has been written on what Vatican II had to say about lay spirituality, it is also true that it has been spoken of indirectly in writings on the liturgy, on Baptism and on the priesthood of all the faithful conferred in Baptism and the secular nature of lay spirituality. In preparation for the celebration of the year 2000, Pope John Paul II wrote *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* in which he spoke of Christian living – or spirituality – based on "a renewed appreciation of Baptism" (TMA 41).

In 1998 the Pontifical Council for the Laity published *Rediscovering Baptism*, a compilation of papers presented at a 1997 seminar at the Vatican on "Being a Christian on the Threshold of the Third Millennium" (Pontifical Council for the Laity 1998). In his opening address Pope John Paul II called on Christians to "live their baptism, their vocation and their Christian responsibility" (:12). *Rediscovering Baptism* says it is not enough just to reach a new consciousness of the importance of baptism. That new consciousness must lead to a new spiritual experience, to a life lived in communion with Christ and linked to his Paschal Mystery (:54).

In 2012 Timothy Radcliffe published *Take the Plunge: Living Baptism and Confirmation*. He stresses that Christianity will flourish if Christians grasp the fact that the Church is a community of the baptised (:1), that each baptised person mediates the love of God, participates in the mediatory work of Christ the priest, the prophet and the king (:189-190, 195, 198). He speaks of sanctity as "the prosaic business of just getting on with what must be done now" (:223).

In his volume *The Priesthood of the Laity*, Paul Philibert says that the Spirit who lived and worked in Jesus now lives and works in those who share his priesthood (see Philibert 2005:24). The lives of the baptised are proof that Christ is risen and present in his people (:26). He emphasises three things: the only true priest is Christ; all the baptised share in that priesthood; the ministerial priesthood is at the service of the priesthood of all the faithful (:70). He echoes what Congar said many years previously: the clergy need to be defined in terms of the laity, and not the other way around (:19).

Lumen Gentium 31 speaks about the “secular character” of lay spirituality, a spirituality fashioned in the context of home and work. Aurelia Hagstrom teaches theology at Providence College in Rhode Island, New York. She has spoken to lay groups across America and says she is always amazed at how little is known about the teaching of Vatican II on the nature of the Church and the role of the laity. Her 2010 publication, *The Emerging Laity*, has an imminently practical chapter on the spirituality of the lay person and how all of life can become a sacrifice acceptable to God (:101). She writes that Vatican II was a wake-up call for the laity, “and t’is time they woke up” (:1).

Paul Lakeland’s *The Liberation of the Laity: In Search of an Accountable Church* (2002) treats the meaning of spirituality and what is meant by a lay secular spirituality (:177). He speaks of spirituality as “the entire life of a Christian as it is intentionally related to God” and of lay spirituality as “the framework of my believing life in the world” (:177). He agrees with Congar and Schillebeckx that “Today it is the clergy relative to the laity that is in need of explanation” (:184).

This research speaks of the historicity of the Church (see Section 3.2). To interpret Vatican II, the history of the Church and the social circumstances of the mid-twentieth century must be kept in mind. An interpretation of the ecclesiology of Vatican II today must be done in the light of what has happened in the Church and in the world since the 1960s. Massimo Faggioli, a lay theologian and historian, is well-suited to do this. His two books, *Vatican II: The Battle for Meaning* (2012) and *The Church in a Change of Era: How the Franciscan Reforms are Changing the Catholic Church* (2019) illustrate this. Speaking of the

reception of Vatican II in Africa, he says this is most obvious in the areas of inculturation, the liturgy and inter-religious dialogue. He says too that it is important to keep in mind that the Council event took place at a time when colonialism was coming to an end.

2.6.5 Works on Lay Ministry

After Vatican II there was a veritable explosion of lay ministries in the Catholic Church and a corresponding explosion of works on ministry. The word ministry was given a range of meanings. McBrien's volume *Ministry* (1987) speaks of some of these: any service given to somebody who needs the service; the work of people in the helping professions such as nursing; general service rendered by Christians to others because of Christ; specific service rendered in the name of the Church and promoting the mission of the Church (:11-12). When a service is done by laity in the name of the Church, promoting the mission of the Church, it can be termed Lay Ecclesial Ministry.

In 1980, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops¹¹ issued a Pastoral Statement titled *Called and Gifted*. The document speaks of "the wide variety of people who bring their gifts and talents to serve the Church and who function under the aegis and authorisation of the Church" (:3). It speaks about the different calls originating in baptism: to adulthood, to holiness, to ministry and to community.

Reflecting the change in thinking from a theology of collaboration to one of co-responsibility, in 2005 the USCCB issued a Pastoral Statement called *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*. It is a resource for the development of lay ministry and formation.

¹¹ From now on referred to as the USCCB.

I have spoken in 2.6.3 above about Thomas O'Meara's *Theology of Ministry* (O'Meara 1999). He describes baptism as the entry into ministry (:210). His comments on spirituality as a source of ministry are particularly relevant to this research that speaks of the spirituality that is required to sustain an ethic of Stewardship.

In his publication, *New Ministries*, William Burrows speaks about ministry in the global Church (1980). He comments on the attitude of dependency that was part of the beginnings of the Church in Africa and parts of Asia and of the need for restructuring ministry around the Small Christian Communities.

2.6.6 General Works on the Laity

In *The Lay-Centred Church* Leonard Doohan (1994) writes on both the ecclesiology that underpins a lay-centred Church and on what is meant by lay spirituality. Writing from a lay perspective, he examines the theological models of laity that developed after Vatican II and argues that the model of Family is best suited to a Church that is predominantly lay. He suggests that the distinction between sacred and secular can be superficial and claims that "living as Church in its fullness is the only spirituality for laity" (1994:124-125).

Russell Shaw, also a lay man, wrote *Catholic Laity in the Mission of the Church* (2014). He emphasises the personal calling of each person, a calling that requires discernment (:110). He warns against the perpetuation of clericalism as lay people see liturgical function as the only way of being Church. Lay spirituality should be genuinely lay and there should be no disjuncture between one's faith and daily living. Shaw quotes GS 43: "One of the greatest errors of our time is the dichotomy between the faith which many profess and the practice of their daily lives" (:187).

Another lay theologian, Tony Hanna, traces the history of ecclesial movements in his Volume, *New Ecclesial Movements* (2006). He examines three Movements – Communion and Liberation, the Neo-Catechumenate way and the Charismatic Renewal. He speaks of the need to hold together the charismatic and the

institutional, the Marian and the Petrine elements of the Church (:193- 234). He argues that the New Ecclesial Movements “put before the Church a model of Christian Communion in which the different parts of the Church form an organic and mutually supportive community” (:282).

2.7 The Reception of Vatican II in Southern Africa

2.7.1 On the Nature of Reception

Vatican II marked a new self-awareness by the Catholic Church of its nature and mission and called for a new way of being Church. But that new awareness and new way of thinking has to be “received” by the local Church and by individual members. In the years following Vatican II, many works were published on the nature of Reception and what it involves. Thomas P. Rausch, in his contribution titled “Reception” in *The New Dictionary of Theology* (2003), says it involves four principles, four elements, that must be considered: it involves the whole Church; it involves a decision on the part of the Church; the faith of the Church includes forms of worship and practice as well as doctrinal formulations; the norm for receiving a practice or teaching is in agreement with the Apostolic tradition (:829-830).

Reception is a two-way process: the affirmation of something proposed by the Church’s teaching authority, and the acceptance and affirmation by the Church authorities of something already practiced by the faithful or proposed by theologians. A good example of this second process is the inclusion in the documents of Vatican II of so much of the work of pre-Council liturgists, historians, scripture scholars and ecclesiologists (see 2.3.1 above).

Ladislaus Orsy published *Receiving the Council* in 2009. He wrote, “Our times are the times for the reception of the Council. No more is asked of us, both individuals and communities, than to enter into the dynamics of the Council and to undergo a conversion to a new vision and new practices” (:xi). He says that the Catholic Church as community is “still waiting for structures that will give full scope to these insights” (:151). The aim of this research is to present Stewardship

as such a structure.

2.7.2 Records of Initiatives by the SACBC

2.7.2.1 Introduction

This section speaks of the primary sources in the form of Minutes of Plenary Sessions and Administrative Board meetings as well as pastoral publications of the Conference. For the purpose of this Literature Review I will refer to the following: the responses to a 1985 Questionnaire distributed by the Vatican; the 1989 Pastoral Plan of the SACBC titled *Community Serving Humanity*, and a survey on financial self-reliance.

2.7.2.2 1985 Responses to the Vatican Questionnaire

The Questionnaire dealt explicitly with the reception of Vatican II by each local Church, with successes achieved and with problems incurred. The responses of the SACBC are recorded in SACBC 1985B. These include the following:

- the full impact of LG and GS has still to come (:5),
- the role of the laity is not fully acknowledged (:14),
- there is a lack of understanding of the priesthood of the laity and of its relationship to the ministerial priesthood (:7),
- there is widespread ignorance of the faith (:7),
- there is a need for “formation and internal evangelisation” (:28).

2.7.2.3 The Pastoral Plan: *Community Serving Humanity* (1989)

The SACBC records reveal the continuous efforts of the bishops to involve the laity in the life of the Catholic Church. These include a 1974 meeting with lay representatives; a 1974 study on Evangelisation Today in South Africa that spoke of the urgent need for real involvement of the laity (SACBC 1976B:44); an Interdiocesan Consultation that called for the setting up of Small Christian Communities in each parish (SACBC 1980). In 1989 the Pastoral Plan,

Community Serving Humanity, was launched (SACBC 1989). It is based on the communion ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium* and on the need for active involvement in the wider community as proposed by *Gaudium et Spes*. As such, it is an explicit act of receiving the new thinking of Vatican II.

2.7.2.4 Reception of the Pastoral Plan

Just as Vatican II had to be received by the local Church of South Africa, so the Pastoral Plan had to be accepted and implemented at diocesan and parish level. How it was received was evaluated in 1992 (SACBC 1992A).

It was again reviewed in Phase One of a Three-Phase ongoing Interdiocesan Consultation launched by the SABC in 2010. The theme for Phase One centred on the 1989 Pastoral Plan and its current effectiveness. The responses to a questionnaire sent to every parish indicate, among other things, that 50% of the laity have never heard of *Community Serving Humanity* (SACBC 2010B).

In his 2016 Master of Theology Dissertation with the University of KwaZulu—Natal, Gabriel Nkosinathi Ngcobo spoke of the need for humility and a non-dominating style of leadership among the clergy if the Pastoral Plan, *Community Serving Humanity*, were to become a reality in pastoral life (see 2016:26). This study speaks of the need for a conversion experience for both laity and clergy if Stewardship is to become a way of life (see Sections 7.2 & 7.3).

2.7.2.5 Findings of 2009 Research

In his 2009 Doctoral Thesis, Christopher Slater listed responses to a survey conducted by him in the diocese of Port Elizabeth (Slater 2009). These include the following:

- 85% of the participants said most Catholics do not have a reasonable understanding of the teaching of Vatican II,
- 70% admitted they are not familiar with Vatican II's teaching on the Church as the People of God,

- 77% believe the laity do not understand their call and responsibilities as lay Catholics,
- 77.5% believe there is a growing understanding of stewardship but that more needs to be done (:279-287).

2.7.3 A New Pastoral Plan (2019)

The SACBC organised a three-phase pastoral consultation to take place from 2010 to 2012. Phases One and Two took place, Phase Three was to be gathering of Delegates from all dioceses and lead to a new Pastoral Plan. This did not happen. Instead, the SACBC set up a committee that designed a new Plan, drawing on the findings of Phases One and Two. It is titled *Evangelising Community. Serving God, Humanity and all Creation* (SACBC 2019).

The Plan has five focal areas: Evangelisation, Laity Formation and Empowerment, Life and Ministry of Priests and Deacons, Marriage and Family, Youth, Justice, Peace and Non-Violence, Healing and Reconciliation, Care of Creation and the Environment.

As with the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II and the 1989 Pastoral Plan, this new Plan has to be received, theologically and pastorally, at diocesan and parish level. Otherwise, it will suffer the same fate as *Community Serving Humanity*. This thesis offers Stewardship as a vehicle for this reception. One of the weaknesses of *Community Serving Humanity* was that the dioceses did not produce their own plan based on the SACBC Pastoral Plan. The 2019 Plan calls for this to be done so that the 'concept' Plan of the SACBC is adapted to the realities of the local diocese. This research goes further: the SACBC 'concept' Plan and the diocesan plan must be further concretised in a parish pastoral plan. It is essential that the laity be involved at all stages of the process.

2.8 Works on Stewardship

2.8.1 Stewardship and Communion Ecclesiology

The 1985 Extraordinary Synod¹² was called to consider the teaching of Vatican II and to assess its effectiveness in the life of the Church. The Final Report (1985) said that communion ecclesiology is the key to an understanding of the ecclesiology of the Council.

A second document that is a key source for this section is “Communion and Stewardship”, the outcome of a study on Stewardship by the International Theological Commission (2004). It concludes that the ecclesiology of communion provides the foundation for Stewardship.

A third work that is important to this section is David Pascoe’s article, “Living as God’s Stewards: Exploring Some Theological Foundations” (2013).

A source from the Lutheran tradition is John H. Reumann’s *Stewardship and the Economy of God* (1992). He traces the origin of the word ‘Stewardship’ and links it to God’s plan for the salvation of the world.

The Baptist theologian Ruth Anne Foster’s “Stewardship: Sign and Substance of the Christian Life as Taught in the New Testament” (Foster 1995) provides an overview of the biblical teaching on Stewardship, especially of the teaching of Jesus and St. Paul.

Pope Francis defines the Church as a “Community of Disciples”. His encyclical *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG 2013) stresses that the evangelising work of the Church is the responsibility of each disciple.

¹² A Synod of Bishops is made up of bishops from around the world who meet with the Pope as an expression of collegiality. The structure is permanent, but the membership varies. There are three types of assemblies: an Ordinary General Assembly, an Extraordinary General Assembly and a Special Assembly. After each Assembly, the Pope normally issues an Apostolic Exhortation containing his reflections on the Synod and its conclusions.

2.8.2 Works from the United States

In 1969 Hugh O'Connell wrote *Stewardship: A Call to a New Way of Life*. It is one of the first attempts to develop a Catholic theology of stewardship, something the author calls "a sore need" (:8).

In 1992 the USCCB published a Pastoral Letter titled *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*. In its tenth anniversary edition, the United States bishops speak about the need for a disciple to make a personal decision to follow Christ (USCCB 2002A:8). This decision, rooted in a personal conversion, leads to a new way of life and stewardship is a practical living of this new way (:9).

Also in 1992, the USCCB published *Go Make Disciples* as a strategy for a new evangelisation. A tenth anniversary edition was published in 2002 (USCCB 2002B). Basic to Stewardship is the conviction that all is gift: basic to evangelisation is that God's most precious gift is salvation in Christ and, like all God's gifts, it must be passed on and shared (:17ff).

In 2001 the USCCB published *Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium*. It says each one is called to adulthood in the faith, to holiness, to ministry and to community. Each is given unique gifts to respond in a unique and personal way to the call of God. Each has a role to play in the Church and the world.

Apart from the publications of the USCCB, much has been produced in the United States on the theory and practice of Stewardship. Charles Zech wrote *Why Catholic Don't Give ... And what can be done about it* (2006). Even if the situation is very different, this thesis suggests that many of the reasons he gives are applicable to the South African situation and to the dependency syndrome in the Catholic Church here.

As a guide for Catholic parishes Andrew Kemberling and Mila Glodava produced *Making Stewardship Way of Life* (2009). Speaking about the spirituality of Stewardship, they mention four core values: identity, trust, gratitude and love. They talk about the stewardship of faith, of vocation and of earth (:75ff). The

publishers claim the work is “the ultimate parish stewardship guide” (see Back Cover).

Another practical guide is Charles Zech’s *Best Practices in Catholic Stewardship* (2008). Stewardship, he says, is not optional: all are gifted and all will be called to account (:10). The special value of this work is that it is the result of a survey of Stewardship activities across the United States and what works in a wide variety of parishes. As with his 2006 publication, much of what Zech says can be adapted to the situation in South Africa.

In 2007 Leisa Anslinger and Victoria Shepp wrote *Forming Generous Hearts*. They give seven principles on which parish Stewardship rests. I believe their second principle is the most basic and essential: “Experience deep conversion to Christ and create a climate in which everyone is given the opportunity to encounter and be drawn into life in Christ” (:33).

There is a similar emphasis on the need for personal conversion for a disciple to live a life of stewardship in Daniel Conway’s *What I Own and What Owns Me* (2006). Sub-titled “A Spirituality of Stewardship”, Conway speaks of Stewardship as a lifestyle that reflects what we believe.

Also writing on the spirituality of Stewardship, Justin Clements in *A Steward’s Way* (1997), also speaks of the need for what he calls stewardship conversion for both individuals and the parish community (:30-60).

2.8.3 Works from England and Wales

In 1995 the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales¹³ published *The Sign We Give* on what they called Collaborative Ministry (CBCEW 1995). Drawing on *The Sign We Give*, the Diocese of Portsmouth drew up its own Pastoral Plan, *Go Out and Bear Fruit* (Diocese of Portsmouth 2005). In 2009

¹³ From now on referred to as the CBCEW.

the same diocese published *Stewardship: Formation Material for Stewardship Teams*). It speaks of Stewardship as “a way of living as a disciple of Jesus Christ” (:4), echoing the USCCB document *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response* (USCCB 2002A).

2.8.4 Works on the Stewardship of Creation

A very important text for this section of the thesis is Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si’* (LS 2015). It is probably one of the most important encyclicals issued by any Pope. It speaks about how the communion between God, humankind and creation that existed at the beginning was damaged by sin and restored in Christ. This forms the basis for his appeal for the care of what he calls our common home. Titled *Care for our Common Home*, it is an appeal to the entire human family “to seek a sustainable and integral development” (LS 13). Pope Francis speaks about the inter-connectedness of all people and all creation. He goes on to speak about the ruptures that have occurred in humankind’s relationship with God, with each other and with creation (LS 66). The Pope remains optimistic: “We know that things can change” (LS 13).

Sean McDonagh has spent many years in the Philippines and out of this experience wrote *To Care for the Earth* (1986). It is sub-titled “A Call for a New Theology”. He speaks of the obligation of human beings as they stand before God “and are ultimately responsible to God for the management of human affairs and of creation” (1986:122). He says people grow into the image of God as they care for each other and for the earth (:123).

A more recent work is *The Ecological Challenge* (Fragomeni & Paivlikowski 1994). It speaks of the need to integrate ecological concerns in the life of faith of the individual and of the community. The ecological challenges, the authors suggest, call for a three-fold response: ethical, liturgical and spiritual.

As mentioned in Section 1.6.3, the International Theological Commission (ITC) said that because human beings are made in God’s image they are called to Stewardship. The document concludes “Human beings ... are required to

acknowledge their position as creatures to whom God has confided a precious responsibility for the stewardship of the physical universe” (ITC 2004, par.95).

In 1991, the USCCB published a document, *Renewing the Earth*. It speaks about the widespread destruction of the environment as a “moral challenge” (:1). It highlights the ethical dimensions of the crisis, its links to both development and poverty and of ways of promoting “a just and sustainable world community” (:2). It concludes with an appeal to all to participate in the debate on how to protect the world’s ecological heritage (see :13).

In *The Church Emerging from Vatican II*, Denis Doyle (2009) speaks of the care of creation in terms of a Stewardship that is concerned, not so much for ourselves, but for those who come after us. He says that it is a matter of survival of the planet and asks, “What will be left to future generations after present society gets done pillaging the earth?” (:335).

2.9 Works on Leadership

The official teaching of the Catholic Church is that the Church is a Community in which all are intrinsically equal (CCL 208). It also teaches that the Catholic Church is hierarchical (CCL 330-572). Leadership at all levels has to balance these two facets of the same Church. It has to hold together the communal and the hierarchical models. The supreme example of this holding together is Christ himself. He was “Teacher and Master” (John 13:13) but came to serve, not to be served (see Matt.20:28).

In *The Collaborative Leader*, Loughlan Sofield and Donald H. Kuhn speak about the key elements of Christian leadership (see 1995:41ff). In particular they speak about the task of fostering the gifts of the laity and creating the environment which enables people discern what is their personal call and what are their gifts (see 1995:129).

In his work *Leadership for Today, Hope for Tomorrow*, Anthony D’Souza speaks of the need for a clear vision that is owned by the community (see 2001:92ff).

He recalls the biblical images of leadership: Servant, Shepherd and Steward (see :17).

Owen Phelps uses the same three scriptural images as D’Souza. In 2009 he published *The Catholic Vision of Leading Like Jesus*, sub-titled “Introducing S3 Leadership, Servant, Steward, Shepherd”. He terms the present time “The hour of the lay faithful” (Phelps 2009:25). Speaking of clerical leadership, he recalls the words of Pope John Paul II in his letter to priests on Holy Thursday 1990: “The priesthood is not an institution that exists alongside the laity or above it. The priesthood of bishops and priests, as well as that of deacons, is for the laity, and precisely for this reason it possesses a ministerial character, that is to say, of service” (:50).

In *Christian Leadership: A Challenge to the African Church*, Emmanuel Ngara also speaks of the leadership of Jesus (2004). He advocates the fostering of team leadership and of the need for the forming of responsible leaders. He also speaks of the importance of educating people on what to expect or demand from their leaders (:94). The Catholic Church, Ngara says, must model good leadership to the secular world and its leaders (:10).

2.10 Works on Parish Conversion

This thesis asserts that before Stewardship is introduced in a parish, a two-fold conversion is needed: a conversion of the heart and of the mind. James Mallon’s 2016 book, *Divine Renovation*, is a call to the Church to move out of its inward-looking mentality and programmes to being what it was intended to be from the beginning, an evangelising community that exists to make disciples.¹⁴

Mallon partnered with Ron Huntley to write *Unlocking Your Parish* (2019). They speak about the need for conversion through an encounter with Christ and they

¹⁴ Mallon has conducted workshops in Southern Africa and his programme, *From Maintenance to Mission*, is already well-known in the region.

propose Alpha¹⁵ as a way to accomplish this. They speak also about a new paradigm of evangelisation, namely, “belong – believe – behave” (:25-26): people need to feel they belong to a hospitable community; in that welcoming community, they grow in faith; this faith determines the way they live.

2.11 Conclusion

This literature review is organised around the main themes of this research, namely Historical, Theological, the Documents of Vatican II, post-Vatican II Documents, post-Vatican II Theological Works, the Reception of Vatican II in Southern Africa and Works on Stewardship.

The Historical Sources (see Section 2.2) speak about lay passivity and clericalism in the history of the Church and the factors that led to a division between an active and ‘superior’ clergy and a passive, ‘inferior’ laity. It speaks too of the growth of paternalism and dependency in the Church in Southern Africa.

The Theological Sources (see Section 2.3) speak about the developments that prepared the way for Vatican II: The Papal Encyclicals, the Liturgical Renewal, the revival of Biblical Theology, the growth of the Lay Apostolate. The period saw a revival of the theology of Communion and a Body of Christ ecclesiology.

The documents of Vatican II (see Section 2.4) are central to this thesis. The sixteen documents rest on two core documents, *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*. The theology of Communion is the common thread linking all sixteen documents. The Church is described as the People of God and, therefore, all are equal, and all are responsible for its life and mission.

Post-Vatican II Documents (see Section 2.5) draw out the implications of the Council and its new vision of Church. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* says that the purpose of the Church is to evangelisation. *Christifideles Laici* says that there is no

¹⁵ Founded by Charles Marham in 1990, Alpha is an introduction to the basics of the Christian faith through 13 sessions of talks and discussions.

room for passivity in a community model of Church. No one is supposed to stand around idle.

Post-Vatican II theologians (see Section 2.6) teased out the meaning of the teaching of the Council and its implications for the life of the Church. Dulles' models of the Church became an accepted way of speaking of the ecclesiology of Vatican II. His model, Community of Disciples, is biblical in origin (see Acts 6:2). It has further been refined by Pope Francis who calls the Church "a community of missionary disciples" (EG 24).

Many of the authors reviewed in this section speak of the role of the laity in a People of God model of Church. The section also includes works on Ministry, lay and clerical.

The new Vatican II vision of Church remains theory if not accepted theologically and pastorally. Section 2.7 speaks of the nature of Reception and in particular of the Reception of Vatican II in Southern Africa. The main source for this section is the Archives of the SACBC.

Because Stewardship is based on the same Communion ecclesiology as the Council, it is offered by this research as a way of receiving Vatican II in Southern Africa and of escaping from both clericalism and lay passivity. The sources for the research on Stewardship (see Section 2.8) are drawn from Catholic and other Christian Churches. The research failed to find anything of significance regarding Stewardship in the Church of Southern Africa. This research is a contribution towards filling this gap.

Chapter Three will deal with the first of the themes of this research, namely, the historical circumstances that led to inter-related phenomena, passivity among the laity and clericalism among the ordained.

CHAPTER THREE

CLERICALISM AND THE ROLE OF THE LAITY IN THE HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

3.1 Clericalism and Passivity

3.1.1 In Society in General

In the first chapter of *Clericalism. The Death of Priesthood*, George B. Wilson suggests that society in general has its “clerics” and corresponding “laity”. These clerical groups are like guilds, formations that bring order into society by assigning clear roles to both the members of the guild and those for whom they exist (see 2008:13). Each guild, each clerical group, has its own distinctive culture, its own way of thinking and behaving, that shapes it into what it is. Each is governed by its own set of rules. Some have distinctive dress, like the judge with his wig in an English court or the priest in his black suit and clerical collar. And some have distinctive titles (like Reverend and Doctor, Monsignor and Professor) that set them apart from and sometimes above the rest of people.

There are common characteristics that belong to society’s guilds or clerical groupings.

Firstly, membership brings privileges: “Individuals who pass through the portals into a particular group ... take on a new identity within society in general. They might be seen by others, and therefore themselves, as endowed with the characteristics of a particular group” (Wilson 2008:15). They share in the achievements of past and present members and unconsciously absorb the philosophy, the ethos, the ways of thinking and speaking, even the mannerisms of the guild.¹⁶

¹⁶ Often as I sat in a plane, minding my own business, dressed like anybody else and exchanging a few pleasantries with the passenger next to me they say, after a little while, “Do you mind my asking: are you a priest?”. I never know should I feel insulted or complimented.

As the new member becomes part of the culture of the group and appropriates its way of life in society, he or she automatically benefits from its iconic status. It is as if they become part of the collective personality and enjoy a social standing, a position and a role in society, which they have not actually earned and that may be out of all proportion to their personal ability and achievement. Even Pope Francis, frequently referred to as “the Jesuit Pope”, seems to share in and benefit from the iconic status of the Society of Jesus.

Secondly, it is not only the “clergy” members of the guild who benefit. Those for whom the group exists benefit from their association with them. People trust that their doctor or lawyer knows their job and will do what is best for them. Wilson says, once the non-members “buy into the script”, they are willing to accept their inferior role because of the accruing benefits (Wilson 2008:7-8). Through this unwritten pact between those who belong (the “clergy”) and those who do not (the “laity”), the culture of a particular guild is both generated and maintained.

Thirdly, even though these groups are a necessary part of the ordering of society and benefit those who belong and those who do not, things can go wrong. When they do, all are responsible, though “all may not be guilty” (Rabbi Herschel, quoted in Wilson 2008:7). “Clericalism” is a sign that things have gone wrong and is a constant danger for every group. As with the weeds among the corn (see Matt.13:24-30), people may not be conscious of its presence until it has begun to choke the good seed.

There are warning signs that help to detect incipient clericalism. The first is when the natural differences between the clerical group and those for whom it exists mutate into distinctions between the “superior” clergy group and the “inferior” laity.

A second warning sign is when the “clergy” group becomes reluctant to accept any criticism from their “laity”. It becomes even more apparent that clericalism is taking over when the group fails to critique itself.

A third sign, linked to the second, is when the “good name”, the public image of the group becomes paramount. The primary loyalty is to the group and the primary purpose is to preserve its public image and its icon status and to avoid scandal at all costs.

A fourth warning sign that the group is being impeded by clericalism is when it becomes so centred on itself, on its iconic status, on the privilege of belonging, that the members lose touch with the realities of life outside the group. Wilson quotes President Nixon: “When they play “Hail to the Chief”, give a twenty-one-gun salute, and everybody stands when you enter a room, and nobody ever tells you to go to hell, you lose touch with reality” (Wilson 2008:10).

3.1.2 Clericalism in the Church

Jesus spoke about how the leaders of this world lord it over their subjects and he warned his followers, “It shall not be so among you” (Matt.20:25). The warning was not heard. The seeds of clericalism were sown at a very early stage of the Church’s pilgrimage and the mature weeds are strong and healthy today. They manifest themselves through what Wilson calls “unexamined attitudes” of both clergy and laity (see Wilson 2008:16-31). These “unexamined attitudes” are indicators that both clergy and laity are operating out of a clericalist mindset.

Clericalism in the Church is rooted in a fundamental theological error, even heresy. If this is named for what it is then there is hope that the roots of clericalism can be removed.

Traditionally the work of bishops, and priests as co-workers has been described under three headings: Teach, Govern and Sanctify (see CCC 1994:888-89). The description remains valid but when it becomes infected with clericalism, it is interpreted to mean that these functions belong to the clergy only: only they teach, govern and sanctify. The laity have a merely passive role: to be taught, to be governed, to be sanctified. I call it a heresy because it denies, in practice if not in theory, the basic teaching of scripture and of the Church, that all the baptised share in the one priesthood of Christ. This means that all, in different ways, share

in the prophetic role of Christ, and so have a responsibility and a right to evangelise, to “teach all nations” (Matt.28:18). That is not delegated to them. It is conferred in baptism. It means too that all the baptised share in the kingly and shepherd role of Jesus. Each has a shepherd’s responsibility for the care of others by virtue of baptism and not by delegation of the local priest. Each shares in the sanctifying role of Jesus “the High Priest of our confession” (Heb.3:1). Each is called to a life of prayer and worship, to be active in the liturgy of the Church and to sanctify the world through their life in the midst of that world, offering all that they do “in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Col.2:17).

To use Wilson’s terminology, the fundamental “unexamined attitude” of both clergy and laity is that priesthood belongs only to those who have received ordination; the laity are not priests. Clericalism therefore reduces priesthood to that of the ordained. It reduces laity to being passive recipients of the ministry of the ordained. This fundamental error gives rise to clericalism in both clergy and laity. Clericalism and passivity are concomitant errors, different manifestations of the same reality. In the words of Wilson, the clericalist mentality sees the clergy “as the only manifestation of priestliness [and so] we reduce our lay faithful to passive recipients of the holy actions of the ordained, diminishing the dignity that should rightly be theirs by virtue of their baptism and confirmation” (2008: xv-xvi). In other words, clericalism leads automatically to lay passivity.

This clericalist mentality, infecting both clergy and laity, manifests itself in a variety of unreflected and unexamined expectations and attitudes similar to those Wilson says are found in all clerical or guild formations. I will speak briefly of seven of them. Each “clerical” attitude has a concomitant lay counterpart.

First, clericalism offers automatic status to the ordained, a position of superiority in society. It does not have to be earned: it is one of the perks of the job. The priest accepts it. The laity believe it is his right as a cleric, a ‘man of God’.

Secondly, priests are set apart from the rest of the faithful. Normally they live apart; they do not hold down “secular” jobs; they have a special title and they dress in a distinctive clerical way. All of this has value but when clericalism enters

the priest begins to believe that because he wears special clothes and is given a special title, then he is special. The laity automatically see him as different, a holy man who is not “like the rest of men” (Luke 18:11), not burdened by sin and “beset by weakness” (Heb.5:2) as they are. When priests live up to these perceptions and expectations, when they actually are “holy men of God”, they can be living examples of another way of life and of the power of God’s grace working in sinful human beings. When they do not, the laity are confused and disillusioned, as in the scandal of the sexual abuse crisis: how can this icon of holiness be guilty of a crime? They, the laity, find it easier to remain in denial than to face the reality of a sinning cleric.

Thirdly, as with groups in civil society as described by Wilson, loyalty to the group and its good name become paramount. Even criminal acts can be covered up in an effort to avoid scandal. Clerical perpetrators feel safe and protected. Victims are not heard. Nobody wants to believe what they are hearing.

Fourthly, all governance in the Church is in the hands of the clergy (see canon 129). Coupled with this is the fact that the priest is the one who presides at the Eucharist and administers the sacraments. Power tends to corrupt, even in the Church. The clericalised priest sees himself as a man of power in the local Church and resents anyone who appears to challenge him. The clericalised laity abdicate the power that is theirs as sharers in the kingly priesthood of Christ. Because they see the priest as a mediator between them and God, they see him as representing God in their lives and often they do not see abuse of power for what it is. Pope Francis maintains that clericalism is at the root of child sexual abuse by the clergy (Pope Francis 2018B:2). Essentially it is an abuse of power. If the “unexamined attitude” of the laity is that priests possess all power in the Church, they themselves feel disempowered and become passive followers of a ruling clergy.

Fifthly, as with clerical groups in secular society, the priest may gradually lose touch with the reality of people’s lives. He does not have to worry where the next meal will come from or how he will manage to pay the next term’s school fees for a child. He can always have recourse to the bishop or ask for a transfer. He may

forget that a family in his care has no one to run to and they cannot just walk away from responsibilities. His priesthood, which exists for the laity, becomes clericalised and separates him from the people that are the *raison d'être* for his very existence. The laity may come to believe that because he does not live their way of life, he cannot understand their problems. The link between what happens in Church and what is occurring in their lives is broken and they, the laity, retreat into passivity. The practice of their faith is limited to their church-related activity.

Finally, the priest is the chief proclaimer of the word of God. Vatican II says it is his "first duty" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis* (PO) 1965:4). This may give rise to an "unexamined attitude" in the priest that he has a monopoly on preaching and that he can do it effectively simply because he has so many years of study and has been ordained. The laity can forget that they too share in the priesthood of Christ and are charged with proclaiming the Good News to all people (see Mark 16:15). They "take the easy option", become passive hearers of the message of salvation. In the words of Pope John Paul II, they fail to take "stewardship responsibility for God's varied grace" (CL Chapter IV).

This research is based on the teaching of the Catholic Church on priesthood as in the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church of Vatican II.

Now the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood, although they differ in essence and not only in degree, are nevertheless ordered to each other; for they participate, each in its own particular way, in the one priesthood of Christ. (LG 10)

There is one priesthood, that of Christ. He is the incarnate Son of God, anointed by the Father "as the eternal priest and everlasting king" (Preface of the Mass of Christ the King). He is "a priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Heb.7:17), continually interceding for the children given to him (see Heb.2:13). All the baptised share in this one priesthood of Christ. Each share in His three-fold function as 'priest', 'prophet' and 'shepherd-king'. This is the foundation of their dignity and of their call to active discipleship. The ministerial priesthood, the priesthood of the ordained, is a priesthood of service. It exists to serve the common priesthood of all the baptised. In the words of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, "The ministerial priesthood is at the service of the common

priesthood. It is directed at the unfolding of the baptismal grace of all the baptised” (CCC 1547).

Clericalism is a denial, in practice if not in theory, of this teaching. It reduces priesthood to that of the ordained. Only they are tasked with teaching, governing and sanctifying. Only they share in the prophetic, kingly and priestly role of Jesus. This mentality, this way of understanding priesthood, automatically allots to the laity a secondary role. Passivity is the inevitable consequence.

3.2 The Historical Nature of the Church¹⁷

Chapter VII of LG is titled “The Pilgrim Church”. As a Pilgrim Church, it is what O’Meara terms “eminently historical” (1995:35). As it travels through history, it both influences and is influenced by what makes history: cultures, philosophies, civilisations, political and social movements, wars, the rise and fall of empires, migration, new discoveries. As the community of faith interfaces with these currents of history, each age, in the words of O’Meara “fashions its own image of the Church”, often in “an unreflective way” (:80, 84). Part of the historical burden of the Church is that one image can become so dominant (for example, the hierarchical one) that another essential element (that of community) may remain dormant for centuries. Future generations can re-claim the dormant element and separate what is merely a culture-bound expression of the faith from the essential message of salvation. As O’Meara says: “What the Reformation vigorously rejected again returns, and what the Reformers advocated, Rome now claims as its own” (:85).

¹⁷ In the historical section of this thesis, I acknowledge especially to the following works: *Catholicism* (1994) and *The Church* (2008) by Richard McBrien, *Lay People in the Church* (1957) by Yves Congar, *The Emergence of the Laity in the Early Church* (1990) by Alandre Faivre, *New Ecclesial Movements* (2006) by Tony Hanna.

This Chapter speaks of the growth of “clericalism” in the hierarchy and of passivity among the laity. This growth is linked to the dominance of the clerical and hierarchic image of the Church and the neglect of both the community image as the People of God and of the priesthood of all the baptised that has its source in Baptism.

Underlying this historical sketch of what contributed to the passivity of the laity are the following convictions:

- First, there was never a golden age when the Church perfectly reflected its Founder and perfectly lived his message, and that includes the Church of the Acts of the Apostles.
- Second, the Church is made up of sinful human beings and so is not perfect; it makes mistakes and is in constant need of repentance and reform.
- Third, there is no intention of disparaging the people and the practices of the past, and that includes the people and practices of the local South African Church, but I do believe there is much to be gained from understanding the circumstances that lead to passivity and neglect of Stewardship obligations in order to respond to the circumstances and needs of today (see Congar 1957:2).

3.3 From Pentecost to Constantine

3.3.1 Laos and Kleros and a New Testament Egalitarian Community

Congar begins his work on Lay People in the Church by saying that “there is no distinction between lay people and clerics in the vocabulary of the New Testament” (1957:2). Faivre agrees: “One searches the New Testament in vain for a theology of the laity; neither layman nor priests can be found in it, at least in the sense in which we understand these words today” (1990:7).

Laikos, from which the word “lay” is derived, is an adjective and is not found in the Bible. On the other hand, the word *Laos*, from which we get the word Laity, is used frequently. It stands for the people of God as distinct from their gentile neighbours (see Congar 1957:1). God said through Moses “you shall be my

possession among all peoples And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex.19:5-6). This "holy nation" is covenanted to God at Sinai and Moses tells them, "You are a people holy to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession" (Deut.7:6). The people of the Covenant are the *Laos tou Theou*, the people of God.

In the beginning of Luke, Simeon says Jesus will be "a light to the gentiles and the glory of Israel, his people" (Luke 2:32). Later the Gentiles themselves become part of the new *Laos tou Theou*: "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people Once you were no people but now you are God's people" (1 Peter 2:9-10). All members of the Christian Community belong to this new People of God. No distinction is made. Paul told the Colossians that "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised" but all are "God's chosen ones" (Col. 3:11-12). Paul speaks of differences (see 1 Cor.12) but these are primarily "a matter of function and stem from the different gifts (*charismata*) given by the Spirit for building up the community" (Keightley 1988:558). The entire community is the new *Laos tou Theou*, the New Israel.

As with *Laos, kleros*, from which we get the word "cleric", designates all of God's chosen people and not a section of them. The word originally meant "the instrument used to draw lots" (Faivre 1990:6). Later it came to stand for the office or the portion of land or the inheritance that came to one as the result of drawing or casting the lot. The soldiers cast lots for the seamless garment of Jesus (see John 19:23) and the "lot" of Judas fell to Matthias in Acts 1:26. In the Old Testament the Israelites as a nation were God's portion and lot: "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage" (Deut.32:9). And in the New Testament the whole Christian community is "chosen and set apart" (*kleronomi*) (1 Peter 2:9), called to be holy as God is holy (see 1 Peter 1:16), to be perfect as the Father is perfect (see Matt.5:49).

The members of the first Christian community are Jews but they are different, set apart as a group. They meet daily in the temple; they gather in the homes of members for the "breaking of bread" (Acts 2.42); they hold everything in common (see Acts 2:44). As a community they are already a new *kleros*, "chosen in Christ"

(Eph. 1:4) and set apart from their Jewish brothers and sisters. Their being *kleros* does not refer to distinctions among themselves but to being different from non-believers because of their belief in the risen Christ. Their being different from others and their unity among themselves rests on their belief and their way of life: “They held steadfastly to the Apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).

Even though Paul had little contact with the Christian Church at Jerusalem, the churches he established were built on the same community model as described in Acts 2. He tells the Galatians that “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, but you are all one in Christ” (Gal.3:29). He reminds the Corinthians that they are called to be as united and as dependant on one another as the parts of the human body. Members of the community have been given different gifts or charisms and these are to be used to build up the community, the body of Christ (see 1 Cor.12:4-11). Each one has a specific contribution to make to the community and its mission; the gifts of the Spirit must be “exercised for the benefit of all” (Keightley 1988:558).

In his letters Paul pays tribute to specific individuals who contributed to the development of the local churches, many of whom would be considered “laity” in the later use of the term. They included Stephanus who worked for the Church at Corinth (see 1 Cor.16:15), the husband-and-wife team, Aquila and Priscilla (see Rom.16:3), and “the workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphora (Rom.6:12). Special mention is made of Rufus and his mother in whose house the local Church assembled (see Col.4:15). Having listed these and other examples, Faivre concludes that “In original Christianity, the challenge of the call to discipleship was for all the people. Today’s vocational distinctions in spirituality would have been out of place in New Testament times” (1990:3).

3.3.2 Leadership in the New Testament Community

3.3.2.1 Jesus on Leadership¹⁸

Even though the early Christian community was profoundly egalitarian, it had evolving but structured leadership. Jesus himself was “Lord and Master” but he lived as “one who serves” (Jn. 22:27). He chose the Twelve, possibly reflecting his own Jewishness, and he told them, “If anybody would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all” (Mk. 9:35). He chose the seventy-two (see Lk. 10:1-6), reflecting the elders of Numbers 11:16 and later the Sanhedrin. Luke may also have had in mind the belief of the time that the world was made up of seventy-two nations (see Barclay 1967:135). Jesus told these messengers, “He who hears you, hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects the one who sent me” (Lk. 10:16).

Peter was chosen as the leader of the Twelve. Jesus said, “You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church” (Matt.16:18). A short time later Peter was reminded he is a follower and not the master: “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me, for you are not on the side of God but of man” (Matt.16:23). Christ remained “the master of the house” (Mk.13:35). All others, including Peter, were stewards who keep watch. Reinstated after the Resurrection, Peter was told he is to be a shepherd leader and reminded that he will die as the Good Shepherd himself had died (see Jn.21:15-19; Jn.10:15).

3.3.2.2 Levels of Leadership in the New Testament Community

The post-Pentecost faith community was compelled at a very early stage to examine its own self-awareness of what it was and what was its mission, of how it related to the Jewish people and later to gentile cultures. As this interfacing occurred, the young Church appears to have three basic convictions. First, they were conscious of the presence and action of the risen Christ. Mark says the

¹⁸ I will return to this theme in Chapter 7.

eleven “went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it” (16:20). Secondly, they were aware of the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The leaders at Jerusalem wrote to the gentile converts, “It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burdens than these necessary things” (Acts 15:28). Thirdly, they had the confidence to make practical and far-reaching decisions that would change their self-awareness of being a Jewish sect to being a community in which there is “neither circumcised nor uncircumcised” (Col.3:11).

Fourthly, the Church of the New Testament saw itself as the new Israel, the new People of God: “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people. Once you were not a people at all but now you are God’s people” (1 Peter 2:9-10). In that new people, all are equal and all are one in Christ: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ” (Gal.3:28).

Because they believed that Christ was with them as He had promised (see Matt.28:30) and that the Spirit of Truth was their constant and abiding guide (see John 14:16), they were confident enough to make bold decisions and to believe that these were according to the mind of Christ. Some of their decisions concerned the governance and the day-to-day organisation of a rapidly expanding Church. Even if they belonged to God as God’s own people and even if all were one and equal, they were human beings living in a human society and so they needed leadership structures. Without this leadership they would be led astray by the “false teachers” (Titus 1:10-11) and be blown about by every wind (see Eph.4:11-16). Peter was conscious of the danger of domination and of what we now call clericalism: “Tend the flock of God that is in your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, not as domineering over those in your charge but by being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:2-3).

I will now look at some of the developing leadership structures of the young Church.

Because the first Christians were pious Jews, they remained attached to the temple (see Acts 5:12) and they made use of the vocabulary and structures they were used to. They knew the Sanhedrin with its group of elders or presbyters attached to it, functionaries who were often sent as emissaries to distant Jewish communities. The new Christian group appears to have adopted this structure by setting up its own council of elders at Jerusalem. This is the group that sent Paul and Barnabas as emissaries to Antioch (see Acts 15:22) and that welcomed Paul to Jerusalem (see Acts 21:18).

Secondly, even though all were one and equal in Christ, each group had its appointed leaders. They may have refrained from using the word priest because of the emphasis on the presence of Christ the one “High Priest” (Heb.4:14), because of the emphasis on the priesthood of all its members (see 1 Peter 2:9) and possibly also not to identify with the priestly class of Judaism. But they had leaders whose principal function was to guard the deposit of faith “once and for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). The immediate danger to the faith came from “false teachers” (Titus 1:10).¹⁹ Three kinds of leaders are mentioned in the Acts and the Letters of the New Testament: deacon, elder/presbyter and bishop/*episcopos*. All three were intended to be a ministry of service to the community.

In the case of deacons, the service is implied in the name (the meaning of the word *diakonos*). As McBrien points out, the deacon was at the service of the needy (as in Acts 6:1-6), of the word (as with Philip in Samaria in Acts 8:4-7), and of worship (as in Philip baptising the eunuch in Acts 8:38) (see 2008:45).

Even though Paul had spoken about the role of each and every member in building up the community (see Eph.4:16), nevertheless he instructs Titus to exercise his own leadership position and “Attend to what is defective and

¹⁹ McBrien suggests that there may have been an early form of Gnosticism which teaches that salvation is limited to the few with special knowledge (*gnosis*) or who have received a special revelation (see McBrien 2008:44).

appoint elders in every town as I directed you” (Titus 1:5). Each community had an elder (*presbyteros*) as leader.

The third kind of leader is the overseer or *episcopos*. The ministry is mentioned five times: Acts 20:28; Phil.1:1; 1 Tim.3:2; Titus 1:7 and 1 Peter 2:25. According to McBrien, it was only at the end of the first century that there was a clear distinction between *episcopoi* (bishops, overseers) and *presbyteroi* (elders) (see 2008:44). Speaking about the celebration of the Eucharist, Osborne says that just because all share in the one priesthood of Christ and all are equal, it never meant that any member in the community could preside at “the breaking of bread” (Acts 2:16): “The view that the New Testament indicates that the total community was enjoined to celebrate the Eucharist, so that in principle any baptised Christian might be the Eucharistic celebrant appears to be totally without foundation Ministerial ministry in general is the basis for Eucharistic ministry in particular” (Osborne 1988:80). The danger of domination that Peter spoke about (see 1 Peter 5:3), the danger of clericalism we speak about today, was there before the end of the first century. In the words of Faivre, “Frontiers were already being drawn between the brothers in the life of the Christian community. There were already groups of people who had been reduced to playing a passive role” (1990:14).

I will now speak about two figures whose lives span the later years of the Apostolic Church and the post-Apostolic period, Ignatius of Antioch and Clement of Rome. Their writings indicate the leadership in place in the Church by the end of the first century and the growth of the distinction, if not division, between clergy and laity.

3.3.3 St Ignatius of Antioch and the Hierarchy

Ignatius was born in Syria around 50AD. It is quite possible he would have known Peter and Paul and John. In 107AD the emperor Trajan visited Antioch and told the Christians to sacrifice to the Roman gods or face execution. Ignatius was arrested and sent to Rome to be thrown to the lions at the Circus Maximus. On the way he wrote letters to the seven Churches of Asia Minor and Greece. He is

the first to use the word “catholic” to describe the universal Church and his letters speak about the content of the faith and the structure of a Church at that very early stage. Each local Church appears to have its own bishop, priests and deacons.

In his letter to the Church of Magnesia on the Meander he wrote, “It was my privilege to have a glimpse of you in the person of your saintly bishop Damas and his two clergy, the worthy Bassius and Appolonius, as well as my fellow- servitor, Zutian the deacon” (*The Divine Office*, Vol.III 1975:326). He praised the faith of the Church of Magnesia and what he called its “Godly unanimity”: “Let the Bishop preside in the place of God, and his clergy in place of the apostolic conclave, and let my special friends the deacons be entrusted with the service of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father from all eternity and in these last days has been made manifest” (*The Divine Office*, Vol.III 1975:330). He asked them to safeguard unity and to “never act independently of your bishop and clergy” (:330).

3.3.4 St Clement of Rome and the Laity

After the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD, Jewish Christianity became less dominant, leadership transferred from Jerusalem to Rome and “The history of the Church from this point is the history of the Gentile Church” (Küng 1976:154). Just as the infant Church centred on Jerusalem could not but be influenced by Jewish structures and culture, so the Rome-centred Church, interfacing with Greek and Roman structures and cultures, could not but be influenced by Greek love of order and hierarchy and Roman legal and governance systems. This meeting of the faith community and non-Jewish cultures called for a re-examination of the Church’s self-awareness.

Clement of Rome is a living link between the writers of the New Testament and the post-Apostolic Church: Peter and Paul were martyred during Nero’s persecution, possibly in 67AD; Clement was bishop of Rome from 92AD to 99AD so it is quite possible he knew the two apostles.

Around 95AD, Clement wrote a letter to the Church at Corinth. As said in Section 1.2.3.2 above, the Corinthian Church was modelled on Paul's vision of a charismatic community. Lacking what McBrien calls "pastoral authority and ministerial responsibility" (2008:39), it was plagued by disputes and divisions. Towards the end of the first century, the Christians of Corinth deposed their leaders. Clement condemned what they had done and called for unity and love, for "peace among Christ's flock and its appointed clergy" (The Divine Office, Vol.III 1975:291). Clement's letter is important for two reasons. First, the focal point of the Church is now the capital of the empire. The Church itself is moving towards adopting the administrative structures of Rome and towards centralisation of its own governance structures. Secondly, Clement is the first to use *laikos*, the derivative of *Laos*, to designate a section of the people of God as distinct from the clergy. Appealing for order in the Church at Corinth, Clement reminds them that "special ministries have been assigned to the High Priest; a special place has been allotted to the priests; and the Levites have their own duties. Lay people are bound by rules laid down for the laity" (Congar 1957:2). This is the structure that Clement takes for granted at a time when all the New Testament was not yet in written form.

Supporting his appeal for order and discipline, Clement used a Roman army metaphor. Each soldier has a defined place and task: "Not all of them are Commanders in Chief, or leaders of a thousand, a hundred or fifty men and so on, but each in his own rank executes the orders of the king and rulers" (Favre 1990:17). Each has a role to play, a function, a *leitourgia*. Clement may have been saying the same thing as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, namely the different roles complement each other, but the example of the army can give the impression of subordination, of a division between those who give the orders and those who obey, between the rulers and the ruled. Keighley sums up what happened after Clement: "If originally *laikos* was merely a way of designating one segment of the Christian population, it was but a short time until this term of distinction came to connote subordination, inequality" (Keightley 1988:558). He says the effects were experienced politically and spiritually: power and authority came to be vested in clerics; personal charism was replaced by the charism of office. While at the outset the whole community was involved in the life and

mission of the Church, this gradually decreased until the work of the Church became the task of bishops, deacons and priests. The clergy came to be associated with the sacred, the laity with the profane and worldly. The laity became progressively passive and “second class citizens” of their Church (Doohan 1984:493).

3.3.5 Spirituality and The Role of the Laity in the First Three Centuries

In 1 Corinthians 12:27-39, Paul spoke of the different gifts and functions of the members that make up the body of Christ. These functions appear to be directed towards serving the Church community itself. However, the Church remained conscious of a mission *ad extra* and around 200AD an apologist wrote what is known as the Epistle of Diognotus. It speaks about what Vatican II calls the secular character of lay spirituality.²⁰ The Epistle speaks about the Christians living in Greek and non-Greek cities, following local custom of food, dress and social life, the same as everybody else but at the same time, very different. They are, it says, like the soul in the body and model a Christian way of life to their pagan neighbours: “The soul, when stinting itself in food and drink, feels the better for it; so too Christians, when penalised, show a daily increase in numbers on that account” (Quoted in Shaw 2014:20).

3.3.6 The Impact of Dualistic Heresies

The split between the clerics and the laity and between the sacred and the profane was exacerbated by dualistic heresies that considered matter as evil (see Doohan 1984:94). One of the earliest was the Encratic heresy which attacked the sexual life of married people (see 1984:94). Gnosticism (c.140) claimed that salvation was reserved for an elect few who had been gifted with secret knowledge and spoke of “material beings ruled by passions” incapable of being saved” (Perkins 1998:421). Montanism (c. 150) placed great emphasis on prophecy and moral rigorism and condemned the re-marriage of widows (see Eno 1988A:676). Manichaeism (c. 274) preached an absolute dualism, “a

²⁰ I will return to this in Chapters 4, 6 and 7.

conflict between good and evil, light and darkness” (Eno 1988B:623). St. Augustine became a Manichean devotee for some time before his conversion. Even though the heresies were condemned and gradually faded, “a negative approach to matter remained and an exaggerated spiritualism developed” resulting in disdain for ordinary, everyday life and often leading to what became known as a “flight from the world” (Doohan 1984:95). As the clerics were associated with the spiritual and the laity with a sinful world and the material, the gulf between them widened.

3.3.7 The Attraction of Martyrdom

The Greek word *martyros* means witness. Jesus came to “bear witness to the truth” (Jn. 18:37) and his final act of witness was on the Cross. His disciples were to witness to him “to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8), and some of them would “be put to death” (Lk. 21:16). Eventually the Greek word came to stand for those who were killed because of their faith in Christ.

The killing started with Stephen in Acts 7:55-60. The “Age of Martyrs” begins with the Emperor Septimus Severus in 202 and ended with the Edict of Toleration, signed by Galerius in 311. Lists of martyrs were compiled in Martyrologies and a cult developed. Physical remains were kept in the catacombs in special containers and people gathered to honour them on the day the martyr died, the day of their *natalis* (see Cunningham 1988:629).

The spirituality of martyrdom is linked to baptism through which one is initiated into the Paschal Mystery and begins a life that shares in and models that mystery of dying and rising. The martyr was and still is regarded as the perfect witness. Jesus said, “Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (Jn. 15:13). Vatican II affirms this: “Martyrdom makes the disciple like his Master Therefore, the Church considers it the highest gift and the supreme act of love” (LG 42).

The special appeal of martyrdom in the early Church was based on three things. First, as said above, it was seen as the greatest act of love, the most perfect

witness one could give. Secondly, the early Christians believed that only the martyrs entered heaven immediately after death; the rest had to wait for the Last Judgement. Thirdly, it was an escape for the lay Christian from his second-class status in the Christian community to the highest possible level, above the ruling clerics. When the era passed, an alternative way was found in monasticism, initially a predominantly lay movement.

3.3.8 The Legacy of Constantine

The persecutions ended with Constantine's military victory and the signing of the Edict of Milan by him and Licinius, the Emperor of the East, in 313. With Constantine, the clericalization of the Church became official policy (see Shaw 2014:21). The Church was given legal status. Church property was given back and large donations were made by the State. Special privileges were conferred on the clergy. They were exempted from military service and taxes and began to wear distinctive dress. The distinction between clergy and laity sharpened and the position of the former as a distinctive class within the Church was confirmed. McBrien says, "This division would be accentuated in the Middle Ages with the development of the distinction between the *Ordo Clericorum* and the *Ordo Laicorum*, the former devoted to higher things of the spirit and the latter devoted to lower things of the flesh" (1994:869).

A second and equally serious consequence of the Edict was how it practically merged the Church and the State into one entity. The Romans saw no distinction between the two.²¹ The Emperor Decius could order every family to offer sacrifice. Constantine could now use the structures of the Church to hold together his empire, convene and preside over the Council of Nicea in 325 and see himself as "the bishop of bishops" (Hellwig 1994B:200).²² Constantine became sole emperor after his defeat of Licinius. He moved to Byzantium, extended the city and renamed it Constantinople. The absence of an emperor

²¹ The same is true of subsequent centuries. Church and State were inextricably interwoven until the emergence of the liberal democracies of the 17th and 18th centuries.

²² Constantine had set a precedent: Theodosius I convened the first Council of Constantinople in 381AD; Theodosius II convened Ephesus in 431AD; Marian called Chalcedon in 451AD; and so on until the seventh ecumenical council called by the Empress Irene in 789AD.

in Rome left a vacuum which in time came to be filled by the bishop of the city, blurring still further the dividing line between the civil and the spiritual, the ecclesial and the political, to such an extent that *ecclesia* stood for both. As Congar says, “the earthly, temporal city was, so to speak, sleeping in the bosom of the Church” (1957:52).²³ St. Bernard warned Pope Eugenius III against appearing more like a successor of Constantine than of Peter (see McBrien 1994:747).

3.3.9 Interpretation of the Facts

The Church of the New Testament was a community of disciples, equal and bound together by their belief in the presence of the risen Christ and in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They were held together “by the Apostles’ teaching and fellowship, by the breaking of bread and by prayer” (Acts 2:42-44). Each had his or her own special gift or charism which enabled them to make their unique contribution towards building up the “One Body of Christ” (Rom.12:5).

All members of the Church formed one holy people, a *kleros* of priests, prophets and kings, set apart for the worship of God (see 1 Peter 1:16). There is no indication that there was one holiness for bishops, presbyters and deacons and another for everybody else. The New Testament refers to all without distinction as disciples or believers or saints.

All disciples together, Jews and Gentiles, formed the new People of God, the *Laos Theau* of the New Testament (1 Peter 2:10), a community of equals gifted in different ways for the benefit of all (see 1 Cor.12:12-28). All, including the bishops, priests and deacons, belonged equally to the one *Laos* of God. All had responsibility for the life and mission of their Church.

²³ This blurring continued for several centuries. The State claimed the right to appoint bishops, giving rise to the investiture problem. The Pope claimed absolute power over all of society. Leo III crowned Charlemagne on 25 December 800 and the emperor was called *caput ecclesiae*. The claim of the Pope to appoint and depose emperors continued for the next 700 years and his claim to wield political power did not end until the loss of the Papal States in 1870. Today his political jurisdiction is limited to Vatican City (see McBrien 1994:618ff; 2008:87 & 395).

The New Testament evidence also points to the fact that the egalitarian nature of the Church was coupled with a clear leadership, hierarchical, structure. For Ignatius of Antioch, writing at the beginning of the second century, that structure was a given, but there is no indication in his writings that this implied inequality. His appeal was for unity under the leadership of the bishop. Clement of Rome made the same appeal for unity in the Church at Corinth and even though he used *Kleros* for the hierarchic leadership and *Laos* for the rest, there is no indication (apart from his reference to the command structure of the army) that the distinction was intended to result in subordination or inferiority. This distinction, however, had been made and it soon developed into subordination and inequality. As the clergy came to be associated with heavenly things, the sacred, and the laity with earthly things, the profane, the latter became passive and were regarded as inferior, second-class Christians. This was exacerbated by the growth of dualistic theories which spoke of “the world” as an evil place, at enmity with God. This meant that the clerics, closely associated with the things of God, were considered close to God himself, holier than those more directly involved in the affairs of an evil world and therefore tainted by that world and at a distance from the all-holy God. All the latter could hope for was to save their souls and be assigned to an inferior place in heaven. The only escape was through martyrdom, the way of supreme witness, or through what became known as *fuga mundi*, a flight from the world. The flight from the world was, in reality, a way of escaping from the lay state.

The New Testament distinction between the leaders and the rest had changed into a division between a superior and inferior type of Christian, between those called to closeness with God and those who walked at a distance, between the active leadership and the passive followers. The gulf between them widened when, after Constantine, the clerical leaders became privileged members of imperial society. Because that society did not recognise a separation of Church and State, the Church and civil leadership appeared to merge to form the “Patricians” and the laity were the new “Plebs” of Christian Rome. The main stewardship function of the laity was to make sure their clerical leaders were free of “worldly” concerns so that they could devote themselves to the things of God. Only the ordained were priests, prophets and shepherds, stewards of the flock.

The rest were ministered to, preached to and led, passive members of the people of God.

In summary, the following conclusions can be drawn from this brief study of the Church of the New Testament and of developments until the end of the third century:

- In the New Testament post-Pentecost writings, there was radical equality of all members of the Christian Community. The titles *Kleros* and *Laos* were applied equally to every baptised person.
- By the end of the first century, *Kleros* referred to the leaders of the Church, *Laos* to the rest, first as an indication of difference but later as designating both distinction and inequality.
- As the distinction became more pronounced, the clerics (coming from *Kleros*) were considered superior to the laity (derived from *Laos*), a distinction that was sharpened after Constantine's conversion and the conferring of special benefits on the clergy.
- The association of the clerics with the things of God and the business of the Church and the laity with the matters of the world led to the laity becoming more and more divorced from the mission of the Church and becoming more passive.
- Stewardship of the Church was in the hands of the clergy and the only duty of the laity was to look after the needs of the clergy.

Shaw suggests that the process of clericalization, and the concomitant process of the laity becoming passive recipients of the ministry of clerics, became entrenched in the middle of the 3rd Century. He writes:

More and more emphasis came to be placed upon the difference between clerics and lay people. The clergy increasingly became a religious elite, more or less isolated from ordinary lay life. At the same time, the laity gradually came to be looked upon – also to look upon themselves – as being essentially passive in religious affairs (2014:21).

3.4 Monasticism and the Laity

3.4.1 Historical Overview

By the beginning of the fourth century the lay person and the cleric were seen as not just different but unequal. Faivre says, “The lay person could not reach the same level of perfection (his/her) function was to release the priest and levite from all his material concerns, thus enabling him to devote himself exclusively to the service of the altar” (1990:69). Martyrdom presented a way of escape from second-class status. The persecutions ceased and monasticism offered a new alternative. It offered a way that was more radical than that of the cleric. It was also a reaction to the politicising of the Gospel and the Church begun by Constantine, continued by his successors and accepted by the clerical leaders.

Monasticism was, at the outset, essentially a lay movement and a flight from an evil world. St. Antony, the father of Christian monasticism, was at morning Mass and the Gospel of the day was that of the rich young man of Matthew 19. He sold his farm, gave the money to the poor and retreated to the desert. His story, later recorded by Athanasius, inspired many to follow him and in a short time “the deserts of the Eastern Mediterranean world (Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor) were populated by those who came to imitate him” (Grabner 1994:582). Most were lay people, men and women.

In spite of the numbers who joined him, Antony remained a hermit. The cenobitic (common life) form was developed with St. Pachomius and promoted by St. Basil the Great (290-348). Martin of Tours, the father of western monasticism, established a monastery at Lerins in France. St. Benedict (480- 540) established Monte Cassino in Italy. His rule became basic for western monasticism. They took a vow of “conversion of life” which included poverty, chastity and obedience and the vow of stability. Monks worked on their farm and the core of Benedict’s rule was encapsulated in the motto, *Ora et Labora* (Pray and Work).

Cluny broke with the tradition of each monastery being an independent unit. It is the first example of a monastic order with a principal monastery and abbot linked to satellite monasteries each with its own abbot but subject to that of the Mother House. Cluny was established in 910 and by the year 1100 “it embraced two thousand abbeys, priories and cells” (Bokenkolter 1990:132).

Gradually the monasteries became centres of learning. Bernard of Clairvuax (1090-1153) believed monks should be able to read the Bible and the works of the Fathers of the Church. Later some were withdrawn from the farms and spent their days copying old manuscripts. Later still, the monasteries ran schools for the leading families of the region. Brockman says that throughout the Middle Ages “the monasteries remained the only schools, hospitals and welfare agencies of the time” (Brockman 1990:59).

3.4.2 Monastic Spirituality and the Laity

Monasticism started as a lay movement. Some monks were ordained to lead worship in the monastery. Eventually most became priests and so monasticism was no longer essentially lay. All within male monastic communities were called monks so a three-fold division developed within the Christian community: lay people, clerics and monks.²⁴ Congar says “The clerics and the monks were given over to the holy, so far as they live in the divine world. The laity live among earthly things*et divisa est* (and they are divided) (1 Cor.7:53)” (1957:8). The monastic enclosure that kept visitor and monk apart symbolised this separation.

The division between the divine and the earthly, between the cleric and the lay person, between what was happening at the altar and what was happening in the pews had its own visual expression in the reed veil that was drawn across the sanctuary. Even when the use of this veil was discontinued, the separation continued with the canon of the Mass being recited in Latin in a whisper while

²⁴ The monastic movement also included women (see Swan, L. 2001, *The Forgotten Desert Mothers*. New York: Paulist Press).

the congregation watched in silence and were left to their own prayer. This continued to the middle of the 20th century and the reforms of Vatican II. The lay people in the pews had become passive spectators.

The difference or separation was not only physical. It was presumed that an individual's relationship to God was directly linked to their way of life. St. Augustine said that a mother will have a lower place in heaven than her daughter who has taken a vow of chastity. Some strands of monastic theology gave a unique interpretation to the parable of the sower: the hundredfold is for the martyr, the sixty for virgins and the thirty for the laity (see Hanna 2006:108). The way open to the laity was minimalist: keeping the commandments, avoiding sin, later summed up as 'pray, pay and obey'. Those who wished to move beyond this moved close to the monastery, but the spirituality they received was monastic, not lay (see Doohan 1984:97). The call to holiness was a call to the monastery, or at least a call to live like a monk.

Monastic abbots became more and more like bishops to their communities, symbolised in the use of the mitre. The influence of the monastic way of life extended beyond the monasteries into the diocese when abbots were appointed as diocesan bishops and ruled the dioceses as if they were monasteries and demanded a monastic way of life from their clergy. Congar gives a summary of the influence of monasticism and the flight from the world in the growth of clericalism in the Church: "The lay condition is a concession to human weakness ... From the Christian point of view, life in the world is a compromise ... The laity, concerned in temporal affairs, have no part in the sphere of sacred things" (1957:9-10).

3.4.3 Interpretation of the Facts

Section 3.2 above spoke about the Church of the New Testament as a community of equals led by collaborative leaders and of the historical process that resulted in there being two kinds of Christians, different and unequal, one active in the life of the Church (clerics), the other passive recipients of their ministry (laity). The focus in this section, 3.3, has been on developments in spirituality. Jesus had

spoken about the call to all to be perfect as the Father is perfect (see Matt.5:48), and St Peter said all are called to be holy as God is holy (1 Peter 1:13-16). As the clergy came to be associated with the things of God and the laity had to live in the midst of what was seen as a sinful world, the conviction developed that there are two kinds of holiness, one superior and closer to perfection reserved for the monk, the other, an inferior brand for the laity. The clergy who were not monks were somewhere in between and their path to holiness consisted of trying to live the life of a monk outside the cloister. The spirituality of the laity in turn became a diluted form of monastic spirituality, mediated through their local clergy.

Jesus had said all were called to the same perfection, to become images of the Father. Neither He nor Peter, as quoted above, would have intended that all should become celibate monks or clerics. They must have meant that lay people would grow to perfect holiness in Christ by being lay people.

An assumption of clericalism is that only priests, monks and religious are called to holiness and a life of prayer. It releases the laity from responding to a call to holiness and prayer in the context of their own lives and validates passivity. With monasticism, this form of clericalism and passivity became embedded in the Church.²⁵

The “flight from the world” mentality that provided the original impulse for the flight to the desert or to the monastery was in itself a failure to hold in tension the paradox of scripture which speaks of a world so loved by God that he sent it his only-begotten Son (Jn.3:16) and of a world that stood in opposition to God and to Jesus his Son (Jn.15:18-19). We will see in Chapter 4 how Vatican II dealt with this paradox as it spoke of the concern the Christian must have for the world, of the secular character of lay spirituality and of the path to holiness through a coming together of Christian faith and everyday lay life. There is but

²⁵ This in no way disparages the monastic way of life or the profound influence monasticism had on the history of Europe and much of the world.

one holiness to which all are called. The path of the individual is a response to that person's personal vocation.

3.5 The Gregorian Reform

Pope Gregory VII (1085) faced three major evils in the Church: simony (buying and selling ecclesiastical offices and spiritual goods); lay investiture (the appointment of Church leaders by Kings and Lords); and the passing of ownership of Church property to the families of bishops and priests. The reforms of Gregory aimed at restoring the authority of the Church. He saw his authority as supreme. Everybody, including emperors and kings, was expected to obey. He claimed the power to excommunicate and to absolve, to appoint civil leaders or depose them. His ultimate aim was to restore the authority of the Pope over the entire Church and to free the Church from the control of secular rulers.

Necessary reforms can have unintended negative consequences. The governance of the Church became centred on Rome and on the newly formed *Curia*. Canon Law became dominant in ecclesiastical studies and even the Sacraments were defined in juridical terms (cf. McBrien 1984:622). Future Popes were not consecrated or installed but crowned with a "Tiara", a triple crown that had its origin in the crowning of Persian deified kings.²⁶

Dulles reminded his readers of the dangers of over-emphasising one model of Church (1987:204). The Gregorian reforms emphasised the institutional model and the authority and power attached to it. In this model, it is the task of the Pope and his representatives to rule; it is the duty of everybody else to submit and obey. It created the conditions for the growth of clericalism and for reducing the role of the laity to humble obedience.²⁷

²⁶ The practice continued until John Paul I insisted on being installed into "Supreme Pastoral Ministry" (1978).

²⁷ Another movement that had a similar result was Ultramontanism. It developed especially in France and said the local Churches should look "beyond the mountains" – the Alps – for guidance and orthodoxy (that is, Look to Rome). It was a response to emerging liberal theologies and to the new secular states that were in no way subservient to Rome. The Ultramontanists regarded direction from Rome and complete acceptance of its authority as the way to save the Church. This emphasis on organisation and control must have facilitated even further the growth of clericalism in the Church.

3.6 Feudalism, the Friars and the Laity

3.6.1 The Laity within the Feudal System

Feudalism existed in Europe in some form or other from the 9th to the 15th century. It was based on the grant of land (a *fief*) by the owner (the king or the lord) to a subject (the vassal) in exchange for some service. When the king gave a vast tract of land to a vassal, that vassal became a local lord and allocated plots to the peasants in return for the service of those peasants. The peasant enjoyed the protection of the lord and the produce of the land allotted to him. The feudal society that grew out of this system was divided into what became known as the “three estates of the Realm”, namely the nobility, the clergy and the peasants. Authority within the structure was pyramidal. Everybody knew where they belonged and what was expected of them. There was a certain stability and comfort attached to it: “No one was unemployed or homeless. Everyone succeeded to plots of land, crafts or other services which ran in the family. Consequently, everyone had a place to stay (though it might be crowded), a livelihood (though it might be skimpy), and a recognised place in society (though it might be lowly)” (Hellwig 1994C:561).

Many of the bishops were vassals of the king and this gave rise to three major questions: Who had the right to appoint the bishop, abbot, the parish priest? In the pyramidal structure of the Church and State, to whom were the clergy answerable? In what way could the king or a local lord interfere in the affairs of the Church?

A problem of a different nature arose when the bishop was not just a vassal of the king but was in turn the local lord who allotted land to the peasants, peasants who were also members of his flock.

The laity were at the base of both the feudal and the ecclesiastical pyramid. The *Decretum Gratiani*, written in 1150AD at the height of feudalism, sums up their position in the Church: *Duo sunt genera Christianorum* (there are two kinds of Christians) (see Congar 1957:7). The difference spoken of by Clement of Rome had become a clear distinction between two groups who were radically unequal.

As Gratian wrote, there were two types of Christians, clergy and laity. The former were in a position of privilege; the latter were a distinct and inferior category both within the Church and in feudal society. O'Meara speaks of a large "passive laity directed in word and sacrament by a small separate group who were publicly constituted in full-time service, i.e., the ordained" (1998:724). In the words of the Decree of Gratian, the laity were "allowed to marry, to till the earth, to pronounce judgement on men's disputes and to plead in court, to lay their offerings on the altar, to pay their tithes, and so be saved, if they do good and avoid evil" (Quoted in Hanna 2006:112).

The system in virtue of which bishops, abbots and even local parish priests were appointed by the king or a local feudal lord was called "lay investiture". The Cluniac Reform, so called because it originated from the Benedictine Monastery at Cluny, coupled with the reforms of Pope St Gregory VII (1073- 1085), was aimed at correcting abuses in the lives of clergy and at getting rid of lay investiture. Shaw says it resulted in a stronger papacy, a stronger clergy and a healthier Church, "but that it had an unintended result – fostering clericalism and weakening the position of laity in the Church" (2005:25).

3.6.2 The Laity in Post Feudal Europe and the *Vita Apostolica*

A new Europe gradually emerged during the High Middle Ages (11th to 13th centuries). The draining of the marshes and the clearing of the forests resulted in a rapidly growing population. At the same time, the opening of new trade routes led to the emergence of an influential merchant class. The centre of gravity moved from the feudal manor and the rural monastery to the expanding cities. Doohan speaks of the life of the laity in this new Europe, marked by growing interest in scripture, devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, increased availability in the vernacular of spiritual and theological writings, and the spread of lay guilds and confraternities (see 1984:98).

With the collapse of the structures of the feudal society, the rapid growth in the population and the consequent migration to the cities, a new phenomenon emerged, namely a large urban poor which survived by begging. With the growth

of the universities, many of whose students were lay, the old distinction between the clergy as *literati* and the laity as *illiterati*, gradually faded. This development was accompanied by a new philosophical and scientific interest in the world as world, in the harmony of nature and the place of men and women in the universe.

Hanna speaks of “a new theological interest in creation as an instrumental manifestation of the Creator” and of “a new sensitivity to the position of humanity, all men and women, in the universe” (2006:111). He writes about the “unprecedented activity in thought, commerce and art” and of the “new forms of cultural and religious activity swirling around them” (:112). The *Vita Apostolica* emerged from this cultural, social and religious ferment.

In the monastic period, the *Vita Christiana* was identified with the *Vita Monastica*. In post-Feudal Europe, the *Vita Monastica* gave way to the *Vita Apostolica*. It was the result of a triple rupture. The first was a rupture from the belief that the only way to live a full and authentic Christian life was to enter a monastery or at least adopt monastic spirituality. The *Vita Apostolica* on the other hand was based on the conviction that lay men and women could follow the way of Christ in the midst of the turmoil of the post-feudal world, and they could do this by returning to the sources, to the simplicity of the infant Church when all lived a life of uncomplicated faith and real poverty and all were responsible for spreading the Good News of the salvation.

The second rupture involved a rejection of the system that left the ordinary lay person at the bottom of both the feudal and ecclesiastical pyramids. The period saw the collapse of the feudal model of society based on lords, vassals and serfs.

This pyramidal model was mirrored in the Church since the Church itself had come to be regarded as “a bureaucracy, a judicial body, and an institution aligned with feudal aristocracy” (Torvend 2015:4). The temptation was to reject the hierarchal model of Church together with the feudal system on which it fed.

The third rupture was a rejection of the tyranny of wealth and the division of urban society into rich and poor. In feudal times, the wealthy were the lords and vassals,

and the clergy who lived comfortable lives on ecclesiastical benefices. In the post-feudal times, society's centre of gravity had shifted to the expanding cities. Power and privilege belonged to the "new rich" of the cities and the emerging merchant class. The *Vita Apostolica* believed that the poor are the blessed ones and God is on their side. Their model was the poor Jesus of the Gospels who had "nowhere to lay his head" (Lk.9.28) and his disciples who had left all "for the sake of the kingdom of God" (Lk.18.29)

McDonnell summarises the basic principles underpinning the *Vita Apostolica*: "Imitation of the primitive Church, poor, simple and penitential, with interests and activities restricted to the spiritual domain; a passionate love for souls, at home and far afield; and evangelical poverty, in common, either predicated on mendicancy or mitigated by the work of their own hands" (1955:15). It offered the ordinary Christian, especially the poor, a way of reclaiming their human and Christian dignity and of living an authentic Christian life by modelling their lives on the life of the poor Christ and His poor followers. It emphasised the right and the duty of every baptised person to be an active apostle, a preacher of the word, a duty traditionally reserved to the ordained. It considered the poverty of Jesus and of His followers to be normative for everybody and for every age. To be a perfect follower was to live in complete poverty and to serve the poor Christ in the poor.

The new movement had many positive elements:²⁸

- It marked a return to "the sources", to the scriptures and the story of Jesus and of his first followers.
- It emphasised the virtue of poverty and the dignity of the poor in a post-feudal society of growing materialism and a new division of society into the wealthy and the poor.
- It was a necessary antidote to the pyramidal organisation of both Church and civil society.
- It taught that holiness is for all and not something reserved to those who lived in the monasteries or at least practiced monastic spirituality.
- It emphasised the fact that all are responsible for the spread of the message of salvation.

Nevertheless, it had within itself inherent dangers, seeds of conflict and division. I give two examples, the Waldensians and the Albigensians, the first related to power, the second to poverty.

The Waldensians started off as the *Poor of Lyons*, a group that owed its origin to a rich merchant of Lyons called Valdes. He sold all he had and dedicated himself to the service of the poor. Others joined him and they grew into “an informal society of preachers” (Torvend 2015:3). As they grew in numbers and spread beyond Lyons, they rejected the power structures of both the Church and secular society. In the process they became anti-clerical (see McBrien 1994:152). I spoke in Section 3.1.1 of the insidious nature of clericalism and how it can infiltrate any group of people. It entered the ranks of the Waldensians in the form of an elite group of leaders called *Perfecti*. These were appointed by way of a laying on of hands, a ceremony resembling priestly ordination. In 1215 the Church condemned them as heretical and started a persecution against them.

The second example is Albigensianism, named after the city of Albi where it originated.²⁹ The *Vita Apostolica* was a rejection of the old division of society into lords and vassals and serfs. It was also a rejection of the way of life of Church leaders who benefitted from the feudal system and rich benefices. It was a rejection too of the new rich/poor divide in society. The rejection of riches and the material things that riches can buy led the Albigensians into the old error of dualism (see Section 3.3.6). It denied the goodness of created things and preached that the world is an evil place, that marriage is to be condemned and that suicide is the preferred way of escape (see Hellwig 1994A:17). The belief that all matter is from an evil source and is intrinsically evil led automatically to a denial of the Incarnation. The movement was no longer Christian. It was condemned by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and was one of the reasons for the setting up of the Inquisition.

²⁸ In the following chapter we will see how some of these elements are reflected in the Vatican II model of Church.

²⁹ There is a family resemblance between the Albigensians and the Cathars of earlier centuries. Augustine of Hippo was associated with the Cathars before his conversion.

Of particular importance for this study of the role of the laity is the story of the Beguines, a female religious movement that emerged at the end of the 12th century in Germany, the Low Countries and France.³⁰ Their radical lifestyle was in the spirit of the *Vita Apostolica* and its principles as outlined above. It was also a reaction to the male-dominated formality of monastic life and to the legal framework of life in the traditional religious congregations, a life built around the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and lived according to a constitution that regulated the lives of the members and that required ecclesiastical approval.

The Beguines started with individual women living at home and dedicating themselves to serving the poor and the sick (see McBrien 1994:1027). Later they formed communities, some of which had several hundred members. They supported themselves and their apostolic work by working themselves. Each group developed its own set of rules. Members could retain ownership of their property. While they lived in the Beguinage, they remained celibate, but they could leave and marry without anyone's permission. Basically, they were free and independent women who adopted a radical lifestyle in their search for holiness outside the monastic male-dominated system, free of the restraints of regular convent life, free to carry out their work among the sick and the poor, and free to change their way of life if and when they wished.

Hanna speaks about the vibrancy of the High Middle Ages, of a new religious and cultural vitality, a new interest in all of creation and a new sensitivity to the position of men and women in the universe. He speaks too of the birth of a new world "bubbling with unprecedented activity in thought, commerce and art (with) new forms of cultural and religious vitality swirling around them" (2006:112). The *Vita Apostolica* emerged from this cultural melting pot. It spoke of the spiritual life as a life based on the life of Christ and his followers, a life dedicated to the preaching of the Gospel in the context of the new world emerging from feudalism, a life of poverty and of dedication to the poor.

³⁰ The Beguines had a male counterpart called the Beghards but they were much fewer in number.

I will now speak of two people, St Francis of Assisi and St Dominic, and of the movements they initiated in response to the positives and the negatives of the new Europe.

3.6.3 St. Francis (1181 – 1226) and the Franciscans

Instead of seeing “the world” as a place of evil, Francis spoke of our connectedness to all created things. Instead of following the “flight from the world” route, he and his followers became one with the growing beggar population of Europe. They would own no property and live as itinerant preachers, modelling Jesus, the wandering evangelist who had “nowhere to lay his head” (Lk.9:58). Their way of life would be their witness, summed up in the frequently quoted advice of Francis, “Preach the Gospel always, and, if necessary, use words”.

The Franciscans travelled across Europe preaching a message of God’s love and forgiveness and promoting a popular spirituality that spoke about the humanity of Christ and that appealed to the feelings of people as well as to their intellects.

Hanna says that

By their devotion to the humanity of Christ, witnessed in the popularisation of the Crèche at Greccio, and a pronounced devotion to the historical life of Christ, the Franciscans channelled the popular preference for an effective spirituality in a direction both orthodox and meaningful (2006:115).

Francis wanted to help lay people to live a full Christian life in and through their lay occupations and so he wrote a letter “To all who live in the whole world”. This became the rule for what became known as the Third Order.³¹ It described “a life of penance in the world which found expression in participation in the sacramental life of the Church, love of neighbour, humility, almsgiving, simplicity and prayer” (Blastic 1994:329). At last a spirituality for lay people that was not monastic was available.

3.6.4 St. Dominic (1170 – 1221) and the Dominicans

Born in Spain ten years after the Italian St. Francis, Dominic was a member of the nobility and well-educated. He first joined the Augustinian Canons of Osma. Later he founded the Order of Preachers whose specific apostolate would be preaching and counteracting heretical groups like the Albigensians of southern France. Dominic divided his followers into small groups which he sent to the cities and university centres of Paris and Bologna. From the outset the Order stressed the importance of life-long learning for its members so that they could confront the heresies of the day and form an enlightened laity. It emphasised the need to combine a life of prayer and contemplation with a life of preaching, in this way “combining the best of monasticism with the best of the Apostolate” (McBrien 1994:1026).

Dominic did not start a Third Order but a group of lay people who wished to live a life of prayer while continuing to live their everyday lives constituted their own Third Order. One of its most famous members was St. Catherine of Siena, and one of her most famous sayings was “If you are what you should be, you will set the world on fire”.³²

3.6.5 Interpretation of the Facts

3.6.5.1 Of the Feudal Period

It would be difficult to recognise in the Church of feudal times the Church of the New Testament, a community of believers in which all were equal and for which all were responsible in line with the hierarchic or charismatic gifts each had received. The pyramidal structure of feudal society of nobles, clergy and peasants and the ecclesiastical pyramid of bishops, priests and laity appear incompatible with a Church in which “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female but . . . all are one in Christ” (Gal.3:27-29).

³¹ Francis himself was never ordained a priest, though he was ordained a deacon.

³² See <https://www.assencionpress.com>. Accessed 6 February, 2020.

In that pyramidal structure, becoming a priest could be a response to God's call, but it could also be a way out of the peasant category, up to the next tier of society. Moreover, the possibility of upward movement provided fertile ground for something that persists in the Church today, namely clerical ambition and the pursuit of positions of power. When power and privilege are sought for their own sake, there is clericalism.³³

The rigid dividing lines, coupled with the fact that influence and authority moved from the top down to the next level, meant that the voice of the laity was not heard by the higher tiers, and the laity themselves expected to be influenced from the top only and not by one another or any structure at their own level. It resulted in a loss among the laity of a sense of stewardship responsibility, of one's personal vocation within the local Church. Responsibility rested with the next tier, that of the clergy. The difference between *Laos* and *Kleros* had become absolute. As the *Decretum Gratiani* puts it, "*Duo sunt genera Christianorum*" (there are two types of Christians) (Quoted in Hanna 2006:112).

This division between active clergy and passive laity found dramatic expression in the celebration of the Mass. It was all in Latin, known only to the clergy and a few educated lay people. Many of the prayers were spoken in a whisper while the congregation prayed their own prayers and only a few received Holy Communion.

A positive element of the period under review was the growth of guilds and confraternities. These brought together lay people of similar interests or engaged in the same occupations. They gave a voice to the laity and provided a link to the next tier of feudal society. They reflected in some way the Church of the New

³³ This is why Pope Francis can link clericalization to clerical child sexual abuse. Such abuse is essentially an abuse of power so the Pope says, "To say 'no' to abuse is to say an emphatic no to all forms of clericalism" (Pope Francis 2018B: 2).

Testament as a community of believers and they gave a sense of belonging to both the local Church and to that of other parishes and dioceses in which their guild or confraternity existed. Each confraternity and guild had its own spirituality and its own apostolate, thus providing an antidote to the pervading passivity of the laity.³⁴

Another positive element in the Church of the period was devotion to Jesus, especially in the reserved Blessed Sacrament, even though this devotion was coupled with a celebration of the Eucharist that, for the laity, was reduced to being present and passive at a celebration conducted by the priest on their behalf.

3.6.5.2 Of the Post-Feudal Period and the *Vita Apostolica*

The argument of this chapter is that the laity played a mainly passive role throughout the history of the Church. The period of the High Middle Ages reads like an exception, an abnormality. Released from the restrictions of feudalism where their place in both society and Church was pre-determined, the laity of the period formed their own lay confraternities and gathered into communities of faith that offered to them both a spirituality and an apostolate.

The spirituality was scripture-based and modelled on the poor and simple life of Christ and his original followers. It offered them a path to holiness that was not the way of the monks, but a way integrated into their daily life and experience. It offered to women in particular a way of reclaiming their freedom and human dignity and of living their Christian lives free of male-imposed restrictions and rules.

It also offered an apostolate, namely passing on the faith and preaching God's word in the new environment of expanding cities and serving the sick and the poor in those same cities.

³⁴ As with the pyramidal structure, so with the proliferation of guilds and confraternities: elements of both are still with us. The kind of leadership required of a steward in a community model of Church and the role of the sodalities and movements in the Church in South Africa will be discussed later in this thesis.

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It also offered an apostolate, namely passing on the faith and preaching God's word in the new environment of expanding cities and serving the sick and the poor in those same cities.

A weakness of the period was what appears like a glorification and romanticising poverty. This had a double effect. First, as mentioned already, it led to a revival of dualism and a rejection of wealth and material things as evil. Secondly, it could result in such an acceptance of poverty that the poor were willing to accept help from the many people willing to help them but were not willing to strive either to extricate themselves from a situation that was degrading and to fight against the structures of the society that kept them poor. This will come later with the labour movements of the 19th and 20th centuries and with the groups inspired by Liberation Theology which sees the poor as agents of their own upliftment and of liberation from all that oppresses them.

3.6.5.3 Of the Work of the Friars

The movement begun by Francis can be interpreted as a reading of the signs of those times. Firstly, the Albigensians were portraying the world and created things as evil. Francis spoke of the goodness and inter-connectedness of all creation and wrote a canticle to "Brother Sun". His introduction of the Christmas Crib was an expression of his conviction of the importance of the body and of the role of the senses in personal and communal prayer.

Secondly, Francis was reacting to a clericalised Church that reduced the laity to passivity. He believed all were called to the same holiness and to be active members of the Church, and so wrote his letter to "all the people of the world".

Thirdly, the priests of Francis' time were tied either to a monastery or to a parish and diocese. Francis saw the need for a group that could be mobile, able to move across Europe and to follow the sailors to new lands.

Fourthly, Francis, following an encounter with a leper, became convinced that Christ is present in the outcasts and in the new poor of Europe. He and his followers would not just preach to the poor and serve them, but they would identify with them by not owning property, by being actually poor and survive by begging for alms like so many of the people of the time.³⁵

Dominic too responded to the signs of the same times. Like Francis, he saw the need for mobile teams of evangelists and for the need to give a counter-witness to the landed lords, the ambitious clerics and the wealthy urban merchant class. Dominic adopted the Rule of St. Augustine in which the community (rather than the abbot, as with the Benedictines) has the major role in decision-making. Poverty and obedience were demanded of all his followers, but obedience was to be exercised in a very democratic system of election of superiors and of governance that was in direct contrast to the pyramidal image of authority in the feudal system. He saw the need for preaching God's word "in season and out of season" (2 Tim.4:2) so that all would come to know the Christ of the scriptures, and so the Congregation he founded was called The Order of Preachers.

Dominic was convinced that if the priests were to be in a position to refute the heresies of the time and to form an educated laity, they themselves would need to be well-educated and to be involved in study throughout their lives. He saw the need for a specialised apostolate to the lay students in the universities and so he sent teams to the major centres to be involved in the education of what would soon become a new lay elite.

³⁵ It is obvious why the new Pope chose the name of Francis. He continually asks the Church to move out of its comfort zones to the margins of society.

3.6.5.4 The Need for Reform

Del Portillo sums up the position of the laity in the Middle Ages, a position defined by clericalism and passivity:

In the Middle Ages, the layman found his field of action reduced to worldly affairs, with the disappearance of the sense of the laity's active participation in the field proper to the Church, which had been so lively in the early centuries; the Church mission came to be identified almost exclusively with the ministry of clerics, and Christian perfection came to be considered as something proper to clerics and religious. The layman's possibilities were reduced to the practice of the common virtues in the exercise of his secular functions, which were generally presented in ascetic literature as an obstacle to the Christian life of perfection (1972:13).

There was need for radical reform. Unfortunately for the unity of Christendom the reform turned into the Reformation. More than half a millennium later the fractured Church struggles with the need for the unity for which Christ prayed and suffered (see Jn.17:21).

3.7 The Reformation and Counter-Reformation

3.7.1 The Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance

The Late Middle Ages span the 14th and 15th centuries; the Renaissance covers the same period but extends into the 16th century. It was marked by a revival of learning based on the language and literature of ancient Greece and Rome, but as McBrien points out, with the language and literature came the morals and the mores of these civilisations, an emphasis on the aesthetic and emotional and "an excessive celebration of the human" (1994:633).

Section 3.2 speaks of what happens when revelation interfaces with culture. A good example is the period under examination. Theology followed the anti-intellectual trend of the Renaissance, "theology, art and spirituality appealed directly, almost blatantly, to the emotions" (McBrien 1994:663). Piety became linked to the visible, the tangible, to places of pilgrimage and to relics. It "grew increasingly away from sound theology and theology in turn from its own best

tradition” (1994:633). The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist came to be understood “in a materialistic way and the sacrament was seen more as something to be adored than to be received” (Viladesaur 1994:723).

In reaction to these trends, a new style of theology developed. It became known as Nominalism and “rejected all forms of mediation between God and mankind: Church authority, meritorious deeds and so forth” (McBrien 1994:663). These ideas were later adopted and developed by the Reformers.

3.7.2 Growth of Confraternities and Guilds

Section 3.5.5.1 speaks of how confraternities and guilds gave to the laity a voice, a spirituality and an apostolate. Terpstra says they were “the lay face of the Renaissance and early modern Church” (2012:1). They were involved in caring for the poor and in the distribution of food and medicine. They were “key players in what might be termed social religion in rural areas and civic religion in towns and cities” (:1). Because of the indulgences attached to membership, they were condemned by the Reformers. In the Counter-Reformation, the hierarchy brought them under their direct control and made them vehicles of Catholic reform. They constitute an exception to the overall passivity of the laity for much of the history of the Church.

3.7.3 The Reformation: Summary of Causes and Content

McBrien speaks of the complexity of the Reformation process, “a process that began in the 14th century, continued in the 15th and reached its climax with the Protestant Reformation in the 16th” (1994:627). It is directly linked to the Renaissance and the theology, spirituality and pious practices that accompanied and flowed from it. It is linked to the break-up of Europe into nation states when the empire disintegrated and the Church lost political power. McBrien lists six specific causes: the divorce of pious practices and sound theology; the effects of the Great Western Schism; the rise of the nation states; the identification of Christianity with western civilisation; and the strengths and weaknesses of men like Luther, Calvin and Zwingli (see :632-634).

Congar speaks of the problems within the Church itself, going “from crisis to crisis, from abortive reform to abortive reform, from demand for independence to demand for independence on the part of laity and of sovereigns” (1957:53). The problems extended to the top: Pope Alexander VI was accused of simony, nepotism and fathering four children. But they were not confined to Rome: most bishops came from noble families and had little contact with their people; secular rulers had their relatives and friends appointed bishops; some bishops had several benefices and acted like absentee landlords. Erasmus and Luther had pleaded for reform and, in 1517, the latter published his 95 Theses. McBrien says there was “an alluring simplicity to the Protestant message and it caught on almost immediately” (1994:637). It is possible the speed with which it was accepted was linked to the historical antipathy between the north of Europe and the countries of the Mediterranean, in particular between Germany and Italy.

In the words of Congar, Protestantism amounted to a “rejection of the whole of the Church’s mediation: magisterium, priesthood, sacraments, the authority of tradition, and the role of the teaching Church in the rule of faith, prelatial authority, the episcopal dignity, the Pope’s supremacy” (1957:38). A new model of Church was offered: a holy assembly of the faithful. This holy assembly “was split into two parts whose organic unity was ignored: on the one side a communion of saints (the true faithful, the predestined) which was the real Church but was invisible; on the other, an organisation that was visible but wholly human and that was not truly Church” (:38).³⁶ In this Church there is one priesthood, that of all the faithful, and Church ministry is a vocation within that one priesthood.

3.7.4 The Catholic Counter-Reformation and the Laity

There had been active reform movements before the Reformation, for example within the Dominican Order; in Florence under Archbishop Renzzi; in Spain; in the schools of spirituality in Belgium; the Netherlands; and in England under the leadership of Bishop John Fisher. Possibly its most influential and lasting form was in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. These emphasised the importance

³⁶ Vatican II brought the “visible” and “invisible” Church together when it spoke about its sacramental character (see LG 1).

of conversion through a directed contemplation of the Scriptures, and the finding of God in all things and all occupations (see Bulman & Parella 2006:4-5).

The Council of Trent met between 1545 and 1563 but was suspended from 1548 to 1551 and 1552 to 1561. It spelled out the Catholic teaching on faith and grace, asserting that while salvation is God's gift, it does require our participation. McBrien quotes from Dolan's *Catholicism*, "Had Trent's decree on justification been decreed at the Lateran Council at the beginning of the 16th century, the Reformation would not have occurred and the religious unity of the Middle Ages would have endured" (1994:637).³⁷

Concentrating on what was rejected by the Reformation, Trent said little or nothing about the laity except what is implied in what it said about Baptism: it makes one a new creation; it can be conferred by anybody; imparts a character or ontological mark on the soul and cannot be repeated; it makes one a member of the Christian community (see Lakeland 2006:195).³⁸

Lakeland says that "while Trent had nothing to say about the lay state, and while its silence echoes down the centuries, through the equally silent Vatican I to the threshold of Vatican II itself, many individual lay people had responsibilities within the Church" (2006:196). During Trent Pope Paul III appointed a number of lay cardinals; the early sessions of Trent were presided over by a layman and another layman, Count Ludavico Nogorda, was secretary during the theological debate.

Trent's insistence on systematic and prolonged training for the clergy had a double effect: it provided the laity with a well-educated clergy, but it also helped to sharpen the distinction between them (see McBrien 1994:637).

³⁷ In 1999 Lutheran and Catholic theologians concluded that the two Churches now "shared a common understanding of our justification by God's grace through faith in Christ" (Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ), 1999). In an article dated 20th July 2015 in the *Catholic Herald* it is said that Pope Francis and his Evangelical friend the late Tony Palmer both believed the 1999 declaration brought the Reformation to an end. Yet the divisions remain.

³⁸ Vatican II will take up the same topic and speak of the equality and priesthood of all the baptised.

Five years before the start of Trent, in 1540, the Society of Jesus received official papal recognition. It was to play a pivotal role in the Catholic Counter-Reformation. They already numbered 13,000 fifty years after the death of Ignatius. Their scholarship, their passion for educating the young, their missionary zeal, their Spiritual Exercises available to the laity, and their sense of loyalty to the Pope combined to make them the chief architects of the successes of the Counter-Reformation.³⁹

The Post-Tridentine theologians continued to concentrate on what the Reformers had rejected. Catholic ecclesiology became polemical and controversial. Treatises defended the veneration of the Saints, devotion to Mary, the Mass. The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist was the main emphasis so that Eucharistic adoration appeared to be more important than the celebration of the Eucharist and reception of Holy Communion. They, the theologians, continued to defend the teaching authority of the Church, the jurisdiction of the Pope, the visible nature of the Church. The Reformers were so taken up with proving that the Church was internal and spiritual, with emphasising a “community of believers” model and the common priesthood of the baptised that they rejected the institutional, visible, sacramental side of that same Church. In the same way, Catholic apologists were so focussed on proving as true everything the Reformers rejected as false that they never mentioned (but never denied) what had come to appear Protestant, namely the Church as a community of disciples and the priesthood conferred on each baptised person. Ecclesiology was reduced to what Congar calls “hierarchology” (1957:39).

Unfortunately, as the Reformers were attempting to do away with the hierarchy, the visible side of the Church, and Catholics were defending it, Europe was becoming more and more secularised and the Church, Catholic and Protestant, more irrelevant. “While Protestantism was making the Church a people without a priesthood and Catholic apologists were replying by establishing the

³⁹ In this Chapter I am considering the role of the laity in the teaching and theology of selected periods. What deserves to be mentioned is the fidelity of so many. One has only to recall their faithfulness in Arian times when the bishops were taking sides but the lay faithful preserved the faith; of the Irish who held on to their faith by means of a mix of patriotism and grace; of the French when the guillotine became the symbol of a revolution; of the Recusant Catholics of England and Scotland who today are proud of their Catholic heritage.

rightfulness of priesthood and institution, the Church in more than one place was finding herself reduced to a priestly system without Christian people” (Congar 1957:41).⁴⁰ With so much sustained emphasis on hierarchy, “the Church” became synonymous with its clerical leadership. The mission of the Church was the business of the hierarchy; it was not the concern of the laity. The salvation of the laity was found in obedience: they were told what to do and did not go further. Congar speaks of the consequences: “forgetfulness of the lay people in the Church leads both to clericalism in the Church and laicism in the world” (:47). He quotes Edouard leRoy: “The simple faithful have the same part as the lambs at Candlemas: they are blessed and shorn” (:47).

Francis de Sales stands out as an exception to the theologians of the Counter-Reformation. He was ahead of his time both in his ecumenism and in his emphasis on the call to holiness of all the baptised. In the Preface to the *Introduction to the Devout Life* he summarised what I have been saying throughout this chapter:

Nearly everyone who has written about the spiritual life has had in mind those who live apart from the world, or at least the devotion they advocate would lead to such retirement. My intention is to write [for] those who have to live in the world and who, according to their state, to all outward appearances have to lead an ordinary life (1971:1)

3.7.5 Interpretation of the Facts

As with the previous period of history reviewed, there were positives in the Pre-Reformation Church: a devotional life centred on the Eucharist, the veneration of saints as models of Christian living, pilgrimages as expressions of the pilgrim nature of the Church, out-reach to the poor through the confraternities, a spirituality and a sense of belonging to the Church through those same confraternities. Positive too was the awareness of the need for reform as well as the actual reform that had occurred in some of the religious orders and dioceses.

⁴⁰ It is interesting to note that many of the Protestant churches have become institutionalised and clericalised with structures and paraphernalia that closely resemble what was rejected by Luther and Calvin and Zwingli.

The negatives of the period were many: a popular spirituality that lacked a sound theological foundation; the linking of indulgences to financial contributions; widespread corruption at all levels of the Church's organisation; the close association of the hierarchy with the powerful and the rich; the conviction that the way to conversion and a life of holiness lay in becoming a monk, joining a religious congregation or becoming a priest.

The need for reform was clear to the people of the time. Many had called for it but the response was piece-meal and localised. The response of the Reformation on the other hand was radical. It saw the visible, hierarchical Church as a human invention that should be dispensed with, not reformed. It recognised the priesthood of all the faithful as the only priesthood. By dispensing with the ministerial priesthood, the problem of inequality would no longer exist. Because all were called to the same holiness, there was no need for monasteries and religious houses occupied by celibate monks and nuns. These should be closed down and the occupants find themselves wives and husbands. There was no need for or possibility of any mediation except that of Christ, so devotion to the saints and pilgrimage sites were, like the hierarchy, a human invention that should be done away with.

Two positive aspects of the message of the Reformers are of particular relevance to this thesis. The first is their emphasis on the priesthood conferred in baptism, something that was never denied before or after the Reformation but never emphasised. The second is their emphasis on the nature of the Church as a community of believers, a community in which all are equal and for which all are responsible. Both of these are central to the ecclesiology of Vatican II.

The Council of Trent is the central act of what is known as the Counter-Reformation. It concentrated on two things, namely an overall reform of the Church and a doctrinal response to the teachings of the Reformation. It brought to a head the piece-meal and sporadic reforms that had been going on for the previous two hundred years and it shaped the Catholic Church for the following four hundred. It came too late to prevent the break-up of the Church of the West. I wish to comment here on how it affected the laity.

First of all, the laity are not even mentioned, except in an indirect way in what Trent said about baptism.⁴¹ The silence of the Council was matched by the silence of the succeeding centuries on the role of the laity in the Catholic Church.

Secondly, because the Reformation had spoken of the Invisible Church as the real Church and of the Visible Church as a human invention, Trent's emphasis was on the visible, hierarchical nature of the Church. The Reformers had spoken of the Church as a community of faith; Trent emphasised the ministerial priesthood and the quality of life expected of its ordained clergy. It was silent on the spirituality and apostolate of the laity.

The Council of Trent appears to have believed that if the clergy were well-educated, lived a life of holiness and of celibacy, resided in their parishes and be seen as different by their way of life and by their dress, looking after the flock and forming them in their Christian faith and practice, then the lay people would become a worshipping community of holy people. The reason for the emphasis on the training and the life of the priest was that the laity would have worthy pastors. While this emphasis was essential and the post-Trent Church was blessed with great numbers of priests dedicated to their people, it had unintended results:

- the emphasis on the education and way of life of the ordained priest led to the neglect of teaching on the baptismal priesthood, the emphasis on the distinctive way of life of the ordained increased their separation from the rest of the community,
- the emphasis on the holiness expected of the priest gave the impression that the same holiness was not expected from everyone.

With the insight that comes from up to five hundred years of history, we can see now how the priest was placed in a separate compartment, responsible for the Church and its functions, clearly relegating the laity to a secondary, mainly passive, role.

⁴¹ This is in direct contrast to Vatican II, often called "The Council for the Laity".

Trent, as I have said, defined the Church's image of itself for the following four hundred years. The image was a hierarchic one and ecclesiology dealt almost exclusively with the origin, the nature and the role of the hierarchy. Even though the community model of the Church and the priesthood of all the faithful were never denied, it appears as if Catholic theologians did not write about them in case they be accused of being tainted with Protestantism until ecumenists like Congar were willing to listen to what other traditions were saying. Post-Trent Catholic ecclesiology spoke about the Church in terms of institution, resulting in what Dulles calls "institutionalism" (1987:35). Dulles continues, "The strongly institutionalist development occurred in the late Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation, when theologians and canonists, responding to the attacks on the papacy and hierarchy, accented these features which the adversaries were denying (:36). Identifying Church with the clerical hierarchy is in reality a definition of clericalism. In the words of Dulles, "it reduces the laity to a condition of passivity" (:47).

3.8 The Laity from the Enlightenment to the Eve of Vatican II

3.8.1 The Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution

Sometimes called the Age of Reason, the Enlightenment started in the Netherlands and England towards the middle of the 17th century. It had absolute confidence in the power of human reason to create a new world through the advancement of science, physics and mathematics. The source of knowledge would not be the exploration of innate ideas as proposed by Descartes, nor in Greek philosophy popularised by the Renaissance, nor in the Bible, but through mathematics and science. Most of its thinkers supported the freedom of the individual and a privatised form of religion, but the Church was seen as enslaving its members by its insistence on revelation as a source of truth. Voltaire may not have been typical, but he did say "I am tired of hearing that twelve men were enough to establish Christianity. I yearn to prove that one is enough to destroy it" (Brockman 1990:140). The Enlightenment influenced the Declaration of Independence of the United States and its Constitution, but it also gave birth to the French Revolution, the Reign of Terror and the guillotine.

The origins of the Industrial Revolution can be traced back to Copernicus (1473 – 1543), Galileo (1564 – 1642) and Descartes (1599 – 1650). 1760 is generally considered the birthday of the Revolution. Apart from the works of the above, it was a result of several factors: better farming methods, the steam engine, the telegraph, the availability of cheap cotton from the United States (because of slave labour) and the development of new technologies in the textile industry. Factories replaced cottage industries and became a new source of wealth. Managing of profits and providing capital for development marked the beginning of capitalism and the banking system (see Montagna 1981:1-12). The population of Europe rose from 140 million in 1740 to 266 million in 1850. Two groups emerged: a small elite of industrial barons and a large working class that became known as “the masses”. With the growth of democracy and the right to vote, “the masses” came to have enormous political power.

The response of the Church to the new world spawned by the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution was ambivalent. Although Pius IX (1846-1878) began with a certain openness to the changes in society, the revolutions of the 1840s frightened him and he became very negative towards the changes in society for the rest of his pontificate. The Enlightenment had privatised religion; society had become secularised; the influence of the Church had been radically reduced. Christ was excluded from public life. The Church leadership believed its flock had to be protected both from capitalism and liberal democracy. On the other hand, the workers of this new world belonged to Christ and had to be reclaimed for him. This could only be accomplished by the workers themselves. The response to this complex situation took two forms: papal encyclicals and the promotion of Confraternities and Catholic Action.

3.8.2 The Papal Encyclicals, John Henry Newman and Catholic Action

3.8.2.1 Leo XIII (1878 – 1903) and the Workers

Holland divides the Papal Encyclicals into Anti (or Pre) Modern (1740 – 1887), Modern (1887 – 1958) and Post Modern (1958 to the present) (see 2003:2-3).

The anti or pre-modern Encyclicals defended the aristocratic and monarchical regimes to which the Church had been linked since Constantine, and attempted to save the laity from the “liberal philosophy of the European Enlightenment with its derivative movements of liberal democracy and industrial capitalisation” (:2). The modern period began with Leo XIII’s 1891 Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. Leo believed that the enemy was not liberal democracy but socialism and communism and that it was possible to reconcile the Catholic tradition and modern society. He would strengthen the traditional Church by a re-introduction of Thomism and he would ward off the socialist threat through a Christianisation of democracy and promoting “Social Catholicism” (:115). The industrial barons and the new capitalists showed little concern for the rights of workers. Leo believed that the answer lay in a return to Christian morality. He stressed the right to private property, the right of workers to organise unions and the duty of the State to protect these rights. *Rerum Novarum* sought to protect workers against exploitation from Marxism on the one hand and unfettered Capitalism on the other and, in the process, keep the workers in the Church.

In 1890, Pope Leo had written *Sapientiae Christianae*. He realised that if the Church was going to be a leaven in the new world of industry and commerce and the new democracies then the lay members of the Church would have to be that leaven. He called for what he termed the re-establishing of the family circle and the promotion of Christian principles at every level of society (see Holland 2003:171). This emphasis on the role of the laity in public life led to what became known as Catholic Action.

3.8.2.2 St. John Henry Newman (1801 – 1890)

John Henry Newman is called the invisible Cardinal at Vatican II. Leo XIII and the popes immediately following him were struggling with two things: to protect the hierarchical structure of the Church and to involve the laity in the work of the Church. The model of Church of their age was hierarchical, and they struggled to express the role of the laity within that model. Leo defended the workers of the world and spoke of their vocation to bring Christ into all strata of society, but he also said a lay person is one who obeys and honours the clergy, an attitude

openly challenged by Newman (see Hanna 2006:126).

Newman was reported to the Holy See because of an article in *The Rambler* in July 1859 “On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine”. His argument was based on the belief that the Holy Spirit is present to the whole Church and not just in its clerical leadership. He complained about “Ecclesiastics all over Europe whose policy is to keep the laity at arm’s length” (Chavasse 1989:5). His dream was for a well-catechised laity with a highly educated core, for a Church in which “the intellectual layman would be religious and the devout ecclesiastic be intellectual” (:8). His hopes and dreams are summed up in an address to the Brothers of the Little Oratory in Birmingham, England in 1851. I quote it at length because it is as valid for the Church in South Africa today as it was for the Church in England in 1851:

What I desiderate (sic) in Catholics is the gift of bringing out what their religion is – I want a laity, not arrogant, not rash in speech, not disputatious, but men who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold and what they do not, who know their creed so well that they can give an account of it, who know so much of history that they can defend it. [...] In all times the laity have been the measure of the Catholic spirit; they saved the Irish Church three centuries ago and they betrayed the Church of England. (Quoted in Chavasse 1989:1-2).

3.8.2.3 Pope Pius X (1903 – 1914) and the Laity

Pope Pius X is remembered for the restoration of the frequent reception of Holy Communion, in abeyance since the Middle Ages, the formation of the young through the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, his promotion of the frequent reading of Scripture and his support for Catholic Action. His emphasis on the role of the laity is explicit: “All the faithful, without exception, must concern themselves with the interest of God and of souls” (Pope Pius X 1906: Par.14). He added that the work of the laity must always be “under the direction and orders of the bishops” (: Par.14). Nilson says he was simply expressing the dominant mentality of 1906 when he wrote:

The Church is by essence an unequal society, that is, a society comprising two categories of persons, the pastors and the flock, those who occupy a rank in the different degrees of the hierarchy and the multitude of the faithful The one duty of the multitude is to allow themselves to be led, and, like a docile flock, to follow pastors (2000:398).

3.8.2.4 Pope Pius XI (1922 – 1939) and Catholic Action

In June 1931, Pope Pius XI defined Catholic Action as “The participation and the collaboration of the laity with the apostolic hierarchy” (AB 5). Doohan refers to Catholic Action as “The first of the great apostolic movements” (1994:140). It spread rapidly around the world. Doohan speaks of the implications of the definition of Pius XI: the mission of the Church was entrusted to the apostles and their successors; the laity are the agents of the hierarchy (see :140). In subsequent years, a fundamental question was debated: Is the lay apostolate based on a mandate of the hierarchy or on baptism? (see Lakeland 2002:27- 28).

3.8.2.5 Pope Pius XII (1939 – 1958) and the Church as Mystical Body

During the reign of Pius XII theologians had been re-examining the writings of the Fathers of the Church, especially those of Cyril of Alexandria, on the Church as Mystical Body of Christ. Chief among them were Émile Mersch and Sebastian Tromp. Pope Pius XII developed the theme in his 1943 encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*. It marked a definite break with the “hierarchology” of the Counter-Reformation. In an address to new cardinals on 20 February 1946, Pope Pius XII reminded them that the laity are “in the front line of the Church. They are the Church” (AAS 38 (1946):149). Pius XII helped to set the theological scene for the Second Vatican Council. The Reformers had emphasised the visible, spiritual nature of the Church. Catholics, in reaction, explained the visible and hierarchical. Pius XII said it is both: “They err in a matter of divine truth who imagine the Church to be invisible, intangible, something merely ‘pneumatological’ as they say [...] The Church is called a body, that it is constituted by the coalescence of structurally united parts, and that it has a variety of members reciprocally dependant” (MC 57). But the Church is more than a visible, organic structure. It has an invisible, charismatic, spiritual component. Pius XII quotes Leo XIII who wrote that as “Christ is the head of the Church, so is the Holy Spirit her soul” (MC 57). Post-Reformation writers implied that the Spirit was given to the Church as hierarchy. Pius XII, on the other hand, says the Spirit is the principle of every truly supernatural act in all parts of the body and is equally present in each part and every member: “He is entire in the head, entire

in the body, entire in each of its members” (MC 57). Each member is called to “supreme holiness” in the context of their own lives (MC 17).

In 1943, Pius XII published *Divino Afflante Spiritu*. It gave official approval to the work of the Biblical Movement and to modern biblical scholarship, acknowledging the fruit of archaeological findings and supporting the use of textual and form criticism. It encouraged the reading of the Bible by individuals and in families (see Holland 2003:277).

Sacraments are signs that effect what they signify. As signs, they should be intelligible to those who celebrate and receive them. They had become unintelligible and so the laity attended as mere spectators at ceremonies conducted in a language they did not understand. The Liturgical Movement of the first half of the 20th century aimed at remedying this and at encouraging active participation in all liturgical celebrations. It was endorsed by Pope Pius XII in his 1947 Encyclical *Mediator Dei*. While it encouraged the active involvement of the laity and promoted what became known as the “Dialogue Mass” in which all, and not just the altar servers, would respond to the prayers, it rejected the use of vernacular languages and spoke of the laity as the Church’s “children” (see Holland 2003:279).

3.8.2.6 Pre-Vatican II Ecclesiologists and Lay Movements

I have spoken about the re-emergence of the laity in the encyclicals of the Popes from Leo XIII to Pius XII and of the call of Newman for a well-educated laity. McBrien speaks about Protestant, Anglican and Catholic theologians whose works were a providential preparation for Vatican II: Yves Congar, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, John A.T. Robinson, Harvey Cox, Karl Rahner, Edward Schillebeeckx, Henry de Lubac, Hans Küng, John Courtney Murray (1980:131-147). I will comment on the work of Congar, Von Balthasar, Rahner and Küng.

Congar (1904–1995) speaks of the nature of the Church and the role of the laity in early Christianity, not to advocate a return to the practices of those times but to examine what is the essence of the Church when stripped of cultural and

historical accretions. He speaks of the Church as a community with a hierarchically organised structure that enables it to be a community and to fulfil its mission. It is, he says, an instrument of “fellowship with God and fellowship with one-another in Christ” (1957:2). It is a community and an instrument of building community with God and with each other.

I have suggested that the Post-Reformation Catholic theologians did not speak about the priesthood of all the faithful, not because they did not accept it, but because of the polemics of the time they did not wish to appear “tainted” by Protestantism. Congar the ecumenist had no such fears and he spoke at length of the priesthood of all the baptised and how that priesthood could be lived in the context of worship and of life (see 1957:112ff).⁴²

Congar insists, as does this Research, that a theology of the laity (and, by implication, a theology of stewardship) must be an integral part of what he calls a total ecclesiology: “At bottom, there can be only one sound and sufficient theology of the laity, and that is a ‘total ecclesiology’” (1957:xxvii). Otherwise, he says, we will end up with a clerical Church, and not the People of God, confronting a secular world.

In 1952, ten years before the opening of Vatican II, Hans Urs Von Baltasar (1905-1988) said that the passivity of the laity was not just an untapped resource but that it impoverished the Church. He added:

One who is merely passive does not really receive; to receive, one must accept; and the more spiritual the gift, the more gratefully and happily it must be accepted, this acceptance of grace becomes automatically an action – an action that accepts, takes hold of, executes and transmits (Quoted in Hanna 2005:133).

This joyful acceptance of grace and gift that leads to action and transmission is what this Research calls Stewardship.

⁴² During the pontificate of Pope Pius XII, Congar’s works were withdrawn from circulation and he was forbidden to teach. He was rehabilitated by Pope John XXIII and became a major figure in the preparation for Vatican II and during the Council. Pope John Paul II made him a cardinal in 1994. Congar died the following year.

Karl Rahner, a *peritus* at Vatican II, published *The Church and the Sacraments* in 1963, the second year of the Council. He speaks of Christ as the basic Sacrament, the visible and effective sign of God's saving action in the world, "the historically real and active presence of the eschatologically victorious mercy of God" (1963:14). In Christ, the grace of God is present in "tangible historical form, established in the flesh of Christ as a part of the world, of humanity and of its very history" (:15). Christ is the reality and the sign, the Sacrament of God's saving grace.

If the incarnate *Logos* who took on the flesh of sin (see Rom.8:3) is the basic Sacrament of God's saving work, the Church, his body, "the People of God in a socially organised form is the enduring historical presence of the eschatologically triumphant grace of God and of Christ in the world" (Rahner 1963:22). The Church, therefore, is the effective sign of the continuing saving work of Christ in the world and so is what Rahner calls the "fundamental sacrament" of the saving grace of Christ (:23). The Church as fundamental, primal sacrament is the People of God, hierarchy and laity, one in Christ and one with each other, sharing in different ways in the one priesthood of Christ.

McBrien calls *The Council, Reform and Reunion* (Küng 1961) "the most influential book in Vatican II's preparatory phase" (2008:137-138). It alerted the Catholic world to the need for reform and renewal, a reform and renewal that are "permanently necessary because the Church consists, first of human beings, and secondly of sinful human beings" (Küng 1961:17). Like Rahner, Küng defined the Church in terms of the People of God socially and hierarchically organised, accepting the definition of the German theologian Michael Schmaus (d.1993): "The People of God of the New Testament founded by Jesus Christ, hierarchically organised, serving to advance the reign of God and the salvation of men (sic), and which exists as the mystical Body of Christ (:15).

While theologians like Newman, Rahner, Von Balthasar and Küng were developing an ecclesiology that spoke of the Church as the People of God and of the role of the laity as equal members of God's people, the laity themselves were

becoming more active in the Church's liturgy and its mission. Here I mention two lay movements flourishing during this period.

The first is the Legion of Mary, founded by a layman, Frank Duff (1889-1980). At the age of 27 he wrote a pamphlet, *Can we be Saints?* and was convinced that all without exception are called to be holy (see Duff 1916). The Legion of Mary had two aims, namely the sanctification of its members and an active and organised weekly apostolate. As the title indicates, Duff saw the Legion as an army of members working for the glory of God and their own holiness through the constant help of the Spirit of God. Founded in Dublin, Ireland, in 1921, by the time Duff died there were branches (called *Presidia*) in many Catholic parishes in almost every country of the world, including South Africa. It gave a well-defined spirituality and mission to the laity.

The second movement I mention here is the Young Christian Workers (YCW) and its off-shoots, the Young Christian Students (YCS) and the Christian Family Movement (CFM). Apart from their chaplains, these were entirely lay and were open to members from all Churches.⁴³ All three movements followed the social enquiry method developed by Cardinal Joseph Cardijn of Belgium (1882-1967) of "See" (critically examining some local situation or problem), "Judge" (looking at the problem in the light of revelation and faith), and "Act" (deciding on what practical action would be taken). The movements were very effective in examining the social implications of the gospel and in forming critical lay leaders. The method was later adopted and adapted by the Small Christian Communities, especially in South America, and evolved into what became known as the Pastoral Cycle, a five-stage analysis and reflection process that leads to action.

3.8.3 Interpretation of the Facts

With the Enlightenment's rejection of revelation as a source of truth and with the privatisation of religion, the Church was denied a voice in the public arena.

⁴³ Because of their critical approach to social justice and the rights of worker, both YCW and YCS became associated with the liberation movements in South Africa and were held in suspicion by the security forces of the time.

With the widespread acceptance of the French Revolution's ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity and with the power given to everybody through the new democracies and promised to everyone through Communism in which all were equal "comrades", the laity must have felt that the Church was the only remaining structure in which they did not enjoy equality and in which they did not have an active role.

Faced with the reality of secularisation, the loss to the Church of what was known as the working class and the rapid spread of anti-Christian atheistic Communism, the initial reaction of the Church's clerical leadership was to defend and protect the laity from the hostile forces of the world. In the past they spoke through the Christian kings and princes; now they found a new voice in encyclical letters addressed to selected recipients or to the universal Church. The early letters of Leo XIII were defensive in nature, aimed at protecting the lay faithful from the dangers of the new world. Later Leo went on the offensive and came down explicitly on the side of the workers and on their rights. Almost by default, the laity were called out of their historical passivity. Leo XIII came to see that if the gospel was to permeate the new world of work and the working classes, it would have to happen through the workers themselves.⁴⁴

3.9 Summary: Causes of Passivity and Way Forward

3.9.1 What the Causes are not

I have reviewed the position of the laity at selected periods in the history of the Catholic Church and put forward reasons for passivity and a minimalist approach to lay spirituality. The purpose of the review was to demonstrate the passivity of the laity and the absence of a genuinely lay spirituality throughout history.

⁴³ Because of their critical approach to social justice and the rights of worker, both YCW and YCS became associated with the liberation movements in South Africa and were held in suspicion by the security forces of the time.

⁴⁴ We will see later how something similar happened in the Church in South Africa: because the number of priests and sisters decreased, the laity were called on to fill the vacuum; because funds from Europe dried up, the local Catholics were asked to support the Church. They should have been doing both even when there was a plentiful supply of overseas personnel and money. The laity are not to be co-opted into the apostolate to meet a specific need; they have a right and a duty to take part in the apostolate by virtue of their baptism and confirmation.

Together they point to a low level of stewardship of the gifts of baptism, the call to discipleship and holiness and the imperatives of mission.

In the beginning there was one kind of Christian: all the baptised were called to discipleship and were responsible for the Church's mission. But in 1150AD the Decree of Gratian could say without qualification, "There are two kinds of Christians", and in 1906 Pope Pius X could write that the Church is "essentially an unequal society". The Church had divided into the leaders and the led, the active and the passive, the clergy and the laity. The purpose of this chapter was to identify the problem of lay passivity, investigate the root causes of this passivity so that solutions could be proposed in the subsequent chapters.

In the context of Catholic dogma, the reason cannot be that the hierarchy and the priesthood exist; these are considered essential elements of the Church as given by Christ (see Chapter III of LG). This hierarchical element, however, does not define the Church. As we find it in the post-Pentecost scriptures, that Church is a community of disciples bound together by faith in the Resurrection of Jesus, called to the same holiness of life and co-responsible for making disciples of all nations (see Matt.28:18). There is no indication of a division of the faithful into "two kinds of Christians" or that Christ founded the Church as "an unequal society".

Just as the existence of the hierarchy cannot be blamed for the passivity of the laity, neither can monasticism. It is true that until the time of St Francis de Sales, the history of spirituality reads like the history of monasticism and religious life. While some are called to a life of silence and contemplation, of vowed poverty, chastity and obedience in an enclosed monastery, that does not mean that everybody else is called to imitate them or to a lower level of holiness. Historically, however, the idea developed that the monk was the ideal disciple so that the diocesan clergy and the laity had to endeavour to be like him. Francis de Sales wrote against this approach to holiness of life but elements of it persist in the Church: priests and religious are considered holier just because they are priests and religious.

3.9.2 The Causes of Lay Passivity

3.9.2.1 As Revealed in the Streams of History

Apart from the influence of monasticism, I have examined other streams of history that were the cause of or the occasion for the division between clergy and laity and the passivity of the latter. The first of these is a perception that because the clergy are linked in a full-time way with the things of God and the laity with the affairs of the world, then Christians are divided into the holy and the less holy. This was reinforced by a dualism that has appeared in various guises and that sees the world as evil and to be rejected or avoided in every possible way. The laity, living in that evil world, must be tainted by it and be expected to do no more than avoid sin and save their souls.

The second stream is one that runs right through history, namely the relationship between Church and State, a relationship that often amounted to a merger. It was part of the Jewish and Roman cultures in which the Church spent its infancy; it became entrenched after the conversion of Constantine; it led to the endless problems of lay investiture; it persisted in modern times when the missionaries and the colonial officers were seen as one and the Church was seen as an agent of colonialism. Because the Church leaders were so connected to the political powers, because they were often the subject of special privileges and exemptions, because authority was exercised within a pyramid framework, the laity and clergy, the ruled and the rulers, were not considered equal and co-responsible for the mission of the Church.

A third stream examined in this chapter has its source in the Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation. The Counter-Reformation's defence of its teaching on the hierarchy and on the ministerial priesthood led to silence on the community model of the Church and the idea of the laity as passive recipients became imbedded in a hierarchical model of Church.

A more positive stream that runs through history but that is more pronounced in the pre and post Reformation period is the variety of lay movements in the form

of guilds and confraternities that gave the laity a sense of community and belonging as well as a spirituality and an apostolate. Their value and influence remain.

A final stream that began in the 19th century and provided a providential preparation for Vatican II is the combined work of Protestant, Anglican and Catholic theologians, liturgists and scripture scholars that led to a more general acceptance of a community model of Church in which all have an apostolate and are called to active participation in the Church's worship. It marked the re-emergence of the laity in the Catholic Church.

3.9.2.2 As in the Governance Structures of the Church

In 1.10, I spoke about the relative importance of structural analysis in a thesis that is essentially practical. Nonetheless, it is important to reflect on the Church's governance structure and how it can retain elements of the pyramidal model in the Church that is essentially a faith community of equals.

This thesis accepts the teaching of Vatican II that the Church has a hierarchical structure by the will of the Founder, Christ the Lord (cf. LG 18). How this hierarchical structure translates into Church governance and practice is not of divine origin but is the legacy of history (cf. 7.7.2). We recall how St Bernard warned Pope Eugenius not to model himself on Constantine but on Peter (cf. 3.3.8).

In this section I will comment on four elements of Church governance that are relevant to this thesis: the link between orders and governance; the appointment of bishops; the appointment and transfer of priests; the role of the Pastoral Councils. My contention is that if all power and authority is in the hands of the ordained, the soil is rich for the growth of clericalism. If the laity perceive that they are powerless, they come to see themselves as unimportant and their main function is to obey and to be led. That is what I call "passivity".

First, the link between orders and governance in the law of the Church. Canon 129 is explicit, “Those who are in Sacred Orders [...] are capable of the power of governance”. While accepting that the hierarchical nature of the Church is of divine origin, it is difficult to see why governance should be confined to the ordained ministers. I suggest that the law is what I call the legacy of history. It is man-made and can be changed. Because the clerics govern and the laity are governed, clericalism can flourish and the work of the laity be reduced to following instructions from above.

Second, the appointment of bishops. When a diocese becomes vacant, the Pope’s representative, the Apostolic Nuncio, consults the local bishops and all or some of the clergy of the diocese. He may consult some of the laity. While there may be justification for secrecy, the secrecy imposed is absolute. A person who has been consulted and completed a questionnaire is not free to discuss it with anybody else. The Nuncio sends his findings to the Vatican. The Pope makes the final choice. The process means that the laity of a diocese have little or no say on who will be their next shepherd. It may help to confirm that they are not important and that their role is passive acceptance and obedience.

Third, the appointment and transfer of priests. A priest may have become an integral part of a community and have a good working relationship with that community. Then the bishop decides to transfer him and to appoint a new pastor to the parish. Generally, the priest himself has no say in the matter and both the parish he is leaving and the receiving parish are merely informed. The role of the laity is a passive one, a passivity imposed by the system. It is not surprising if they feel powerless and without a voice.

Fourth, the consultative nature of Pastoral Councils. In an effort to involve the laity in the pastoral life of the diocese and parish, the Code of Canon Law says that every diocese and parish is to have a Pastoral Council. The Diocesan Pastoral Council is made up of clerics, religious and lay members (cf. canon 512). The Parish Pastoral Council is comprised of members of “Christ’s faithful” and those involved in pastoral care (see Canon 536.1). The aim of both Diocesan and Parish Pastoral Councils is to involve the laity in pastoral care. The weakness is

that both have only a consultative role (see Canon 514.1 and Canon 536.2). While they do give a voice to the laity, that voice can be ignored. The result may be a frustrated and powerless laity. They can easily retreat into passivity.

As said already, these structures have developed over history. In 5.3 we spoke about the “*Sensus Fidelium*” and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the entire Church, clerical and lay. The same Holy Spirit has been present throughout history and is present today. All need to listen and discern what He is saying to the Church of today. A listening, synodal Church will listen to the entire Church, clerical and lay, and discern together what is from God and should be embraced, and what is from history and can be discarded. Otherwise, the theory we call the *Sensus Fidelium* will remain mere theory and not reflected in practice.

In a discussion about the influence of the governance structures of the Church and the role played by the laity, it has to be kept in mind that how these governance structures work in practice depends to a large extent on the one operating them. If the clerical leadership works out of a Hierarchical model in which all power is concentrated in an individual and where Pastoral Councils are merely consultative, the Vatican II teaching on the Church as a community for which all responsible has little impact. If the clergy are considered “holier” and closer to God, then the call to all to be perfect as God is perfect is not heard.

On the other hand, if the Council’s teaching that all are equal, that all share in the priesthood of Christ, that all are called to be holy and sent on mission, if all of this is accepted in practice and in theory both by the laity and their local priest and bishop, then the existing governance structures will support and promote the active involvement of all. This thesis proposes Stewardship of Time, Talent, Treasure and Testimony as a way of achieving this.

3.9.3 Clericalism as Interpretative Key

Having reviewed the different but inter-connected streams of history that led to entrenched inequality between clergy and laity and to the passivity of the latter, I believe that the key to an interpretation of the historical data and an

understanding of the phenomenon is clericalism, something that has deep roots in history.⁴⁵ It is found in some clerics, not all, and it is found in many lay members. Originally the word was used to describe the alleged interference of clergy in political and social life but recently it has taken on a different meaning.

First, I wish to say what it is not.

- It is not an attack on the priesthood or a denial of the fact that the Church has a hierarchy.
- It is not a denial that there is a variety of vocations in the Church and that different charismatic and hierarchic gifts are given by the Spirit for the building up of the People of God and the promotion of God's kingdom.
- It is not to deny to the Church the right and the duty to raise a prophetic voice if the rich are trampling on the poor or the State is enacting laws that are a violation of the law of God or that go against the legitimate rights of people.
- It does not mean that clerics do not have a distinctive way of life, even a distinctive dress, and enjoy a "clerical culture" in which they get companionship and support.

Secondly, I wish to say what it is and how it manifests itself.⁴⁶

- It is a mindset that places the cleric above the lay person, that confers on him a special status in society and that implies that all the baptised are not equal.
- It is a mindset that implies that priests, simply by being priests, are called to be perfect, are already holy, and that they are not burdened with the weaknesses that are part of being human.⁴⁷
- It is an attitude that speaks of the "power of the priest" to celebrate the Mass and confer the Sacraments and that appears to forget that the power at work is the power of the Holy Spirit.

⁴⁵ Pope Francis calls it one of the three temptations of the Church. The other two are its making of the gospel message an ideology which consists in viewing it through a social or psychological or political lens; and functionalism which attempts to run the Church as if it were merely a business (see National Catholic Reporter <http://ncronline.org> of 2015/08/10).

⁴⁶ Here I am indebted to Shaw 2005:80-92 and Cozzens in www.associationofcatholicpriests.ie/2015/07, downloaded 2015/08/10)

⁴⁷ This partly explains the shock and disbelief experienced when priests are accused of scandalous or criminal behaviour.

- It is an attitude that is strengthened by laying greater emphasis on the “ontological change” brought about by ordination, and not enough emphasis on the need to be, like Paul, “all things to all people” (1 Cor.9:19). Being “set apart” (Rom.1:1) does not mean being ‘set above’ (see PO 3).
- It implies that the laity are not called to the same holiness as the priest.
- Because a clericalised Church (as distinct from a Church served by clergy) gives the impression that the work and mission of the Church belongs exclusively to the clergy, resulting in the laity becoming passive and leaving the work of the Church in the hands of the clergy.

Part of the evil of clericalism is that it is as prevalent in the laity as it is in many clergy. This can be seen in a variety of attitudes:

- The laity who want to be active in the Church look for liturgical roles as if the only way to be an active Catholic is to be involved with the priest in the sanctuary.
- The laity feel dispensed from the obligation to a life of prayer, to try to be perfect as the “heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt.5:49) because that is a priestly prerogative and obligation.
- Because clericalised laity believe that the Christian life is confined to the Church and what happens in the Church, there is a divorce between faith and culture, between belief and daily life, resulting in a failure to bring Christ into the *areopagus* of today’s world.
- As stated above, the clericalised lay person is passive, is happy to remain passive and leaves everything to the priest.

One of the consequences of clericalism in the Church is that it leads to what Congar calls “laicism in the world” (1957:147)), to a form of anti-clericalism that denies the Church the right to speak on social issues, on structural sin, on unjust laws, on the rights of the poor and marginalised. Bishops, priests and other Church leaders who challenge the law-makers are warned to “stay out of politics”.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ The emphasis on the priesthood of all the baptised and the condemnation of clericalism has led to confusion around the identity of the ordained. It is necessary to remember that being equal does not mean being the same (see Rosetti 2005:52).

3.9.4 The Way Forward

Clericalism is woven into the fabric of the Church of history. It has resulted in the passivity of the laity and continues to do so. The way forward is through the ecclesiology of Vatican II which speaks of the Church as a communion of the Christian faithful, a communion that reflects the unity, diversity and equality within the Trinity. In that communion there is radical equality, but that equality does not imply that all are the same and that there is only one vocation and one way of sharing in the priesthood of Christ. In the following chapter I will examine the ecclesiology of Vatican II and subsequent papal documents and demonstrate that within that ecclesiology there is no space for clericalism or its offshoot, lay passivity.

If the laity accept that all are called to discipleship, they will also have to accept the consequences of that call. If they accept that all are equal in the Church, they have to accept the consequence that all have equal but different responsibilities to be stewards of the Church and its work. If all are called, then all are sent.

There is a personal and communal responsibility to respond to the call and to go on mission. The dignity of the priesthood of all the faithful carries with it a responsibility to live that priesthood. That is the challenge of stewardship, the challenge to live discipleship and to accept practical responsibility for the life and mission of the Church.

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The fundamental idea that runs through the documents of Vatican II is that of communion. In a community model of Church, all are equal, though not all are the same. Chapter 4 examines the communion ecclesiology of the Council and the role of the laity in a community model of Church.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE TEACHING ON THE LAITY IN THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL AND
POST- CONCILIAR DOCUMENTS

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter Three I spoke of the different streams of history that contributed to the growth of clericalism, the inequality within the Church, the passivity of the laity and the consequent failure of the laity to assume stewardship responsibility for their Church. I indicated that I believe the way forward is through the practical reception of the ecclesiology of Vatican II, an ecclesiology which speaks of the Church in terms of communion. Kasper says that for the Church, “There is only one way forward: the way pointed out by the Council and its communal ecclesiology. This is the way which God’s Spirit has shown us” (1989:150).

Even though the Council documents do not use the words, Vatican II presents a vision of the Church as a “community of disciples” (Dulles 1987:204), a community whose oneness and diversity reflects the oneness and diversity of the Trinity. That divine unity and diversity is reflected in creation itself and in the human race; it is reflected in the one call to holiness through a variety of vocations; in the one priesthood of Christ that is shared in different ways; in the one People of God that includes a hierarchy and a laity; in the one call to stewardship and a variety of ways of being stewards.

The focus of this Research is the call of all the laity out of passivity into active stewardship of the world and in the Church. That call to stewardship needs to be integrated into what Congar (1957:xxxviii) calls a “complete ecclesiology”. For Catholics at this juncture of the Church’s pilgrimage, that ecclesiology is presented in an authoritative way in the sixteen documents of Vatican II, but especially in *Lumen Gentium*, *Gaudium et Spes* and *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.

A problem with the post-Vatican II Church is that the theory of Vatican II remains theory and has not been translated adequately into pastoral practice. Kasper

maintains that “the true reception of the Council is only beginning” (1989:150). In 1994, Pope John Paul II called for “a new commitment to apply, as faithfully as possible, the teaching of Vatican II to the life of every individual and the whole Church” (TMA 20) and in April 2015, his successor, Pope Francis, spoke of the need to “keep this great event alive” (EG 4). It is my contention that it will come alive in conscious and active stewardship when each one assumes stewardship responsibility for living the communion ecclesiology of the Council. If this is true, then this Research will have made a significant contribution to the life of the Church in Southern Africa.

Before embarking on an examination of the documents of Vatican II, I will first examine the fundamental underlying idea of the Council, namely communion ecclesiology.

4.2 Communion Ecclesiology

In 1985, Pope John Paul II called an Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the closing of Vatican II and to assess the state of its implementation. At the close of the Synod, a Final Report was published and the Pope authorised the compilation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, a task which was completed in 1994.

The Final Report says that the ecclesiology of the Council is an ecclesiology of *koinōnia*: “The ecclesiology of Communion is the central and fundamental idea of the Council” (1985:6). While the word *Koinōnia* was not prominent in the Council documents, Ratzinger (2001:7) says that if the concept is understood properly, “it can serve as a synthesis of the essential elements of the Council’s ecclesiology”.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ As with *communio*, so with stewardship. Even if the word is not used by the Council, this Research proposes that, if properly understood, it provides a way of living communion ecclesiology and so of living Vatican II.

Ratzinger further suggests that 1 John 1:3 provides a biblical frame of reference for a correct understanding of *Communio* ecclesiology:

That which we have seen and heard we proclaim to you, so that you may have fellowship (*communio*) with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, who comes to us through the proclamation of the Church; and that fellowship with Christ and with each other merges into fellowship (*communio*) with the one and Triune God (2001:7).

Communion with God is made possible through God's communion with us through Jesus Christ. To be one with Christ is to be one with the Father and to be one with all who are in Christ. The final outcome will be what John calls "complete joy" (1 Jn.1:4).

Ultimately, communion ecclesiology is rooted in a theology of the Trinity. God is not an isolated loneliness but a community whose endless happiness is found in the glory of the Father and the Son "before the world was made" (Jn.17:5), in "a life that is an eternal love-life, a love-life that takes the form of a shared Spirit, the one we call the Holy Spirit" (Gaybba 1991:21). The undivided nature, mind and will of God subsists in three undivided ways in the "unbegotten" Father, the "begotten" Son, and the bond of love between Father and Son we call the Holy Spirit. Gaybba concludes: "The Father *is* the Divine nature existing as source of the Son, while the Son *is* the divine nature existing as flowing from the Father as the Father's image. The Spirit (in western theology) *is* the divine nature existing as a love that flows from both Father and Son" (:95).

This *circumincessio* of knowing and loving that is the life of the Trinity is revealed in the economy (*oikonomia*) of God's work of creation and salvation through which God reveals the Godself and shares the divine life. That revelation through the *oikonomia* in turn helps us to understand the *oikonomia* itself. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, "Through the *oikonomia*, the theology is revealed to us; but conversely, the theology illumines the whole *oikonomia*" (CCC 236). God first revealed the Godself in creation, long before men and women entered the scene. In that created world, "everything has its own value and significance" (LS 46). The Creator "loves everything that exists" (Wis.11:24). "Even the fleeting life of the least of beings is the object of his (sic) love, and in its few seconds of existence, God enfolds it with his affection" and Pope Francis asserts that, "the

ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fullness of God” (MV 46-47).⁵⁰

Long after God’s outpouring of love in creation, God poured out this love in a unique way when human beings were created in the divine “image and likeness” (Gen.1:26). If the inner life of God is a *communio* of knowing and loving and humankind is made in the divine image, then man and woman are created to know and love and to reflect and reveal the community of the Trinity: the individual human being is made as a reflection of God; the human family reflects the divine Family. In other words, the family of humankind is made in God’s likeness so the human community is a reflection of the Trinitarian community, of the relational nature of the unity of God (see Gaillardetz 2008:85). Consequently, because we are made in the image of God, we were intended from the beginning to be a community of love. Kasper reminds us that in the first pages of the Bible we are told that “It is not good that man should be alone” (Gen.2:18) and asserts that it is “only in the *prolis* – in community with other people – can a man or woman find fulfilled humanity” (1989:148).

Gaybba (1991:22) says that human beings do not just reflect the Trinitarian community but they are called to share in it. This sharing entered a new and more profound phase when the Son became human. Within the imminent life of the Trinity, the Son is the reflection of the Father. With the incarnation, the eternal Son has a human soul and body. As Incarnate Son he is “the perfect image of the invisible God” (Col.1:15) and can say “To see me is to see the Father” (Jn.14:9). The Incarnate Word is the perfect link between the divine community and the human community made in his image. Gaybba puts it graphically: “The Son would no longer relate to the Father simply as God but would always relate to him as a human being” (:23). One of our race is a member of the Trinity of God; the Son of God is our brother (see Phil.2:7); the Spirit of God’s love is our Spirit. And so, on Easter Sunday, the Risen Christ tells Mary not to be afraid but to “go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God” (Jn.20:17). The final unity and community

⁵⁰ I will return to this when speaking of the stewardship of Creation.

have been achieved. 'Made in the image and likeness of God' has taken on a new reality: one of the human race is the perfect image of God and all are called to be his brothers and sisters. The Church, like Mary on Easter Sunday, is sent to proclaim this extraordinary news.

4.3 *Communio* and the Economy of Salvation

As stated in Section 4.2, the economy of salvation reveals God and knowing something of who God is sheds light on that economy. God's plan is for all to share the divine life of knowing and loving and eventually to become fully like God himself and share in the divine and perfect joy, to see God face to face (see 1 Jn.3:20).

Because God is a community of persons and has made us for communion with God and each other, the divine historic plan of salvation has been bound up with community, first with Israel and then with the community of disciples of Jesus, the Church. God's plan was that the community of Israel would be a leaven in all humanity, a light to all nations so that salvation would reach "the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 49:6; Acts 1:8). Christ, a member of the God- community, became a member of the Israel-community and entrusted his message to the community of those who believed in him, a message that the believing community was commissioned to proclaim to the end of the earth and the end of time so that all would become disciples and be drawn into communion with each other and with God. Faith in Christ would be the condition for entry into the community; the sign and instrument of this entry would be baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, a baptism that would draw individuals out of their isolation into the community that is God and the community of faith (see Matt.28:18-20).

All of the above is saying in a variety of ways what Doyle calls "a web of interwoven relationships" (2000:12): the life of the Trinity is a web of relationships of the three Persons sharing fully the one nature; after the Incarnation, the Trinity is "different" because it is now a web of divine and human relationships because one of the three Persons is now a human being; the Church as the Body of Christ is a web of relationships between individuals and God, between the

community of believers and God, between those who belong to God in Christ. This 'web of relationships' describes the Church at all levels from the family to the small neighbourhood community, to the parish, to the diocesan and universal Church and to ecumenical links within a divided Church.⁵¹

Ratzinger (2001:8) speaks about how, in the post-1985 years, *communio*⁵² became a type of slogan (as did the term "People of God" after Vatican II). It became devalued, its meaning distorted, and discussion degenerated into a discussion on the exercise of power and "who is the greatest" (Mk.9:34). While *communio* and communion ecclesiology are given different meanings by different authors, there are common elements (I am indebted here to Doyle 2000:13 and Kasper 1989:148):

- It signifies a return to the Church of the New Testament and of the first millennium before the Eastern Schism and the Reformation, as a community of believers who lived a life of fidelity to the teaching of the Apostles, to fellowship, to prayer and the breaking of bread (see Acts 2.42).
- It is based on what and who God is, a Trinity of knowing and being known, of loving and being loved in an eternal *circumincessio* and complete joy.
- It is not concerned primarily with organisation and authority structures, though these are important, but with the Church as communion or fellowship with God and with each other.
- It emphasises the importance of visible unity symbolised and realised through shared participation in the Eucharist.
- It provides a dynamic and healthy interplay between unity and diversity in the Church.
- Both the Greek *koinōnia* and the Latin *communio* designate not merely community but participation, "participation in the good things of salvation conferred by God, participation in the Holy Spirit, in new life, in love, in the Gospel, and above all participation in the Eucharist" (Kasper 1989:154).

⁵¹ The scandal of a divided Body of Christ takes on a new and tragic poignancy when viewed in the context of communion ecclesiology.

⁵² Unfortunately, the word became associated with a publication and a movement that reflected a conservative view of Vatican II's implementation.

Our participation in “the good things of salvation” goes back to God’s participation in our community and our life through the Incarnation. For God, that participation had consequences – it led to the Son of God dying for the community He had joined and for the new community He founded. Our participation in the good things of salvation also has consequences – we have to become good stewards of those good things. As quoted in Section 4.2, the Final Report of the 1985 Synod said that the ecclesiology of communion is the “central and fundamental idea” of Vatican II. The remainder of this Chapter examines that ecclesiology under the headings of Mystery, People of God, Mystical Body of Christ, Temple of the Holy Spirit, and Priesthood. Each is a different way of speaking of community and the theology of communion of Vatican II.

4.4 The Church as Mystery

4.4.1 Introduction

Schillebeeckx published his *Christ the Sacrament of Encounter with God* in 1963, before the writing of *Lumen Gentium*. His influence on *Lumen Gentium* is clear. He speaks of the “sacramental principle”, namely how the spiritual is revealed and communicated through the material, and corporeal human beings communicating with God in the same way. The supreme example is the incarnate Son of God. In him dwells “all the fullness of God” (Col.2.9). He is, therefore, the very sacrament of God, the sign and effective instrument of his presence. The Church is an expression of the same sacramental principle: it is the sacrament of Christ. Schillebeeckx says that Christ becomes visible in the visible reality of the entire Church (see :56). The seven sacraments, using words and material things, are effective signs and instruments of Christ’s continuing presence and saving work. Chapter One of *Lumen Gentium* reflects Schillebeeckx’ concept of the sacramental principle.

The opening chapter of *Lumen Gentium* is titled “The Mystery of the Church” but the first paragraph uses the word Sacrament, not Mystery. It would appear from the text that the words are used interchangeably. McBrien maintains that “the distinction between the two theological categories is, for all practical purposes,

without any real difference” (2008:164). Both stand for what Pope Paul VI called “a reality imbued with the hidden presence of God” (Quoted by McBrien 2008:164). Saying that the concept of mystery is “completely and utterly Pauline”, Kasper defines it as “a transcendental saving reality which is revealed and manifested in a visible way” (1989:151).

By speaking of the Church as Mystery, the Council is moving beyond the post-Reformation ecclesiology, which spoke of the Church in terms of an institution and organisation to which members belong, to a community, a mystery in which people participate, a sacrament of God’s on-going saving action in time and space. The sequence of the first four chapters of *Lumen Gentium* demonstrate this new vision of the nature of the Church:

- Chapter One speaks of the Church as a mystery of faith, rooted in the mystery of the Trinity.
- Chapter Two says the Church is the People of God, the *Laos Theau* of the New Testament.
- Chapter Three says the hierarchy forms part of this People of God by the will of the Founder.
- Chapter Four speaks of the laity who, like the hierarchy, form part of God’s holy people.

This arrangement implies that Chapter Four on the laity and Chapter Three on the hierarchy must be understood in the context of Chapter Two on the People of God, and Chapter Two on the People of God makes sense only if read in the light of Chapter One on the Mystery of the Church. A clear understanding of Chapter One is, therefore, essential for an interpretation of *Lumen Gentium* and for an understanding of the ecclesiology of Vatican II.

4.4.2 The Revelation of the Mystery

I have spoken in Section 4.2 about the mystery of the Trinity, a mystery revealed in the economy of salvation, in God’s eternal plan for salvation in Christ in what Ephesians calls “the fullness of time” (Eph.1:10). I have spoken too of how, within the community of the Trinity, the Son is the eternal image of the Father, and the

Incarnate Son is the perfect “image and likeness” (Gen.1.7) of God. To see him is to see the Father (see Jn.14.9). In him God is present and acting as “Son of Man”, as a human being, one of us. As incarnate Son of God he is the true “*Lumen Gentium*” (Light of the Nations), the perfect sacrament, sign and reality, of God’s presence. If the Church is to be called the “*Lumen Gentium*” it can only because it too is ‘mystery’, a sacrament of the continuing presence and action of the one Saviour. The role of the Church is to proclaim Christ as the light of the world and to reflect to the world the light shining on the face of Jesus (see 2 Cor. 4.6) and so be what Jesus said it should be, “the light of the world” (Jn.8.12).

Lumen Gentium 1 speaks of the Church as Sacrament (mystery), “the sign and instrument of communion with God and of the union with men (*sic*)”. In Christ and through him, all are drawn into communion with the three Persons of the Trinity and with each other. As the saving plan of God unfolds, God is revealed, and so *Lumen Gentium* speaks of the revelation of the Father and his role in the plan (LG 2), of the Son (LG 3) and of the Holy Spirit (LG 4). Together with LG 1, these paragraphs are essential to an understanding of the ecclesiology of Vatican II, an ecclesiology which speaks of the Church depending on and living in the Trinity.

LG 2 describes the role of the Father in the economy of salvation and how God is revealed as Father in that economy:

- He is creator who in his wisdom and goodness created the universe and who made human beings to share in the divine life.
- When these humans fell in Adam, God offered “the means of salvation, bestowed in consideration of Christ the Redeemer”, who would, in time be “the image of the invisible God, the first born among many brethren” (Rom.8:29).
- God planned from the beginning to call into a holy Church all who would believe in Christ.
- That holy Church was present in figure from the beginning, was established in “this last age of the world and made manifest in the outpouring of the Spirit”.
- At the end, all the just from the time of Adam to the last of the elect will be gathered with the Father in the universal Church.

That is the Father-God revealed in the economy of salvation and proclaimed by LG 2.

LG 3 links the mystery of the Church to the work of the Son:

- Before the foundation of the world, we were chosen to be adoptive children of the Father God.
- This was accomplished when the Father sent the Son into the world and this incarnate Son, by His obedience, “inaugurated the kingdom of heaven on earth and revealed to us his mystery”.
- The Church, “already present before Christ in mystery, grows visibly through the power of God in the world”.
- The Son drew all people to Himself when He was “lifted up” (Jn.12:32).
- The Eucharistic sacrifice celebrates the sacrifice of Christ our Pasch (see 1 Cor.5:7) and Eucharistic Communion is both a sign and a source of unity among those who believe in Him.
- Christ is “the light of the world, from whom we go forth, through whom we live, and towards whom our whole life is directed”.

Finally, LG 4 links the mystery of the Church to the action of the Holy Spirit:

- The Spirit was sent on Pentecost Day “so that he might continually sanctify the Church and that, consequently, those who believe might have access through Christ in one Spirit to the Father”.
- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of life, the fountain springing up to eternal life (see Jn.4:47; 7:38-39).
- The Holy Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of believers (see 1 Cor.3:16; 6:19).
- The Spirit prays in the hearts of believers and “bears witness to their adoptive son ship” (see Gal.4:6; Rom.8:15-16, 26).
- The Holy Spirit guides the Church “along the way of Truth” (Jn.16:13) and he bestows on the Church her varied hierarchic and charismatic gifts”.
- The Spirit continually renews the Church and “leads her to perfect union with her spouse”.
- The restoration begun in Christ “is carried forward in the sending of the Holy Spirit and through him continues in the Church” (LG 48).
- And so the universal Church is “a people brought into unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (LG 1).

In the ecclesiology of Vatican II, therefore, the Church is a participation in the community of the Trinity and is an icon of Trinitarian fellowship. Kasper gives the following summary:

We can therefore sum up by saying that, according to the council, the mystery of the church means that in the Spirit we have access through Christ to the Father, so that in this way we may share in the divine nature. The communion of the church is prefigured, made possible and sustained by the communion of the Trinity. Ultimately, as the council says, echoing Cyprian, the martyr bishop, it is participation in the Trinitarian communion itself (*Lumen Gentium* 4; *Unitatis Redintegratio* 2). The church is, as it were, the icon of the Trinitarian fellowship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (1989:132).

4.5 The Church as the People of God

4.5.1 Introduction

The Church has its origin in and reflects the communion that is the Trinity. When Vatican II spoke about the communion that is the Church, it did so in terms of three biblical images: People of God, Body of Christ and Temple of the Holy Spirit. This choice, out of a possible ninety-five that the scriptures use to speak of the Church, points to the intention of the Council Fathers to root the Church in the Trinity: the Church as People of God points to the Father; the Church as Body of Christ links it to the Son; the Church as Temple is a reminder that the Spirit lives in the Church and in the heart of each of its members.

4.5.2 The Gathering of God's People

Section 3.2.1 speaks about the Church of the New Testament as the *Laos* of God, a *Kleros* set apart for the worship of God. That early Church had its leadership, but all belonged to that one *Laos*. By speaking of the Church as the People of God before speaking of hierarchy and laity, Vatican II is implying that it is reclaiming that ancient heritage. Having spoken briefly about God's covenant relationship with Israel, *Lumen Gentium* speaks about the covenant instituted by Christ, the new covenant in his blood (see 1 Cor.11:25) and continues, "He called a race made up of Jews and Gentiles which would be one, not according to the flesh but in the Spirit, and this race would be the New People of God" (LG 10). This New People of God, the New Israel, "which advances in this present era in

search of a future and permanent city (see Heb.13:14), is also called the Church of Christ” (LG 10). All who accept Christ are filled with his Spirit and are “gathered together and established as the Church, that it may be for each and everyone the visible sacrament of this saving unity” (LG 10).

LG 10 gives in very condensed form the Council’s teaching on the Church as People of God. As with all Council documents, it is the work of theologians to unpack it, trace its origins and discuss its implications. I believe that an examination of the origin and use of the word “Church” will help clarify what is meant by “the People of God” in the Old Testament and how the Church is the people of the Father in the New. Ratzinger speaks of the transition of the Hebrew root “*qahal*” to the Greek word “*ekklesia*” to the Latin “*ecclesia*” to the English “Church” through the Romance languages (see Ratzinger 1991:30-31). *Qahal* stood for a convocation or assembly of the people. The prototype for all such gatherings was Sinai when the people were called, gathered to listen to God’s word and enter into a covenant with their liberating God (see Deuteronomy 4:10). The convocation of Ezra after the return from Babylon re-enacts what had happened at Sinai (see Nehemiah 8:1-12). From Ezra on the Jews looked forward to and prayed for a new *qahal*, a new gathering by God of God’s people. The Greek word *ekklesia* derives from the Hebrew *qahal* and when the young Church used the word it was in fact saying that the prayer for a new assembly of God’s people had been heard: the Church of God is the new *qahal* of Yahweh; Jesus is the new Sinai; His blood is the Blood of the New Covenant and around Him are the new People of God, now encompassing Gentiles as well as Jews (see Ratzinger 1991:31; Rodrigues 2000:152-153; Hebrews 12:18-24). The *qahal-ekklesia*, says Rodrigues, “is the People of God, ransomed by Jesus Christ, scattered throughout the earth, but living, already now and always, in a holy congregation” (2000:154). Vatican II, therefore, is not using “People of God” with its Old Testament meaning only. It is the people gathered at “You have come to Mount Sion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem [...] and to the assembly of the first born who are enrolled in heaven” (Hebrews 12:22-23).

The people of God is a new people. Christ is the new Liberator surrounded by twelve apostles, symbolising the twelve tribes. He is surrounded too by seventy

disciples, the nations of the world. He instituted a new Covenant, sealed in His blood (see 1 Cor.11:25). “He called a race made up of Jews and gentiles which would be one, not according to the flesh, but in the Spirit, and this race would be the *new* (own emphasis) People of God” (LG 9). Jesus is “the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29). Those “brethren”, his brothers and sisters, form not just the new people of God, but, more accurately, the new People of the Father (see Rodrigues 2000:147).

Speaking of this community of believers, Fuellenbach draws attention to three aspects of the New People of God: it is a chosen, “elected”, people; it is an egalitarian people; and it is a pilgrim people (2002:41-47).

4.5.3 Elected

First it is a people by election. Election in salvation history has been compared to an hourglass as a narrowing down and widening of the divine plan: God chose Abraham and, in him, all his descendants; the choice of God narrowed down to Christ, the Chosen One of God (see Lk.9:33); and in choosing or electing Christ God included all who belong to Christ, all who are in Christ (see Lk.9:41-42). Consequently, Peter can say “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9).

4.5.4 Egalitarian⁵³

Secondly, the Church is *egalitarian*. Jesus said “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles Lord it over them and their great men make their authority felt. This is not to happen among you” (Matt.20:25-26). Fuellenbach says we are not to emulate monarchist structures like those of the Roman Empire or the hierarchies of feudalism (see 2002:43). “The bishop,” he says, “is neither a feudal overlord nor a democratically appointed representative” (:43). The model is Jesus Himself who came “not to be served but to serve and to give his life” (Mk.10:45).

⁵³ This is the theory. It is not always translated into practice.

The ultimate model is the Trinity and its eternal *circumincessio* of self-giving *agape*.

As with the three Persons of the Trinity, there is a radical equality among all who belong to the Church, the very icon of the Trinity. *Lumen Gentium* 32 is explicit, and because it is so crucial I quote it at length:

In the Church not everyone marches along the same path, yet all are called to sanctity and have obtained an equal privilege of faith through the justice of God (see 2 Pet. 1:1). Although by Christ's will some are established as teachers, dispensers of the mysteries and pastors for the others, there remains, nevertheless, a true equality between all with regard to dignity and to the activity which is common to all the faithful in the building up of the body of Christ. The distinction which the Lord has made between the sacred ministers and the rest of the people of God involves union, for the pastors and the other faithful are joined together by a close relationship: the pastors of the Church - following the example of the Lord - should minister to each other and to the rest of the faithful; the latter should eagerly collaborate with the pastors and teachers. And so, amid variety all will bear witness to the wonderful unity in the body of Christ: this very diversity of graces, of ministries and of works gathers the sons of God into one, for "all these things are the work of the one and the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:11).

This is a long way from the "two types of Christians" mentioned above in 3.5.5.1 and from the hierarchology of the post-Reformation Church.

The question remains: has it been fully "received" in the post-Vatican II Church? How egalitarian is it at diocesan and parish level? It is important to remember that LG 32 implies that while all are equal, all are not the same. All are one in Christ but there are different ministries within the one People of God.

4.5.5 Pilgrim

Thirdly, Fuellenbach says we are a Pilgrim People, a people on the way towards its final goal, the fullness of the Kingdom to come (see 2002:45). As it goes on its pilgrim way through time and history, it remains a sacrament, a sign of the reality to which it points "when the universe itself will be perfectly re-established in Christ" (LG 48). This re-establishing has already begun in Christ, risen from the dead and, in His life-giving Spirit, forever active in the world through His Church, the universal sacrament of salvation (see Eph.1:23). The "new heaven

and the new earth” have already begun in Him (Rev.21:1) “for the Church is endowed with a certain sanctity that is real though imperfect” (LG 48).

Because it is imperfect, individual members are asked to strive to “please God in all things” (see 2 Cor. 5:15) and to be numbered among the blessed (see Matt. 25:41; LG 48). Because it is imperfect, the Church herself “carries the mark of this world which will pass” (LG 48). As a pilgrim Church, it is not perfect and will not reach perfection until the end (see LG 48), “always advancing towards the plenitude of divine truth, until eventually the words of God are fulfilled in her” (DV 8). As a pilgrim Church immersed in human history, she can take on an all-too-human face, align herself too closely with political ideologies, or with the rich, or with a particular culture, and become enslaved to things that Paul VI called “relative”, forgetting that only the kingdom is “absolute” (see EN 8). Fuellenbach quotes J.B. Metz: “The second coming of the Lord does not seem to occur since no one in the Church seriously longs for it” (2002:43). The fact that for most of the Church’s history the laity were considered second-class members may be one of its greatest “sins”. Vatican II was a decisive step away from entrenched clericalism and towards the liberation of the laity (see 2002:26). Ratzinger says that the Pilgrim Church “is still the sinful Church continually in need of renovation” (1966:77). He continues: “It must always throw off its earthly bonds and whatever leads to self-satisfaction [...] The Church, as the People of God on pilgrimage, is also always the church under the sign of weakness and sin. It is a church in continual need of God’s forgiving kindness” (:77).

As she continues on her pilgrim way, the Church as a Community is linked to her members who have gone ahead. She remembers her dead who are awaiting final purification, and she is one with those who have faithfully followed Christ, the “great cloud of witnesses” (Heb.12:1) who have completed their journey and are taking part in “the liturgy of perfect glory” (LG 51).

4.6 The Church as the Mystical Body of Christ

4.6.1 Introduction

As indicated in Chapter Three, the hierarchical, institutional element was dominant throughout much of the history of the Catholic Church, especially after the Reformation, a dominance that was evident in the ecclesiology of Vatican I. In the years preceding Vatican II there was a return to the Body of Christ model, a model officially approved by Pope Pius XII in *Mystici Corporis Christi* (1943). Vatican II used the same model but its use is linked to Trinitarian ecclesiology. It makes up what is lacking in the People of God image, namely the centrality of Christ and the intimate connection between the Church and the Risen Redeemer. Ratzinger says that “Through the Church the mystery of the incarnation is active today: Christ continues to move through time In the Church Christ never belongs to the past, he is always and above all the present and the future The Church is the presence of Christ” (2001:2).

4.6.2 Communion with Christ

The Body of Christ image of the Church is distinctly Pauline (see 1Cor.12). Ratzinger reminds us of Paul’s Semitic culture and Hebrew faith which accepted the notion of corporate personality: “We are all in Adam, a single man writ large” (1991:35). Fuellenbach expands on this idea, saying that in Semitic thinking a group derived its identity from the identity of an individual: Adam was both an individual and all humanity; Abraham was both the Son of Tehar and the people of Israel (see 2002:48). Steeped in this way of thinking, Jesus for St. Paul is both an individual and all who accept him as Saviour: all are ‘in him’ as all mankind was in Adam, all Israelites in Abraham.

I argue, however, that the communion between Christ and the Church goes deeper than this. Jesus himself said that he and his followers are one as the vine is one with its branches (see Jn.15:5). In the Risen Christ, all are “a new creation” (see Gal.6:15; 2 Cor.5:17) and “By communicating his Spirit, Christ mystically constitutes as his Body those brothers (*sic*) of his who are called together from

every nation” (LG 7). This communication of the life of the Risen Christ to all believers is accomplished through the sacraments, especially through baptism in which we are “born again by water and the Holy Spirit” (Jn.3:4), buried with him in a death like his and risen with him to a new life (see Rom.6:4-5). Ratzinger speaks of this mystery of faith: the Lord becomes our food; my “I” is assimilated to that of Jesus; I become one with him, and through him with all others who have received him because “all are assimilated to the ‘bread’, and they are made one among themselves, one body” (1991:37). LG 3 says that “as often as the Sacrifice of the Cross by which ‘Christ our Passover is sacrificed’ (1 Cor.5:7) is celebrated on the Altar, the work of our redemption is carried out. Likewise, in the sacrament of the Eucharistic bread, the unity of believers, who form one body in Christ, (see 1 Cor.10:17) is both expressed and brought about”. Ratzinger speaks of the Church being “generated” in the Eucharist: “The Eucharist, in which the Lord gives us his Body and makes us one body, forever remains the place in which the Church is generated, where the Lord never ceases to found her anew; in the Eucharist the Church is most completely herself – in all places, yet only one, just as he is only one” (1991:37).

Through baptism, therefore, we are “incorporated” into Christ, made one with him as vine and branches are one. His life flows through each of his members and so we are ‘in Christ’ in a more real way than Jews were ‘in Abraham’. Through baptism also we are made one with each other, “con-corporated” into each other “so that together as members of the head we are capable of continuing the mission of that of Jesus the Christ” (Miller 1999:10). Miller continues, “As Christ was sent by the Father to gather us into communion with himself, so Christ sends us as Church to continue that unification of all peoples” (:10). That union with Christ and with each other in Christ is both celebrated and nourished in each Eucharistic sacrifice and communion. At the end of each Eucharistic celebration, all are sent out as Jesus was sent (see Jn.20:21) to make visible “the way of salvation” (:10) in the particular part of the world in which they live and work.

4.6.3 The Church as Sacrament of Christ

4.6.3.1 Christ is the Primal Sacrament

The Incarnate Son is the perfect “image and likeness” of God. In Him God has made himself visible, one with mankind. In Him and through Him, God receives perfect obedience and praise. Christ is what Kasper calls the “Primal” Sacrament, the perfect sign and instrument of God’s saving action in the world (see 1989: 110).

A sacrament is “a sign of something present” (Dulles 1987:66), a sign that effects what it signifies. LG 1 says Jesus is the Light of the Nations, the *Lumen Gentium*. He is God at work in the world, “the perfect sign and instrument of God’s grace in human history” (Gaillardetz & Clifford 2012:52). To see Him is to see the Father (see Jn.14:9). He is “the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation” (Col.15) and so He “fulfills to an all-surpassing degree the character of all human beings as image of God” (Kasper 1989:120; also see Gen.1:27). He is the primal, ultimate sacrament because He is in the Father and the Father is in Him (see Jn.14:10). He is the New Adam “who has restored in the children of Adam that likeness of God which had been disfigured ever since the first sin” (LG 22). He is the sacrament of communion with God, “containing the grace he signifies, signifying the grace he contains” (Kasper 1989:67). He is, as Dulles says, the ultimate sign and instrument of God turned towards us and of our acceptance of that gift of God: “He is simultaneously the sacrament of God’s self-gift and of man’s self-obedient acceptance” (1987:68).

4.6.3.2 The Church is the Sacrament of Christ

LG 1 says that the Church is “mystery” and “sacrament”. Dulles quotes from Rahner’s *Church and the Sacraments*: “Essentially the Church is the historically continuing presence in the world of the incarnate Word of God. She is the historical tangibility of the salvific will of God as revealed in Christ” (1987:69). This continuing presence of the incarnate Son of God finds its most tangible expression when the Church gathers as a local community to celebrate the

Eucharist, to listen to the word of God and listen to the words spoken at the Last Supper, “This is my Body ... This is my Blood” (Matt.26:26-28). That gathering of the local Church is the Body of Christ, Head and members, present in this particular time and place.

As the celebration ends all return to their homes and to the communities of which they are a part to be “loving symbols of the Divine love and beacons of hope in the world” (Dulles 1987:73). The focus is not on the Church but on the salvation brought about by Christ at work in the world in the here and now.

4.6.3.3 The Individual Sacraments as Acts of Christ and the Church

McBrien speaks of the Christological and ecclesiological nature of the sacraments: Christological in that they are acts of Christ, ecclesiological because they are acts of the Church (see 2008:331). Vatican II says Christ is always present in the Church, “especially in her liturgical celebrations [...]. He is present in the sacraments so that when anybody baptises, it is really Christ Himself who baptises” (SC 7). Each individual sacrament is an effective sign of God’s grace, of God’s invitation to communion with him. Our response to that invitation is “full, active and conscious” participation in the celebration of each sacrament (SC 14).

4.7. The Church as the Temple of the Holy Spirit

4.7.1. The Holy Spirit in the Church and in Each Member

Vatican II completes its presentation of the Church as the icon of the Trinity with these words:

When the work the Father gave the Son to do on earth (see John 17:4) was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that he might continually sanctify the Church and that, consequently, those who believe might have access through Christ in the one Spirit to the Father (see Eph.2:18) (LG 4).

The Spirit of God was present at Creation itself as the breath of God (see Gen.1:2) and has been active in the “Universal Church” from the time of Adam (see Section 4.4.2): the Spirit spoke through the prophets and inspired the whole

Old Testament to such a degree that each book has God as its author (see DV 11); Mary conceived her Son by the power of the Spirit (see Matt.1:18; Lk.1:35); the same Spirit came on Jesus at his baptism and “drove” him into the desert (see Mk.1:9-11) and was part of the Resurrection when Jesus “was designated Son of God” (Rom.1:4). The Spirit who was active throughout salvation history, remains active in the Church as “power from on high” (see Acts 2:1-4).The Spirit guided the early Church through major decisions (see Acts 15:28) and remains active today in the lives of Christians who have access to the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit (see Eph.2; LG 4). The same Spirit lives in the hearts of each one (see 1 Cor.3:13).

Not only does the Spirit live in each individual but “dwells in the Church as in a temple” (LG 4). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* quotes Augustine: “What the soul is to the human body, the Holy Spirit is to the Church” (CCC 185). He is the source of unity in the Church as he is the bond of love between Father and Son. In the Spirit, all are joined to Christ, the head of the Church, and to each other. The Holy Spirit is not divided and cannot be in one person more than another: “The whole Spirit of Christ is in the head and the whole Spirit of Christ is in each of the members” (MC185). The same Spirit is the gift of God to the Pope, to each bishop, to each lay person, working in each according to the different charisms given to each. The gifts of the Spirit are both institutional and charismatic. Both are co-essential for the Church as founded by Christ and by means of both, the saving message and work of Christ are not merely events of the past but remain “a present reality” (Ratzinger 1991:19).

4.7.2. Universal Call to Holiness

Chapter Three speaks of how holiness of life became associated with a “flight from the world” and the way of the hermit and the monk. The married state came to be seen as a compromise that limited the laity to avoiding grave sin and saving their souls. The beginning of this Chapter stated that the theology of communion underpins the ecclesiology of Vatican II: God is a communion of persons and all are called to communion with God and with each other. Jesus is humankind’s perfect response to this call to communion and to holiness. The Church, the sign

and instrument of his continuing presence, is called to model his holiness. Chapter 4 of *Lumen Gentium* is titled “The Call to Holiness” and it opens with the words “The Church Is held, as a matter of faith, to be unfailingly holy”. There is, however, a paradox with this ‘holy’ Church of God: its members sin “over and over again” (James 3:2); we deceive ourselves if we say we have no sin (see 1 John 1:8); and Jesus taught us to pray continually for forgiveness (Matt.6:12). We are, in the words of Küng, a “*communio peccatorum*” (see Küng 1976:411-416). At the same time, we are called “saints” (Rom.1:7; 15:25), a “holy nation” (1 Peter 2:9), living stones in a holy temple (see Eph.2:21), and so we are, again in the words of Küng, a “*communio sanctorum*” (Küng 1976:419). That same paradox exists in the life of every follower of Christ who can say with Paul, the things I know I should do, I do not do, and I find myself doing the very things I know I should avoid (see Rom.7:19).

LG 39 and LG 40 speak of the holiness of the Church and the call to each member to be holy:

- the Church is holy because Christ, the Son of God, loved the Church and gave His life to make her holy,
- God sent the Holy Spirit to be the soul of the Church,
- “all in the Church, whether they belong to the hierarchy or are cared by it, are called to holiness” (LG 39),
- this holiness finds expression in different ways in different people, “each in his own state of life” (LG 39),
- all those called by God are “justified in the Lord Jesus” and are made children of God “in the Baptism of faith and partakers of the divine nature, and so are truly sanctified” (LG 40),
- all must hold on to and perfect in their lives the sanctification received in baptism and live lives “as is fitting among the saints” (Eph.5:3).

LG 40 concludes: “It is therefore quite clear that all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love”. All are called to imitate the poor and humble Christ, called to live a life of love that has a vertical dimension towards God and a horizontal dimension towards our neighbour (see Fuellenbach 2002:148). All the baptised are called to be “living

stones built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). All of life, even the most mundane things, becomes a “spiritual sacrifice”.

One of the major themes of *Lumen Gentium* is the universal call to holiness. In 2018 Pope Francis devoted chapter one of *Gaudete Exsultate* (GE) to this call (see GE 1 to 34). He speaks of holiness as “the most attractive face of the Church” (9) and says that the invitation to be holy as God is holy (see Lev.11:44) is addressed to each person (see GE 10). He speaks of the traditional idea that it is only priests and religious who are called to sanctity: “To be holy does not require being a bishop, a priest or a religious. [...] We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by being witnesses in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves” (14).

4.8. A Holy Priesthood

4.8.1. Only One Priesthood

Christ is the primal sacrament. He is both the sign and instrument of God’s saving work and the perfect expression of the world’s love and obedient service. He is “the one Mediator between God and men” (1 Tim.2:5), the lamb without blemish who gave his life for the redemption of the world, the High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek (see Heb.7:17). Commenting on Hebrews 7, Dulles (1997:7) says the priesthood of Christ includes his divine appointment (Heb.5:4-6), his earthly supplication (Heb.5:7), his obedience to the Father (Heb.5:8), his sacrificial death (Heb.9:18) and his heavenly intercession (Heb.7:25) (see Dulles 1997:6). He is the Prophet through whom the Father has spoken (Heb.1:2) and the shepherd-king who watches over his flock (Heb.7:2; 13:20). The entire life of Jesus was an act of priesthood but it reached its consummation when he was lifted up and his blood was poured out for the forgiveness of sins (see Jn.12:32; Lk.22:20). His priesthood continues in heaven where he intercedes for those who come to him (see Heb.7:25).

4.8.2 Sharing in the One Priesthood of Christ: The Priesthood of all the Faithful⁵⁴

The People of God of the Old Testament saw themselves as “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex.19:6). St Peter told all those who believed, Jews and gentiles, that they form God’s new elect, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people” (1 Peter 2:9). Revelations speaks of those ransomed by the blood of Christ as “a kingdom and priests” (Rev.5:10).

Caught up in the polemics of the Post-Reformation, Catholic ecclesiology concentrated on proving the validity of the ordained priesthood. Congar broke from this tradition and wrote at length on the validity and practical living of the universal priesthood (see 1957:112ff). Pope Pius XII took it up in *Mystici Corporis Christi* and wrote “By virtue of baptism, Christians are made members of the Mystical Body of Christ, and by the character imprinted on their souls, they are appointed to give worship to God. Thus, they participate according to their condition in the priesthood of Christ” (MC 88).

This participation of all the baptised in the priesthood of Christ became a key theme in the ecclesiology of Vatican II. The first document approved by the Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC), defines the liturgy as “the exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ [....] In it full public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is by the Head and the members” (SC 7).

Speaking of the Church as the People of God, LG 10 says all the faithful are consecrated by the Spirit as a “holy priesthood” so that they can offer their whole lives as a sacrifice to God. Referring specifically to the laity, LG 34 to 36 talk about Christ, the supreme and eternal High Priest, continuing through them his mission of witness and service as Priest, Prophet and King.

⁵⁴ “Priesthood of the Faithful” includes the three *munera* conferred in baptism, namely Priest, Prophet and King. I prefer to speak of the “Priesthood of all the Faithful” rather than “priesthood of the laity” for two reasons: first, this priesthood conferred in baptism is not lost when one becomes an ordained priest; and secondly, “priesthood of the laity” can imply a lesser, inferior form of priesthood. Vatican II asserts that some of the faithful, already sharing through baptism in the priesthood of Christ, are set aside as ministers to act on behalf of the people in the name of Christ. By the sacrament of ordination and by the anointing of the Holy Spirit “they are signed with a special character and so configured to Christ the priest in such a way that they are able to act in the person of Christ the Head” (PO 2).

First as Priest: Hebrews 2:13 says that Jesus the eternal High Priest, is always in the presence of the Father saying, “Here I am with the children you have given to me”. In each liturgical celebration, and especially in the Eucharist, we are joined to this prayer of Jesus before the Father. O’ Collins says that “The faithful and their priests express their priestly identity at the celebration of the Eucharist (and the other sacraments) when they join themselves to the loving self-offering of Christ and his intercession for the whole world” (2014:32). The laity are not just passive spectators of what is happening at the altar. Vatican II calls for “full, conscious and active” participation (SC 14).⁵⁵

It is not only when they participate in the liturgy that the laity exercise their priesthood. They remain priests when they leave the church and continue to worship God by offering themselves and all they do as “a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God” (Rom.12:1). The whole of life is what Hebrews calls “a continuous sacrifice pleasing to God” (Heb.13:15). As *Lumen Gentium* says,

All their works, prayers and apostolic undertakings, family and married life, daily work, relaxation of mind and body, if they are accomplished in the Spirit – indeed even the hardships of life if patiently borne – all these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5) [.....] And so worshipping everywhere by their holy actions, the laity consecrate the world to God (LG 34).

Secondly as Prophet: LG 35 says Christ continues his prophetic role not only through the hierarchy “who teach in his name and by his power” but also through the laity who are gifted with a “*sensus fidei* and the grace of the word so that the power of God may shine out in their daily family and social life”. They show their faith and their hope in the structure of their everyday lives. In this way they become heralds of the gospel through a proclamation of the word and the testimony of a life “lived in the ordinary circumstances of the world” (LG 35). Every baptised person is the salt of the earth and the light of the world (see Matt.5:14). Each is the leaven hidden in the dough of the secular world (see Lk.13:21). LG 38 quotes the Letter to Diognatus: “What the soul is to the body, let Christians be in the world”. Each disciple of Christ exercises his or her prophetic role when they witness to their faith in Christ wherever they are, at

⁵⁵ As I said in Section 4.2, the root meaning of “communion” is participation. A community that does not participate is not truly a community.

home, in school, at work. In the words of Collins, “In their special way all Christian parents, teachers, writers and artists have a vocation to put their prophetic function into practice” (2014:34).

Thirdly as King: LG 36 says Christ has subjected all things to the Father. His followers strive to overcome “the reign of sin in themselves” (Rom.6:12) and by their humility and patience lead others into his kingdom of justice, love and peace. The laity, LG 36 says, have a special role to play in “ordering the whole of creation to the praise of God”, in illuminating “the whole of society with the saving light” of Christ and impregnating all cultures and human endeavours with “a moral value” (LG 38). The ordained priests are admonished to “recognise and promote the dignity and responsibility of the laity in the Church” (LG 37). That is the aim of this Research.

If Christians do not “recognise their dignity” and are not aware of their own priesthood, they will live as if the only priests are the ordained. If only the ordained are seen as priests and prophets and kings, clericalism is the end product. The laity become passive recipients of the service of the ordained.

4.8.3 Sharing in the One Priesthood of Christ: The Ordained Ministry

All the baptised form a priestly people. They exercise that priesthood both when they gather for the liturgy and in their daily living. All, priests and laity, take the sacrifice of daily life to the Eucharistic celebration and return to daily living to bring to the world “the ethos of God’s reign revealed in the teaching and ministry of Jesus” (Gaillardetz 2010:189). It is within this context of the community of believers and the priesthood of all the faithful that Vatican II speaks of the priesthood of the ordained. The ordained priests are servants of Christ and servants of the Church. In the words of McBrien, “The Church is the whole People of God – laity, religious and clergy alike – and the hierarchical structure of the Church exists to serve the whole People of God, not to dominate it” (2008:167). That is why the basic statement of Vatican II on the hierarchical priesthood is in Chapter Two of LG on “The People of God”: “Though they differ essentially and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or

hierarchical priesthood are none the less ordered to one another; each in their own proper way shares in the one priesthood of Christ” (LG 10). The text continues,

The ministerial priest, by the sacred power that he has, forms and rules the priestly people; in the person of Christ, he effects the Eucharistic sacrifice and offers it to God in the name of all the people. The faithful indeed, by virtue of their royal priesthood, participate in the offering of the Eucharist.

McBrien comments: “Whatever ‘sacred power’ the ordained possess and exercise is always for the sake of the life, mission and ministries of the whole People of God” (2008:328). The ordained priest is ordained for service of the priesthood of all the faithful. He acts in the Church and for the Church. Like the High Priest of Hebrews, he is taken from among people to act for those people in relation to God (see Heb.5:1). His role of priest therefore is one of *diakonia*, of service. Vatican II is explicit: “That office which the Lord committed to the pastors of his people, is in the strict sense of the term a service” (LG 24). His priesthood comes from Christ and is, in its essence, related to Christ and to people: “It depends entirely on Christ and on his unique priesthood; it has been instituted for the good of men (*sic*) and the communion of the Church” (CCC 1551). The ordained priest is the servant of Christ present in the Church and the servant of the Church as the Body of Christ. He is ordained to promote “the exercise of the common priesthood of all the baptised” (PDV 16).

4.8.4 Synthesis of the teaching on the priesthood and its importance in the context of this thesis

This thesis maintains that clericalism and lay passivity are a denial in practice of the teaching on the priesthood of all the baptised. It further maintains that if this teaching is accepted in practice, then both clericalism and lay passivity will begin to diminish.

Jesus is the one and only true priest, the one mediator between God and people (see 1 Tim.2:5). His whole life was a priestly act but found its perfect expression in his death, resurrection and ascension. In heaven, He remains our advocate with the Father, continually interceding for us (see Heb.9:24).

All the baptised share in that one priesthood of Christ, forming as they do the body of Christ. The same Spirit who anointed Jesus at the Jordan anoints each of the baptised as priests. Like Christ all life is lived in “the power of the Spirit” (Lk.4:14), and all of life becomes “a spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God” (1 Pt.2:5). Just as Christ was priest (see Heb.7:17), prophet (see Lk.4:18) and king (see Jn.18:36), everyone baptised into Christ is priest and so called to partake fully in the liturgy and to offer everything they do as a spiritual sacrifice so that all of life becomes holy. Each one is prophet and so is called to play an active role in the spread of God’s word and to bear witness to the way of Christ wherever they live and work. Each is king and shepherd, and so takes the values of the kingdom into the secular world of which they are part.

The ordained or ministerial priesthood exists for the service and promotion of the priesthood of all the faithful. The ordained priest is taken from among people and ordained for people to lead as Christ led and to serve as he served (see Heb.5:1). The idea of this kind of servant-priest is incompatible with clericalism, just as the priesthood of all the faithful is incompatible with passivity.

4.9 The Laity in Vatican II and Selected Post-Vatican II Papal Documents

4.9.1 Introduction

Bosch says, “We desperately need a theology of the laity – something of which only the first rudiments are now emerging” (2012:484). It is the contention of this thesis that the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II provides a solid foundation for that theology. It is within that overall ecclesiology, that overall vision of the Church, that the laity see who they are and what is their role and vocation. By baptism and confirmation all, clergy and laity, are members of Christ’s body, all are priests, prophets and kings, all are equal and share in the mission of Christ *ad intra* and *ad extra*. In the words of Kasper, “Communion ecclesiology means that there cannot be active members on the one side and passive ones on the other. This ecclesiology puts an end to the pattern of a welfare Church for looking after people” (1989:162). Because all the baptised are equal, all share, in different ways, responsibility for their Church. Because they are responsible in

different ways, we can still speak about the role and vocation that are specific to the laity and to every individual. This section (4.9) will outline that role as it is described by Vatican II and a selection of post- Vatican II documents. The following section (4.10) will consider the role in terms of vocation or call.

4.9.2 In *Lumen Gentium* (LG)

LG 31 states that “everything that has been said about the People of God is addressed equally to laity, religious and clergy”. All the baptised are anointed as priests, prophets and kings “to carry on the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world” (LG 31). What is specific to the lay members of the People of God is “to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will” (LG 31). They are heralds of the faith “by the testimony of their lives” (LG 35). They are called to a life of holiness, to “the perfection of love” in their specific place and state of life (LG 39).

4.9.3 In *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (AA)

AA says that the right of the laity to play an active role in the Church’s apostolate does not come from a mandate of the hierarchy (see Section 3.7.2.3) but from their membership of the People of God. AA 3 is explicit: “From the fact of their union with Christ the Head flows the layman’s right and duty to be apostles It is by the Lord Himself that they are assigned to the apostolate”. They have a special role to play in the renewal of “the temporal order” so that it becomes “harmonised with the principles of the Christian life” (AA 7).

The apostolate of the laity is not confined to the “temporal order”. Strengthened by their active participation in the liturgy, they play an active role in the spreading of the word of God and “participating in the apostolic and missionary enterprises of their ecclesial family” (AA 10). Speaking of the apostolate of “like towards like”, the Decree says that “Many men (sic) cannot hear the Gospel and come to acknowledge Christ except through the laymen they associate with” (AA 13).

4.9.4 In Sacrosanctum Concilium (SC)

The liturgy is “the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the source from which all its power flows” (SC 10). It is “the outstanding means by which the faithful can express in their lives the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the Church” (SC14). Because it is the “summit” and the “source” of the Church’s life, all members, clerical and lay, are called to “full, conscious and active participation” (SC 14).

As said in 4.3.2, *Gaudium et Spes* maintains it is the role of the lay person to bring the spirit of the Gospel into the heart of the secular world. SC speaks of the movement in the opposite direction, from the heart of the world to the Church: “The baptised person, therefore, is not only a person who lives in the heart of the world, but also a member of the world who lives in the heart of the Church” (SC 24).

4.9.5 In Ad Gentes Divinitus, (AGD)

Bosch speaks of the emergence of the *Missio Dei* in the 1950s. In its classical form it is seen as coming from the nature of God himself: “God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit Father, Son and Holy Spirit sending the Church into the world” (2012:399). “To participate in mission”, he says, “is to participate in God’s sending love” (:400). The Great Commission of Matthew 20:18-20 was for all: disciples are sent to make others what they themselves are, disciples and followers of Jesus (see :75).

AGD was obviously influenced by the new “*missio Dei*” way of understanding mission. AGD 2 says “The Church on earth is by its very nature missionary since, according to the plan of the Father, it has its origin in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit”.

While the task of mission belongs to all disciples, AGD 41 speaks of the specific role of the laity as catechists, teachers, development workers and lay apostles. As lay people they are in a privileged position to be “a leaven animating and

directing the temporal order from within” (AGD 15). If they are to be truly effective, attention must be paid to their continuing formation (see AGD 21).

4.9.6 In the Code of Canon Law⁵⁶

4.9.6.1 The Code and Vatican II

In his constitution promulgating the 1983 Code, Pope John Paul II called it “the final document of Vatican II and said that “it corresponds perfectly with the teaching and character of the Second Vatican Council” (1983:2). The Pope continues: “The Code manifests the spirit of the Council, in the documents of which the Church, the universal ‘sacrament of salvation’ (see Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, Nos 1,9,48) is presented as the People of God and its hierarchic constitution appears based on the College of Bishops under its head” (:2). The People of God model of Church is basic to the Code.

4.9.6.2 The Code and the Laity

The title of Book II of the Code, which contains Canons 204 to 746, is called “The People of God”, linking it directly to chapter II of LG, also titled “The People of God”. Two canons of this large section are important to this thesis and are quoted in full. In the words of Sheehy et al, they are “doctrinal in nature, reflecting the Church’s theological vision of the kind of Church which Christ intended to found” (1995:115).

The first of these is Canon 204:

Can. 204 §1 Christ’s faithful are those who, since they are incorporated into Christ through baptism, are constituted the people of God. For this reason they participate in their own way in the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ. They are called, each according to his or her particular condition, to exercise the mission which God entrusted to the Church to fulfil in the world.

⁵⁶ The Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church (from now on referred to as the Code) is the body of law approved by the Pope for the governance of the Church. The first code of modern times was that of 1917. A new one was drafted in the wake of Vatican II and was promulgated in 1983. The final canon, 1752, says that the salvation of souls is the “supreme law”.

It says three important things: by baptism members are made one with Christ; they share in the priesthood of Christ; they are responsible for the mission God gave to the Church. All share in the priesthood, so there is no room for clericalism. All are responsible for the Church and its mission, so there is no room for passivity.

The second part of this Canon speaks of what Sheehy et al call the Church's "human and social element" (1995:116), its hierarchical structure:

Can. 204 §2 This Church, established and ordered in this world as a society, subsists in the catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and the Bishops in communion with him.

It is worth noting that both LG 8 and Can.204 §2 use the word "subsist" in an inclusive way, not wishing to identify the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church in a way that excludes other churches and Christian denominations (see Sheehy et al 1995:116).

While Canon 204 implies equality of all members, Canon 208 makes it explicit:

Can.208 Flowing from their rebirth in Christ, there is a genuine equality of dignity and action among all of Christ's faithful. Because of this equality they all contribute, each according to his or her own condition and office, to the building up of the Body of Christ.

This is the direct opposite of what we saw above that "there are two types of Christians" and to the statement of Pope Pius X who said the Church is an unequal society" (see Section 3.7.2.3). Canon 208 speaks of a "genuine equality" and it links this equality to an obligation of assuming responsibility for the mission of the Church, according to the "condition and office" of the individual member.⁵⁷

Having stated clearly that the Church is the People of God in which all are equal and for which they are responsible, Canons 208 to 223 outline the obligations and rights of all Christ's faithful irrespective of rank or office. These include:

- the duty to fulfil obligations to local and universal Church (Can.209§2),

⁵⁷ This is how it is supposed to be. It is not always evident in Church life.

- the obligation to strive for holiness and promote the growth of the Church (Can.210),
- to strive so that all people everywhere receive the message of Christ (Can. 211 & 216),
- to make known to their pastors their needs and their suggestions for the good of the Church (Can.212),
- their right to be nourished by their pastors with the word of God and the sacraments (Can.217),
- the right to establish Church organisations and movement (Can.215),
- the duty to provide for the material needs of the Church and to promote social justice (Can.222).

The Code then speaks of the obligations and rights that are specific to the lay faithful. These include:

- by virtue of their baptism and confirmation, they have the right and duty to spread the message of salvation (Can.225§1),
- to bring to the “temporal order” the spirit of the Gospel (Can.225§2),
- to build up the People of God through marriage and the family and to provide for the Christian education of their children (Can.226),
- to be appointed to Church offices in accordance with the law (Can.228),
- to be educated and formed in the faith (Can.229),
- to receive the formation needed to enable them fulfil their role in the Church (Can.231).⁵⁸

4.9.7 In *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, On Evangelisation in the Modern World (EN)

An Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was held in Rome in 1974. On 8th December 1975, Pope Paul VI promulgated the Apostolic Exhortation called *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, On Evangelisation in the Modern World (EN). The Synod discussed three questions:

⁵⁸ I personally have never heard of workshops being held with the laity to appraise them of their rights and obligations.

- In our day, what has happened to that hidden energy of the Good News, which is able to have a powerful effect on a person's conscience?
- To what extent and in what way is that evangelical force capable of really transforming the people of this century?
- What methods should be followed in order that the power of the Gospel may have its effect? (EN 4).

The Pope says these questions arise from a more fundamental one, namely if after Vatican II, "Does the Church find herself better equipped to proclaim the Gospel and to put it into people's hearts with conviction, freedom of spirit and effectiveness?" (EN 4).

Jesus said, "I must preach the Good News of the kingdom of God for I was sent for this purpose" (Lk.4:42). EN 7 says Jesus was "the first and greatest evangeliser". His preaching proclaimed the kingdom of God and the kingdom "is so important that, by comparison, everything else becomes 'the rest', which is given in addition. Only the kingdom therefore is absolute, and it makes everything else relative" (EN 8). The mission of the Church is to do what Jesus did, proclaim the kingdom. This is her "essential mission", her "deepest identity" (EN 7).

Jesus was sent by the Father and He sends the disciples (see John 20:21). The Church, the People of God, is sent as Jesus was sent. It was founded to evangelise, to proclaim the Good News of the kingdom. EN 21 says the kingdom and its values are proclaimed above all by the witness of a life lived "in Christ" (Col.3:3). People listen to preachers only if they are witnesses (see EN 4).

EN 70 speaks specifically about the laity as evangelisers:

- they live in the heart of the world and evangelise from within,
- they evangelise in the arena of politics and economics, of culture and of learning, of the media and international life,
- they evangelise in the family, in social life and in the workplace.

EN 71 speaks of the family as a privileged place of evangelisation. There all members evangelise and are evangelised. Evangelised families become evangelising families. Young people who live a life of faith and prayer, become apostles to each other (see EN 72). Laity and clergy together search for ways of communicating the gospel in today's changed world (see EN 73).

4.9.8 In *Christifideles Laici*, The Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful (CL)

Christifideles Laici is the 1988 Apostolic Exhortation issued by Pope John Paul II subsequent to the 1987 Synod on the vocation and mission of the lay faithful. The Pope used the image of the vineyard to speak about the mission of the Church and of every member: the vineyard is the "whole world" (CL 1) and the words of Jesus, "You go into my vineyard too" (Matt.20:4) are addressed to everybody (see CL 2). It is a call to move from passivity into active mission; no one can stand around idle and passive (see Matt.20:6).

Vatican II spoke about the Church as "Mystery" and "Sacrament" (see Section 4.4.1). CL 8 says the image of the vine "serves to express the *Mystery of the People of God* [...] the lay faithful are seen not simply as labourers who work in the vineyard but are themselves being a part of the vineyard" (CL 1). Jesus is the vine; all who are in him are the branches (see Jn.15:5). The Church is "the vine of the Gospel. She is mystery because the very life and love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are the gift gratuitously offered to all those who are born of water and the Holy Spirit (see Jn.3:3) and called to live the very communion of God and to manifest it and communicate it in history (mission)" (CL 8). The Church is the vine of the gospel, the mystery of Trinitarian love offered to all the baptised who are called to communion with God and sent to communicate God's love to all people (see CL 8).

The lay faithful "are the Church" (Pius XII 1946). They are "in Christ" (Col.3:3), one with Christ as the branch is one with the vine (see CL 9). Being one with Christ, each share in his three-fold mission of priest, prophet and king:

- Because they share in his priestly office, they are united to him and to his sacrifice and all of life becomes “a spiritual sacrifice” (see 1 Peter 2:5).
- Because they share in his prophetic mission, they are given the grace and the power to believe in the Gospel and to communicate it to others (see CL 14).
- Because they share in his kingly mission, they are called to spread the kingdom of God, overcoming whatever in themselves is contrary to that kingdom, living a life of service and striving to restore all of creation “to its original value” (see CL 14).

LG 30 spoke about the secular character of lay spirituality and mission. CL 15 takes up the theme. The laity live in the secular world. There they find Christ and bring the values of the gospel into all facets of life (see CL 15).

Section 3.3.6 speaks about dualistic heresies and the “flight from the world” as a place of evil. Elements of this persist today. *Gaudium et Exultate* discusses contemporary Gnosticism and Pelagianism as “two subtle enemies of holiness” (chapter 2). In the vision of Vatican II and CL 15, the world is “the place and the means for the lay faithful to fulfil their Christian vocation”. There they are like leaven, sanctifying the world from within (see CL 15). They become salt, light and leaven (see Matt.5:14; 13:33) in the heart of the secular world when they respond to the call to holiness (LG 5; 39-42) “by embracing the beatitudes, in listening and meditating on the word of God, in conscious and active participation in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church, in personal prayer, in family or the community, in the hunger and thirst for justice, in the practice of the commandment of love and in all the circumstances of life and service to the brethren, especially the least, the poor and the suffering” (CL 16). Each one is mystically joined to Christ as the branches to the vine; each is an *alter Christos*, another Christ. The same life flows through the branches as through the vine: they have within them the power of Christ to change the world.

While the document speaks of the secular nature of the laity’s mission and spirituality, they also have a mission *ad intra*, in the inner life of the Church (see LG33). CL 21 speaks of the various ministries listed in 1 Cor.12:28 and

Eph.4:7,11-13. CL 22 speaks of the ministry in the Church of the ordained based on the sacrament of Holy Orders and the ministry of lay persons based on baptism and confirmation. Bosch, however, warns of the danger of creating “mini pastors” (2012:484) and CL 23 speaks about the temptation to “clericalise” the lay person and of creating an ecclesial structure parallel to that based on ordination. Pope Francis, too, warns of the danger of the priest clericalising the faithful and the lay faithful asking to be clericalised (see EG 3).

A clericalised laity may give the impression of an active and involved community. The danger is that the activity can be centred on the Church and the altar and the essential secular dimension spoken of in LG 30 and CL 15 neglected. Church-centred activity may cover up passivity regarding the mission to the world. GS 43 and CL 2 speak of the problem in very similar words. I will quote the latter.

In particular, two temptations can be cited which they have not always known how to avoid: the temptation of being so strongly interested in Church services and tasks that some fail to become actively engaged in their responsibilities in the professional, social, cultural and political world; and the temptation of legitimizing the unwarranted separation of faith from life, that is, a separation of the Gospel’s acceptance from the actual living of the Gospel in various situations in the world (CL 2).

In the words of Olson, “Two common errors are highlighted here: the shirking of responsibilities by those who would focus on their heavenly home at the expense of earthly duties, and those who, due to a legalistic understanding of their faith, divorce it from everyday life” (2006:9). Section 3.5.5.2 speaks about how it happened with elements of the *Vita Apostolica*. Chapter 5 will say how it happened with the Pastoral Plan, *Community Serving Humanity*, when the major emphasis was on the “community”, on the Church *ad intra*; and when there was not sufficient attention paid to “Serving Humanity”. It was as if *Lumen Gentium* was accepted and received and *Gaudium et Spes* ignored.

4.9.9 Synthesis of the Teaching of Vatican II and post-Vatican II Publications on Communion Ecclesiology and the Role of the Faithful

The 1985 Synod of Bishops said that the ecclesiology of communion is “the central and fundamental idea of the Council’s documents” (Final Report 1985:6). It is also fundamental to the post-conciliar publications referred to in this chapter.

Lumen Gentium (see Section 4.9.2) speaks of the Church as mystery rooted in the mystery of the Trinity and as an effective sign of communion with people (see LG 1). The words used to describe the Church speak of communion: People of God (10); Body of Christ that continues the presence of Christ in today’s world (10). It is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, made holy by the Spirit’s abiding presence (4). All members are called to perfection (39ff).

Apostolicam Actuositatem says that the apostolate of the laity derives from being a member of the people of God (1). With this in mind, and in light of the People of God model of Church of *Lumen Gentium*, it appears almost superfluous to speak about a theology of the laity. The laity’s right and duty to participate in the life and mission of the Church rest on the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II.

Sacrosanctum Concilium says that the nature of the Church as Mystery and as People of God finds expression in the Church’s worship. It calls for “full, active and conscious” participation (14). It leaves no room for passivity.

Ad Gentes Divinitus speaks of the Church, rooted in the mystery of the community of the Trinity (see LG 1), is “by its very nature missionary since ... it has its origin in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit” (2). This means that the whole people of God is responsible for the spread of the kingdom.

The Code of Canon Law defines the Church as the People of God, and therefore all are responsible for its mission (see can.2041). Canon 208 speaks of the essential equality of all members. If all are equal, all are responsible though in different ways.

Evangelii Nuntiandi says that the community of the Church “exists to evangelise” (7). The laity evangelise “from within” as a leaven in the heart of the world (70).

Christifideles Laici compares the Church to a vineyard. The laity of the Church are part of the vineyard to be cared for and workers within that vineyard. Nobody can stand around idle (see CL 12).

In the pre-Vatican II years, Catholics spoke of “vocation” as the call of some men and women to be priests and religious. Vatican II and subsequent documents speak of the Church as a community of disciples. All are called to discipleship and all are sent on mission. All are called to build up the body of Christ and to bring the values of the kingdom of God into every sphere of life. This may appear so generalised and vague that its implications for lay members are not apparent. *Christifideles Laici* made them specific by examining them from a variety of perspectives and under the heading of Vocation (see CL 45- 56). The following section will examine some of these perspectives.⁵⁹

4.10 The Vocation of the Laity

4.10.1 General and Specific Vocations

Bosch reminds us that while Jewish disciples at the time of Jesus chose which teacher to follow, with Jesus it was he who called (2012:37). “He called those he desired” (Mk.3:13). Some followed, others did not. Disciples were called “to be with him and to be sent out” (Mk.3:14). They are sent out as “disciples- makers” to “proclaim what he preaches and does” (2012:57 & 39).

When Catholics speak of the “vocations crisis” they are voicing a concern about the scarcity of priests and the aging profile of religious. Olson suggests that “although there is a real crisis in regards to the number of priests, there is an equally grave – and related – crisis in the area of lay vocation” (2012:8).

⁵⁹ Here I am indebted to the 1980 publication of the Bishops’ Conference of the United States, *Called and Gifted* and the 1995 updated version (USCCB 1980 and 1995).

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Shaw speaks of three meanings of vocation. The first is the vocation common to all Christians that flows from their baptism and confirmation to “love and serve God and neighbour and cooperate with God in his (sic) redemptive work” (2014:96). This is the vocation mentioned in LG 32: there is “a common dignity of Christians deriving from their belief in Christ, a common grace as sons (sic), a common vocation to perfection, one salvation, one hope and undivided charity”. All without exception are called to the “perfection of love” (LG 32).

The second type of vocation is the vocation to a particular state in life (see Shaw 2014:98). LG speaks of three groups: clergy (see LG 18), Laity (LG 43) and religious (LG 30). LG 31 speaks of the special vocation of the laity: “By reason of their special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will”.

The third kind of vocation is what Shaw calls “Personal”. He says the “stuff” of this vocation is “the unique combination of commitments, obligations, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses” of each individual (2014:100). LG 11 speaks of the journey to holiness through the individual’s “condition or state”. CL 58 says that the purpose of all lay formation is to facilitate “an ever-greater willingness to live one’s mission”. It asserts that “this personal vocation and mission defines the dignity and the responsibility of each member of the lay faithful” (CL 58). This personal calling can be lived out in the isolation of a hermitage, but it is normally lived in the community of family, of local church and in the concrete circumstances of modern life.

4.10.2 The Laity’s Call to Community

The Church is a community that has its origin in the Trinitarian Community. It is the Body of Christ and each is baptised into that body. Speaking specifically

about the laity, LG 31 says that they are “incorporated into Christ, are placed in the People of God, and in their own way share the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ, and to the best of their ability carry on the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world”. In other words, each baptised person has Stewardship responsibility for the building up of the Church and for its mission in the world and they are enabled to do this through the grace of God working in and through them (see LG 33). All are not the same but all are equal; all have not the same responsibilities but all are responsible. LG 32 says “there is a true equality with regard to the dignity and to the activity which is common to all the faithful in the building up of the Body of Christ”. The emphasis on equality in dignity implies that the Church is not “an unequal society” as asserted by Pope Pius X; the stress on equality in activity implies that there should never have been a time when the laity were passive recipients of the ministry of the clergy. Clericalism is the practical rejection of the equality and consequent responsibility of all the baptised.

If the Church is the People of God, a community of believers, then the lay faithful must feel part of that community, have a sense of belonging, of being supported and of having a role to play. The first and primary place where the lay faithful experience this sense of belonging and of responsibility is in their own family, “the primary vital cell of society” (AA 11). It becomes the “primary cell” of the Church “if the family, by the mutual affection of its members and by family prayer; presents itself as a domestic sanctuary of the Church; if the whole family takes its part in the liturgical worship; if, finally, it offers active hospitality and practices justice and other good work for the benefit of all its brothers suffering from want” (AA 11). *Ecclesia in Africa* calls the family a community in dialogue with God, the domestic Church where all, parents and children, exercise the priesthood of all the faithful, the first school of Christian living (see EA 92).

The second place where the laity experience and live community is in the Small Christian Communities (SCCs) and in the local parish, itself a community of communities. In the former, the members experience a sense of belonging to a faith community nourished by the word of God and active in the service of

neighbours in need. Each community becomes a radiating centre of evangelisation (see CL 26). It is at this level that the Stewardship responsibility of the lay faithful becomes grounded in the Word of God and expressed in practical service.

EN 58 speaks of SCCs as “the hope of the universal Church”. Kasper says that if the community model of Church is truly accepted and lived, the active/passive divide would disappear: “In *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (58), Pope Paul VI termed the true basis Christian Communities of the Church a hope for the Church renewal; for communion ecclesiology means that there cannot be active members on the one side, and passive ones on the other. This ecclesiology puts an end to the pattern of a welfare Church for looking after people” (1989:162).

In the parish, a communion of SCCs, the laity experience the uniqueness of the local Church, are inserted into the universal Church and are given “the opportunity to cooperate in all the apostolic and missionary enterprises of the ecclesial family” (AA 10). The weekly Mass is a celebration of the lay faithful’s union with God and with each other, the summit of the local Church’s worship and the source of its power to live in deeper communion and to participate in the mission of the Church at parish and diocesan level (see CL 19).

4.10.3 The Laity’s Call to Holiness

Historically, the call to holiness was seen as a call to become a priest, religious or monk. Vatican II broke with this history and asserted that “all the faithful of whatever rank or state are called to the fullness of Christian life and the perfection of charity” (LG 40). Speaking to the laity, CL 16 says that this call, rooted in baptism, requires of each one to embrace the beatitudes, participate in the liturgy, live a life of personal, family and community prayer, a life of service to the poor and the suffering (see CL 16).

Both Vatican II and *Christifideles Laici* speak of the “secular character” of the layperson’s journey to holiness. I have spoken in Chapter Three of the dualism that surfaced in different guises throughout history and of the “flight from the

world” response of those who wished to answer God’s call to holiness. Speaking of the Church’s solidarity with the whole human race and its history, Vatican II says that there is nothing that is genuinely human that “fails to find an echo in the hearts of the followers of Christ” (GS 1). The world is not an evil place to be avoided: God made it and saw that it was good (see Gen.1). But the Council also acknowledged that there is evil in the world, that there is a “clash of conflicting forces” in each person and in the world at large (GS 10).

Gaillardetz and Clifford (2012:92) speak of the spirit of dialogue that pervades GS: both Church and world have much to give and much to receive. The Church receives much from the world, from its philosophies, its technologies and progress; but it also has a message to give about the ultimate meaning of things, about the need for salvation in Christ and about the good news that reveals God as a God of love and that “reveals humanity to itself and that brings to light its very high calling” (GS 22).

The lay person is at the meeting place of the reality of the world and the reality of salvation in Christ and so the Council speaks of the secular character of his or her path to holiness. Calling it “secular” does not mean that the old concept of the clergy being responsible for the things of God and the laity for the things of the world is being sanctioned. Neither does it mean that the laity are left without an active role in the worship and apostolate of the Church. It does mean that the secular world is the place where the lay person spends most of his or her life and that it is in the context of that secular life that they live a life of faith, hope and love and advance on the way to holiness. They are empowered to become holy in and through their secular activities through their incorporation into Christ the Priest, Prophet and King and the presence of the Spirit in their lives.

Because the lay person is incorporated into Christ the Priest, their private and family life, their work, the trials of life, everything they do become a living sacrifice acceptable to God (see LG 34).

Because they share in the Prophetic role of Christ, each becomes a witness to Christ and to a life of faith and hope that is especially powerful because it is “accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world” (LG 35).

Because they are made one through baptism with Christ the King, the lay person is empowered by the Spirit to bring the values of the kingdom into secular life and to carry out “the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world” (LG 31; see CL 36).

4.10.4 The Laity’s Call to the Apostolate

4.10.4.1 Foundation of the Lay Apostolate

Section 3.6.2.6 speaks about the growing involvement of the laity in Catholic Action from the end of the 19th century onwards and how Catholic Action was defined as a participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy. Vatican II on the other hand described the apostolate as the activity of the entire Church that promotes the spread of the kingdom of God and every baptised person has both the right and the duty to participate in that work: “From the fact of their incorporation with Christ the head flows the layman’s right and duty to be apostles” (AA 1). The primary source of the lay apostolate is baptism. Sharing in the priestly and prophetic role of Christ, each offers their lives as a spiritual sacrifice and each bears witness to Christ in the world. In his Apostolic Exhortation of 2013, Pope Francis says that the Church is not divided into active evangelisers and passive recipients. The reality is that

In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (see Matt. 28:18). All the baptised, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelisation, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelisation to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients (EG 67).⁶¹

⁶¹ The Pope’s reference to the laity as passive recipients is of particular significance to this thesis.

Specific sources of this agency are the special spiritual gifts or charisms that the Spirit allots to each one as he wills (see 1 Cor.12:7-11). Each person is called to be a good steward of these special gifts (see 1 Peter 4:10) and each is empowered to use them through a life lived in Christ, through prayer and participation in the liturgy. This is done in two arenas, the Church and the wider world. AA5 is careful to point out that while it is possible to distinguish between these two arms of the apostolate, they are in fact one: they are one because they are part of the one plan of God “to renew all things in Christ” (Eph.1:10), to make the whole world a new creation (see 2 Cor.5:17), and because the individual baptised person is not divided in himself or herself but is at one and the same time a member of the Body of Christ and a citizen of the world. Nevertheless, we can speak of the two arms of the one apostolate under the headings *ad intra* and *ad extra*. Doohan (1984) states it succinctly: “The baptised person, therefore, is not only a member of the Church who lives in the heart of the world but is also a member of the world who lives in the heart of the Church” (:24).

4.10.4.2 The Lay Apostolate Ad Intra

SC14 says all worshipers are called to “full, conscious and active” participation in the liturgy. This full participation in the internal life of the Church is not limited to the liturgy but extends to all the activities that promote the life of the Church. The call of Vatican II to the participation of all had led to the growth of a variety of ministries in the post-Conciliar Church.

O’Meara defines an ecclesial ministry as “The public activity of the baptised follower of Jesus Christ flowing from the Spirit’s charism and on individual personality on behalf of the Christian Community to proclaim, serve and realise the Kingdom of God” (1999:50). Some of these ministries are liturgical, such as Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, Funeral Leaders, Proclaimers of the Word, Leaders of Sunday Service in the absence of a priest. Non-liturgical ministries include catechesis, pastoral counselling, leaders of Pastoral Councils and SCCs and the societies and sodalities that have their own specific apostolate. The call is to the participation of everybody, even those who have not a specific function or do not belong to a sodality. No one is to “stand around idle all day”;

each is told, “You too go into my vineyard” (Matt.20:3-4).

4.10.4.3 The Lay Apostolate *Ad Extra*

The lay apostolate *ad extra* includes the witness of the individual Christian in the secular world; the social and charitable group work of the Church; and ongoing evangelisation.

The witness of the individual Christian. Both AA 16 and EN 41 speak of the impact of a person whose life is a model of what it means to be Christian. EN 42 says that people are influenced more by witnesses than they are by teachers and if they listen to teachers it is because they are first witnesses.

The impact of the layperson’s witness in a secular culture goes deeper than merely modelling a life of faith and love. A particular (and local) example of lay witness is that of Paddy Kearney of Durban (1942-2018). He was actively involved in the struggle against apartheid and in supporting victims of human rights abuse. Founding director of the Diakonia Council of Churches and the Denis Hurley Centre in Durban, he promoted inter-faith and ecumenical dialogue and joint social action. Together with other churches and other faiths, he worked for the relief of poverty, social cohesion and peace. The street named after him in Durban, the Paddy Kearney Way, is a symbol of his life, linking as it does the Catholic Cathedral and the local Mosque. For him, social justice was, as Pope Francis says, an essential element of the Christian faith (see LS 64).⁶²

The Church is “in the nature of a sacrament” (LG 1), the sign and instrument of Christ present in the world. But the Church is made up of individual baptised people, each sharing in the priesthood of Christ, incorporated into Christ and sharing in his life. Each can be said to be like a sacrament of Christ, a living sign of his saving presence. Jesus said, “He who hears you, hears me” (Lk.10:16). Possibly he could have said with equal truth, “He who sees you, sees me”. This is implied in LG 38: “Each individual must be a witness before the world of the resurrection and life of the Lord Jesus and a sign of the living God”. The

⁶² See www.scross.co.za/2018/11/paddykearney. Accessed 16 April 2020.

lay man or woman, living and working at the cutting edge of Church and world, is in a privileged position to witness to the living Christ. Jesus is the true "*Lumen Gentium*", the light of the world (see Jn. 8:12). That light shines everywhere there is a Christian whose life is modelled on Christ. Each reflects the light of Christ (see Matt.5:14).

The social and charitable group apostolate (see AA 8). Jesus healed the sick, cured the lepers, gave sight to the blind and said this should be sufficient proof for John the Baptist that he was "the one who is to come" (Matt.11:2-6). Later, in Matthew, he said we will be judged at the end by how we have helped our neighbour in need (see Matt. 25:40). From the time the infant Church distributed food to the widows in Jerusalem (see Acts 6), the Church has been involved in charitable, social and development work. Examples in today's Church are the St Vincent de Paul Society, involved in relief work among the poor; Justice and Peace organisations, promoting social justice and the rights of people; development committees, enabling people to take control of their own upliftment. It also includes *Caritas*, a relief and social development arm of the Church at parish, diocesan and international level. The work of these and other social agencies is a continuation of the saving presence of Christ and a sign that the kingdom of God is continually coming.

The need for continuing evangelisation. LG 1 speaks of the Church having its origin in and reflecting the communion of the Trinity. Communion and mission are intimately connected, both in the inner life of the Trinity and the life of the Church, the icon of the Trinity. *Ad Gentes Divinitus* speaks of the life of the Trinity as the origin of all mission. The Father is "the Principle without principle from whom the Son is generated and from whom the Spirit proceeds through the Son" (AGD 2). All created things manifest the glory and goodness of God and man and woman were, from the beginning, offered "a share in His life and glory" (AGD 2). This offer reached its climax in the sending of the Son. Jesus saw Himself as "the one sent by the Father" (Jn.20:20). As in the inner life of the Trinity, that "sending" had to be complimented by "receiving". All who did receive Him received adoption as God's children (see Jn.1:12). Jesus, sent by the Father, is "the first evangeliser" (EN 7). The Church He founded was founded for mission.

All mission has its origin in the *missio Dei*. As Pope John Paul II said, “Communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion” (CL 52). As an icon of the Trinity, the Church “has its origins in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit” (AGD 2); it is a communion that exists for mission; evangelisation is “her deepest identity. She exists to evangelise” (EN 14). Each member is called to partake in this mission; no one can refuse to respond (see AA 33). Pope Paul VI said that for the laity the special field of evangelisation is the world of politics, economics, science, culture, the city, the media (see EN 70).

Pope John Paul II spoke frequently of the need for a “new” evangelisation, new in commitment and methodology but also new in the sense of a re- evangelisation of peoples with a long Christian history but who now appear to have lost the faith and for whom the Church has become distant or irrelevant (see RM 37). The lay faithful, committed to their faith and living in the midst of that secular culture, are ideally placed to conduct that dialogue (see AGD 15).

4.10.5 The Laity’s Call to Maturity

For most members of the Catholic Church, education in the faith ends with Confirmation. This means that many young people “graduate” from the Church with Confirmation and some never return. It also means that many adults go through life with a teenager’s knowledge and little appreciation of the nature of the Church and their responsibility for its mission. Passivity is perpetuated. AA 30 speaks of the obligation of each person to grow into adulthood in the faith and to prepare themselves for the apostolate. CL 57 proposes “a continual process of maturation” and speaks of the obligation of the Church authorities to promote “the total and ongoing formation of the lay faithful”. Ongoing formation is both a right and a duty for all members of the Church (see CL 63).

Speaking about the formation of Priests, Pope John Paul II said it should cover four areas, namely Human, Theological, Spiritual and Pastoral (see PDV 43- 59). The same areas need to be covered in the integral formation of the lay faithful.

4.10.6 The Laity's Call to Stewardship

Christifideles Laici is one of the few Vatican documents that speaks explicitly about stewards and stewardship. Chapter IV is titled "Labourers in the Lord's Vineyard" and is sub-titled "Good Stewards of God's Varied Grace" (see CL 45-56). CL 45 speaks about St Gregory the Great's commentary on the call of the labourers in Matthew 20:1ff. Gregory linked the different hours of the parable to the different stages of life: the "early morning" represents childhood; the "third hour" is adolescence; the "sixth hour" stands for adulthood; the "ninth hour" is old age and the "eleventh hour" is the most advanced years. Each age has its own contribution to make to the life of the Church and each has its own challenges and opportunities.

USCCB 2002 publication, *Stewardship, A Disciple's Response*, says that Stewardship is a joyful acceptance of God's gifts, the fruitful use of these gifts and the return of them to the Lord with increase. The "gifts" include the particular gifts of different stages in life, the natural talents of individuals, the gift of the Church, the gift of baptism, the gift of particular charisms given by the Spirit to different people. Together they amount to a huge richness that is present in any one community. Jesus warned against the burying of any talents, our own or those of others (see Matt.25:18).

4.11 Summary and Conclusion

God is one and God is a community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Humankind was created in the divine "image and likeness" (Gen.1:20), and so the human family reflects the divine community. God is revealed in the economy of salvation and the unfolding plan is bound up with the community of Israel and, after Christ, with the community of the Church.

The New Testament Christian community was an egalitarian gathering of disciples of Jesus, though it had a clear leadership structure. Gradually, the distinction between the leaders and the led became a division between those who were directly involved with the things of God, and a passive laity who were directly

involved with secular affairs. Eventually, Gratian's Decree could say that "there are two types of Christians" (see Section 3.5.1).

In the counter-Reformation period, Catholics stressed what the Reformers rejected, namely, the hierarchical component of the Church. They did not deny, but neither did they stress, either the idea of the Church as a community or the priesthood of all the baptised. Vatican II broke with this tradition. *Lumen Gentium* spoke of the Church as Mystery, the sacrament of God's redeeming presence. It spoke of it in terms of community, the People of God, the *Laos Theau*, of the New Testament. All members of that People of God are equal, and all are called to be holy. *Gaudium et Spes* called the Church out of its isolation and its defensive mentality and said that it had much to learn from the modern world and much to contribute. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* says the whole community must be involved in the worship of the Church in a "full, active and conscious" way (14). *Apostolicam Actuositatem* spoke about the essential role of the laity in the People of God community. It spoke too of the secular character of lay spirituality and of how the laity are in a privileged position to make the world holy and to bring the values of the Gospel into the *areopogae* of today. (see LG 31 and AA 2). Through the witness of their lives and through the power of the Spirit living in them, each becomes a sign and an instrument of God's presence in all of life.

The post-Vatican II publications also reflect a community model of Church. The *Code of Canon Law* says that the Church is the people of God and each member participates in his or her own way in "the priestly, prophetic and kingly role of Christ" (CCL 204.1), and that there is "genuine equality of dignity and action" between all members (CCL 208).

Evangelii Nuntiandi says that the reason for the Church's existence is to evangelise (7) and that the laity have a special role to play in taking the values of the Gospel into the family and public life (see 70).

Christifideles Laici says that the Church is the vine of the Gospel: all are one in Christ and with Christ as the branches and the vine are one (see 9). Again, the role of the laity in the secular world of life and work is stressed (see 14). A warning

is given about being so involved in internal Church activities to such an extent that the faith becomes divorced from daily living (see 2).⁶³

As said in Section 4.9.1 above, the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II and subsequent documents are incompatible with both clericalism and with a passive laity. If these two evils persist, then the ecclesiology of Vatican II has not been received. The following Chapter will examine to what extent it has been received or not received in the dioceses of the SACBC.

⁶³ This will be discussed again in Chapter Five in the context of the SACBC Pastoral Plan, *Community Serving Humanity*.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RECEPTION OF VATICAN II IN SOUTH AFRICA

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Three described how clericalism and the concomitant passivity of the laity are rooted in history and in an ecclesiology that was predominantly hierarchical. Chapter Four discussed the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II and proposed that the acceptance of this People of God model would transform the Church into what it was intended to be from the beginning, namely, a community of missionary disciples of Christ in which all are priests and prophets and shepherds.

There are many ways of assessing the degree to which the Vatican II model of Church has been accepted or received in the Church of Southern Africa, to what degree its ecclesiology has become embedded in pastoral practice. Until it becomes so embedded, the communion model may have been received in theory, but not in practice.

The method chosen for this thesis is to examine the many pastoral initiatives of the SACBC since Vatican II and to assess their effectiveness. The argument is that the degree to which they were successful or unsuccessful is a valid indicator of the degree to which the ecclesiology of Vatican II has become the ecclesiology of the Church of Southern Africa. The conclusions are listed in 5.12 and indicate that many lay members are not even aware of the People of God model Church and that many priests work out of a model that reduces the laity to being passive recipients of the ministry of the clergy.

5.2 Brief Outline of the History of the Catholic Church in South Africa⁶⁴

5.2.1 Beginnings (1837-1870)

The Catholic Church in South Africa is relatively young: it celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2018. In other ways it is as old as the universal Church. The missionaries came from the old Churches of Europe and transplanted in African soil the model of Church that they knew. That model was rooted in the history of Europe and in the Reformation and its aftermath. The role of the laity in that church was a passive one as outlined in Chapter Three. So, the transplanted model of Church included the model of Church of that time together with all its historical and cultural baggage.

The Dutch came to the Cape in 1652. Four years previously, the largely religious Thirty-Year War in Europe ended with the Treaty of Westphalia. That treaty included the principle, *cuius regio, eius religio* (the religion of the ruler becomes the religion of the citizens). In the words of MacCulloch, this permitted each ruler to “decide on which side of the Reformation divide his territory and subjects were to fall”. (2009:644). This same period saw the end of a long war between Catholic Spain and Protestant Netherlands.

While the authorities in the Netherlands were reasonably tolerant, the Dutch East India Company was not. Mainly Calvinist, the Company outlawed the Catholic Church in the territories it administered. Brown says that a French bishop, whose ship was wrecked in Table Bay, was refused permission by the Cape authorities to offer Mass” (Brown 1960:4).

Following the Bavarian *Kerk-Orde* of 1804, some priests were granted permission to reside in the Cape to minister to Catholic soldiers, but “these were sent home when the British returned to the Cape” in 1806 (Brown 1960:195). Catholic chaplains returned in 1817 and in 1818 Bishop Bede Slater was appointed Vicar

⁶⁴ In this section I use the stages of this history as they are in the SACBC Pastoral Planning Working Paper (SACBC 1984A: 45-62).

Apostolic.⁶⁵ Mauritius was added to the Vicariate and Slater resided there. The first resident bishop, Dominican Patrick Griffith, arrived in 1838. He found there “the ruins of a chapel that had been washed away in a flood ... and a small and scattered congregation with meagre funds” (Brain 1997:195). Three years later, in 1841, he built the present St. Mary’s Cathedral. There was no alternative at the time, but the historical dependency on foreign funds goes back to the beginning. He opened a school for boys and the school apostolate became pivotal to the mission outreach of the Church in South Africa. In the words of Archbishop Buti Tlhagale, the teaching priests, brothers and sisters “represent the hundreds of men and women who unreservedly dedicated themselves to the service of others by providing education to generations of young people” (Tlhagale 2018:217).

The Vicariate of the Eastern Districts of the Cape of Good Hope was set up in 1847 and that of Natal in 1852 (see SACBC 1984A:43). When Bishop Marie Jean François Allard was appointed the first Vicar of Natal, his letter of appointment told him that his mission was “not to a few heretics who inhabit your towns but to convert the Zulus” (Brain 1997:197). He appears to have had little success with the Zulus and he and his priests took care of the small Catholic settler community “made up of Irish and Dutch soldiers and discharged soldiers living in poverty” (:196). These small and impoverished communities remained isolated from the larger and wealthier Protestant society and developed their own protective sub-culture and “a siege mentality” (SACBC 1984A:46).

5.2.2 Consolidation and Growth (1870 to 1918)

The Industrial Revolution reached South Africa “with the discovery of gold and diamonds between 1867 and 1886” (Brain 1997:196). Large numbers arrived from Europe. The Catholics among them were “struggling artisans and blue-collar workers” (:196). Schools were opened for the children of the immigrants. In 1875 the Jesuits came to Grahamstown and Pope Leo XIII mandated them to evangelise the peoples along the Zambezi. Trappist monks led by Fr. Francis Pfanner arrived

⁶⁵ A Vicar Apostolic is a bishop assigned to a territory that is not yet a diocese and is called a Vicariate.

at Sunday's Well in 1880, but two years later they moved to what became known as Mariannhill. Their coming led to a rapid expansion of Catholic missionary work in Natal and the Transkei (see 1997:199). By 1889, Mariannhill was the largest abbey in the world with 285 members.

In spite of moving into new areas and increasing in numbers, the Catholic Church remained isolated from the other Christian Churches and continued with its siege mentality (see SACBC 1984A:48). At the same time, it "accommodated itself to prevailing White attitudes and the colonial mentality and drifted into social and institutional segregation" (:48). The Pastoral Plan Working Paper asserts that a disproportionate amount of money and personnel were allocated to the white Catholic community which was itself in a position to contribute substantially to the Churches and its institutions. (:49). The document concludes that "It looked as if there were two or more Catholic Churches in South Africa developing on parallel lines" (:49).

5.2.3 Between the Wars (1918-1939)

During this period of growth, several new dioceses were created. The creation of separate jurisdictions and the recruiting of new missionary groups to run them resulted in a rapid increase in both personnel and material resources. The new groups, including the Franciscans, the Holy Ghost Fathers and the Sacred Heart Fathers, "saw themselves primarily as missionaries to the Black population" (SACBC 1984A:50). But there were long-term disadvantages. First, the concentration of the missionary drive in the hands of the missionaries resulted in the neglect of local vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Secondly, the availability of a large cohort of full-time and dedicated missionaries led to a neglect of the laity and their responsibility for the life and growth of their Church. Thirdly, with a steady flow of money through the missionaries from the Holy See and from funding agencies, the local Church remained dependent on foreign funds, something that has persisted to the present time. Bishop Mandlekosi Aloysius Isaac Zwane draws the logical conclusion: "With many vocations from Germany, Ireland and elsewhere, and with adequate foreign money, there is little pressure on the local black people to provide support for the Church in the form

of trained personnel ... As a result, Blacks were unable to develop a sense of full responsibility for the Church and tended not to feel part of it" (Zwane 1982:120).

During this period between the wars there was a rapid growth in the number of schools for African children and the Church became a major player in the provision of education for the indigenous population.

5.2.4 From 1945 to Vatican II

5.2.4.1 Seminaries and Schools

In 1946 Archbishop Martin Lucas was appointed Apostolic Delegate. He was responsible for establishing the SACBC and was instrumental in setting up St Peter's Seminary for Black and St John Vianney's Seminary for White students. As with the counter-witness of a divided Church, the dual seminary system ran counter to everything the Church should have stood for, even if the Apartheid laws left the Church authorities little real choice. In 1972 the SACBC began discussions on integrating the double system and had decided to do so by 1976. To their great credit, the women religious were unambiguous in the stand they took on integration. From the time of the appointment of Bishop Patrick Griffith in Cape Town in 1938 (see Section 5.2.1), Catholic Schools formed an integral part of the life of the Church. The Church suffered a major set-back with the passing of the Bantu Education Act (1953). As said in Section 2.2.2, its aim was to maintain and legitimise Apartheid by insisting that all schools be organised along racial lines, by protecting the rights of "whites" and by ensuring that the level of education for "blacks" would be in line with their inferior status in society. Schools that did not comply with the Act would lose their Government subsidies and Independent schools would need State permission to operate.

In the words of the SACBC, "The Catholic establishment was aghast. It could not imagine a missionary situation without schools" (SACBC 1994A:53). The bishops were determined to run their schools even without Government subsidies. A form of planned giving was introduced, but many schools could not survive. In 1971 there were 180,660 students in Catholic schools, 99,422 of whom were Black

African. In 1981 this had fallen to 88,591, of whom 58,108 were Black African (see SACBC 1994A:116-117).⁶⁶

Brigid Flanagan spoke of the dilemma in which the SACBC found itself. To close the schools would anger the Government and deprive black children of quality education. To hand over the schools to Government would deprive the Church of an important sphere of influence. Keeping the schools open along racial lines would compromise the Church's opposition to Apartheid (see 1982:88).

With the increased concern for social justice following Vatican II and the growing explicit opposition to the whole system of separate development, the Church faced up to the fact that acceptance of segregation in schools amounted to an acceptance of Apartheid (see Flanagan1982:89). The women religious led the way. In 1975 they presented the following Resolution to the SACBC: "The time has come for those Catholic schools which had hitherto accepted only white pupils to a practical witness to social justice by accepting non-white Christians into their schools" (SACBC 1976A:180). The February 1976 Plenary accepted the Resolution and said it favoured integration (see SACBC 1976A: Resolution 7). However, the student uprising and subsequent turmoil of 1976 delayed the process and integration was finally accomplished three years later (see SACBC 1984A:58).

5.2.4.2 Parishes and Missions

As mentioned above, the Catholic Church began as a part of the broader settler community and drifted together with that community into social segregation along racial lines. Many of its members were soldiers or discharged soldiers living in poverty. With the opening of the mines, most of the Catholics who came from Europe were labourers or artisans. But with the excellent education made available to their children, many moved into middle-class society. At the same time, they were the *Roomse gevaar* (the Roman danger) and lived in their own sub-culture in city parishes. Bate says, "They set up a Catholic ghetto enclave within prevailing

⁶⁶ There was a positive flip side to the loss. It forced the Church to search for new ways of being missionary and to place more emphasis on the family rather than on the school (see Brain 1997:205).

white society where all of the religious and social needs of Catholics could be met from cradle to grave” (Bate 1999A:13). Each parish had its own beautiful church and its own resident priest, and most were financially viable.

The Church in Black areas, on the other hand, were called “missions” rather than parishes. The buildings were simple structures. The “Central Mission” was where the priest lived, and he was responsible for several “Out-Stations”. Because of lack of employment opportunities in the rural areas and the migratory labour system, the mission Church members were mainly the old people and the children. Many were poor and the missionaries were slow to ask them for money for buildings, the salaries of catechists, the day-to-day running costs of the mission. Everything was provided. The impression created was that the Church was rich and the priest did not need their money. As Bishop Zwane said, black members did not really feel part of their Church (see Section 1.7.4). A spirit of paternalism and dependency developed, the local brand of clericalism and lay passivity.

5.2.5 After Vatican II

5.2.5.1 The Struggle for Justice

Vatican II, especially *Gaudium et Spes*, gave a new urgency and impetus to the Catholic involvement in the struggle for justice and civil rights in South Africa. Archbishop Denis Hurley, an influential figure at the Council, was in the forefront. Possibly the main work was done by priests, religious and laity at local level, but the clear leadership given by their bishops was vital. From the 1960s onwards, the SACBC published a series of documents and statements that condemned the injustices of society and that persistently called for change. In 1972, it issued *A Call to Conscience* which said that “While the evil of Apartheid exists, no one can rest” (SACBC 1967- 80:15). In 1977, the bishops spent their entire January session discussing the student uprising of 1976 and what their response should be. They issued a “Declaration of Commitment” which listed twenty-one “action points” related to social justice and the response of the Catholic Church to the turmoil of the time.

Chapter Four says Vatican II gave a fresh impetus to ecumenism. The SACBC decided to work together with the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and eventually became a full and very active member.⁶⁷ It added a strong voice to the Christian voice of the country, and it integrated the Catholic Church into the South African Christian family (see Oblate Archives Documentation 153- 57:5). The siege mentality and the long years of isolation had come to an end.

5.2.5.2 The Struggle *Ad Intra*

The spirit of Vatican II was encapsulated in the opening words of its Constitution of the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, Joy and Hope. But the joy and hope were short-lived. Many priests and religious who had made a life-long commitment within a different model of Church and a different social *milieu*, asked to be released from their vows. There was a dramatic fall in the numbers entering the local seminaries and religious congregations and an even more rapid decline in the number of overseas missionaries. As the Pastoral Plan Working Paper says, “Just when the Church needed young vigorous recruits to promote its new image, they disappeared” (SACBC 1984A:54).

The Pastoral Plan Working Paper speaks of the factors that put “the whole internal evangelisation of the Church at risk” (SACBC 1984A:57). Apart from the decrease in the number of priests and religious and the decrease in funds, other factors included: the lack of preparation of the clergy, the difficulty in getting young people together in a time of social unrest, lack of trained lay catechists and pastoral leaders, lack of catechetical material based on the Vatican II ecclesiology, migrant labour and broken and divided families (see :56).

The picture was bleak, but positive things were happening. The decline in priestly and religious vocations forced the Church to move away from a model that involved over-dependence on religious and clergy to a Vatican II People of God model which sees the laity not only as a vineyard to be cared for, but also as workers in that vineyard. This new way of visioning the Church resulted in

⁶⁷ I served for six years on the Executive Committee of the SACC.

two initiatives that were to have a profound influence on the formation of children and adults. The first was the publication of a new catechetical series for the formation in the faith of children and youth. It was called *The People of God* series, based on the Vatican II model of Church and published in eight languages.

The second concerned the Missiological Institute called Lumko. Established in 1962, it was taken over by the SACBC in 1974. It was to become very effective in the formation and training of lay leaders and catechists (see SACBC 1984A:55-56). It played a pivotal role in the development of the Pastoral Plan, *Community Serving Humanity*, in the establishment of Small Christian Communities (SCCs) and in the training of leaders for a community model of Church. Its approach is encapsulated in the title of one of its major publications, *Towards Non-Dominating Leadership* (Lobinger 1983): a People of God model of Church calls for a new type of leader.

With this historical background in mind, I will now examine how the Vatican II community model of Church and its teaching on the laity was received by the Church in South Africa. To do this I will draw on three sources:

- The 1985 Second Extraordinary Synod
- A selection of pastoral programmes initiated by the SACBC in the post-Vatican II period.
- Doctoral research conducted in the Diocese of Port Elizabeth.

5.2.5.3 Continuity or Discontinuity

Chapter Four examined the ecclesiology of Vatican II and this chapter speaks about the attempts made by the SACBC to develop a community model of Church in which all play a conscious and active role.

An important question is how Vatican II is interpreted: did it mark a complete break with the Church's tradition, or did it simply state old truths in a new way? A debate that has been going on for some years speaks of it in terms of continuity or discontinuity. The debate is important for this thesis. It affects what we understand by the reception of Vatican II and what we are receiving. If nothing has changed, then we continue with the old, post-Reformation of Church. If everything has

changed then we can ignore previous Councils and the Church's long tradition.

In an article titled "How Should Vatican II be Interpreted?", published in the Catholic Courier in December 2009, McBrien suggests that it is not a matter of either continuity or discontinuity, but a matter of both/and (McBrien 2009).

First, there was continuity. O'Malley says, "Vatican II affirmed again and again its continuity with the Catholic tradition, especially with the Council of Trent and Vatican I" (2007:84). The basic teaching of the Church remained the same. Secondly, there were profound changes in liturgy, in ecumenism, in the Church's relationship with the Jews, and in the way it relates, in a spirit of service, to a changing world. It affirms that other faiths can be pathways to God.

One way in which there was real change is the way in which tradition is understood. That tradition did not begin with the Council of Trent, or even with the Council of Nicea, but goes back to the Old Testament concept of the People of God and the New Testament image of the Body of Christ. It went back to the Fathers of the Church who grappled with interpreting the teachings of Jesus and determining what are the essentials of the Catholic faith.

The tension between holding on to the old in its entirety and the need to reinterpret the old played out in a dramatic way in Vatican II. Cardinal Ottaviani presented the first draft on the Church, *De Ecclesia*. It read like it had been copied from the old manuals. Cardinal de Smedt condemned it as triumphal, clerical and judicial (O'Malley 2008:73). Out of this dispute came the two key documents of the Council, *Gaudium et Spes* and *Lumen Gentium*.

This thesis accepts the both/and approach to the problem. This balance is reflected in two key words that are associated with the Council, namely, *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* (cf. 2.4.1). *Ressourcement* looks to the past, to the sources of the Christian faith as found in Scripture and in the Church Fathers. Here there is continuity with a long tradition. *Aggiornamento*, on the other hand, looks to the present and the future and the need for renewal. The Church lives in a world that is always changing. It must be continually reforming. This involves

some form of discontinuity with the past.

The debate of the Council indicates a transition from Ottaviani's *De Ecclesia* to both *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*. The debate remains valid: even when we accept the People of God model of Church, we may be more influenced than we care to admit by the older pre-Vatican II model of Church. In an article titled, "The Theological Foundation of a New Relationship Between Laity and Clergy in the Service of the Church's Mission", McCabe describes the two models (cf. 2018:16). The traditional model of cleric/lay relationship was based on the image of the Church as a hierarchical structure with the following characteristics:

- The Church was a visible, historic society with rules and a constitution which loyal members accepted and obeyed.
- The Church leaders were responsible for teaching, governing and sanctifying, and this created a division between the givers and the receivers, the rulers and the ruled. "Leadership was viewed as an exercise of authority over others" (:16).
- The structure promoted paternalism: the leaders thought for the people and provided the answers.

The Vatican II model, on the other hand, speaks of the Church in terms of sacrament, the sign and instrument of Christ's continuing saving work in the world. It sees the Church as a communion that has its origin in the communion of love that is the Trinity. McCabe gives the distinguishing features of this vision of Church.

First, the Church is the People of God. All share the three-fold office of Christ as priest, prophet and king (cf. LG 9-13). Each baptised member is a temple of God (cf. LG 9). Each is called to a life of holiness (cf. LG 40).

Secondly, the Church is the Body of Christ (cf. 1 Cor.12). All form a single body, but members have different gifts and functions. These compliment each other and build up and unite the community.

Thirdly, the Church is servant as Jesus was servant. It is servant not only of its own members but of all humanity. It exists for others just as Jesus was a man for

others. It is involved in development, reconciliation, in healing the wounds of the world, in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed.

This thesis rests on this Vatican II model of Church. It proposes that Stewardship provides a way of ensuring that it is embedded in each parish and diocese. The model of leadership required for Stewardship is discussed in 7.7.2.

5.3 The Nature of Reception

Rausch gives a definition:

Reception as a theological concept refers to the process through which an ecclesial community incorporates into its own life a particular decision, teaching or practice (2003:828).

He distinguishes between the classical sense of the word which refers to acceptance by a local Church of a conciliar decision, and the more recent ecumenical meaning of the acceptance of a consensus arrived at with another church on some aspect of the Christian faith.

The theological concept of reception goes back to the beginning of the Church; it continued for the next one thousand years as a constituent part of the Church; it virtually disappeared for the following thousand years until it returned with Vatican II (see Rausch 2003:828-829). First, it is as old as the New Testament. Jesus said the word of God is a seed that falls on rock, along the path, among thorns or on fertile soil (see Mark 4:3-9). The seed is one thing; the ground it falls on another. It bears fruit only if it is received by fertile soil. Later St Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth:

I want to make it quite clear to you, brothers, what the message of the Gospel I preached to you is; you accepted it and took your stand on it and you are saved by it, if you keep to the message I preached to you [...] The tradition I handed on to you in the first place, a tradition which I had myself received, was that Christ died for our sins (1 Corinthians 15:1-3).

Paul himself had received the message; he had passed it on to the Corinthians; they in turn received it. Gaillardetz quotes Rausch: "What resulted from the reception of the apostolic preaching by those who became the converts of the apostles and other early Christian missionaries was the Church itself" (Gaillardetz

2002:98). The Church exists to receive the message of salvation and hand it on (see Rausch 2003:828).

In post-apostolic times the process continued: the Word was preached and received in faith; what was received was assimilated, lived in everyday life and celebrated in liturgy; what was accepted and lived and celebrated was transmitted to a neighbouring people and to a new generation. A living tradition by which truths are passed on and received became an integral part of what the Church was.

In the days of Paul and through the first millennium the Church was “a communion of local churches” (see Rausch 2003:828). Reception by a local Church of “confessions of faith, liturgies, various conciliar decrees, and the finalisation of the Biblical canon, provided them recognition and authority” (McBrien 2008:322).

As the community model of Church faded and was gradually replaced by a more hierarchical one, reception took on a new meaning until it became synonymous with submission and obedience. Rausch asserts that

[...] an excessively hierarchical concept of Church which developed so emphasised the role of ecclesiastical authority that the notion of reception was virtually rejected (2003:828).

Vatican II did not speak explicitly about reception, but it did restore the theology and ecclesiology on which it rests. It spoke about the Church as a communion of local churches, asserting that

The Church of Christ is present in all legitimately organised local groups of the faithful, which, in so far as they are united to their pastors, are also quite appropriately called churches in the New Testament (LG 26).

Each local community is the new People of God and Christ is present among them (see LG 26). The Church of Christ is also present in each diocesan community, governed by the local bishop, the Vicar of Christ who governs the local Church in His name (see LG 27).

Secondly, Vatican II revived the notion of the “*Sensus fidei*”. Burkhard gives the definition of Tillard that distinguishes between the *Sensus fidei* and the *Sensus*

fidelium:

The *sensus fidei* may be described as an active capacity for spiritual discernment, an intuition that is formed by worshipping and living in communion as a faithful member of the Church. When this capacity is exercised in concert by the body of the faithful, we may speak of the exercise of the *sensus fidelium* (2008:566).

The capacity for what Tillard calls “spiritual discernment” comes from the Holy Spirit who was poured out on the whole community in the Upper Room on Pentecost Sunday (see Acts 2:1), the Spirit of Truth given to each one in Baptism (see. John 16:13), the Spirit that anoints the whole body of the faithful with the gift of knowledge (see 1 John 2:20) so that they “do not need anyone to teach” them (see 1 John 2:27). *Lumen Gentium* speaks of this anointing:

The whole body of the faithful who have an anointing that comes from the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 John 2:20 and 27) cannot err in matters of belief. This characteristic is shown in the supernatural appreciation of the faith (*sensus fidei*) of the whole people, when, ‘from bishops to the last of the faithful’, they manifest a universal consent in matters of faith and morals (LG 12).

While Article 12 does not use the word reception, it does say that the People of God, under the guidance of the teaching authority of the Church “**receive**⁶⁸ not only the mere word of men, but truly the word of God, the faith once for all delivered to the saints (see Jude 3)”.

Before speaking of how Vatican II was received by the Church in South Africa, I wish to summarise what the process of reception involves and the criteria for judging if it has occurred.

First, what it involves, and here I follow Rausch and Gaillardetz.

Rausch says the process involves four principles (Rausch 2003:829-830). First, reception is a process that involves all of the Church. As No.25 of *Lumen Gentium* says, the whole Church “assents” to the truth. This was normal practice in the early Church: “ecclesiastical decisions or teachings became normative for the later Church only when they were received by the faithful” (2003:829). This does

⁶⁸ Own emphasis.

not mean, as Congar pointed out, that reception confers validity. Instead, it “affirms, acknowledges and attests that the matter is for the good of the Church” (1957:829).

Secondly, reception involves a decision on the part of the Church authority. It may be in an ecumenical council whose decisions are confirmed and “received” by the Pope. Or it may be the approval of what is already being practiced by the faithful. The role of the Church authorities is to “articulate what is the faith of the Church” (Rausch 2003:829).

Thirdly, “the faith of the Church” is not just doctrinal formulations but includes “forms of worship, life and practice (which) emerge out of a living tradition” (Rausch 2003:829).

Fourthly, the norm for receiving a practice or doctrine is not negotiation between parties but “agreement with apostolic tradition” (Rausch 2003:829).

Gaillardetz speaks of five elements which supplement those of Rausch (see 2002:98).

- Reception involves discernment regarding the authenticity of what is received.⁶⁹
- The process of reception is not just notional but involves integration and absorption into the life of the community.⁷⁰
- It may be a slow process, spanning more than one generation.
- Reception is basically reception of Christ, the Word of God, not “a filing cabinet of propositional truths” (:98).

⁶⁹ Because it involves the whole Church, reception is not necessarily a one-way process of the lay faithful affirming and receiving what is proposed by the authorities. A good example of reception by the Church authority itself is the incorporation of so much of the pre-Vatican II liturgists, historians and theologians into the teachings of the Council. An earlier example is the adoption of private confession as a norm after it had been practised for many years by the Church in Ireland.

⁷⁰ This principle is of special importance for this research. The question becomes: how was the teaching of Vatican II integrated and absorbed into the life of the Church in South African?

- Reception is an essential part of what the Church is. Gaillardetz quotes Rausch: “what resulted from the reception of the apostolic preaching by those who became the converts of the apostles and the other early Christian missionaries was the Church itself” (:98). He quoted the Venerable Bede: “every day the Church gives birth to the Church”.

I will now examine the degree to which the ecclesiology of Vatican II was “received” by the Church in South Africa and became part of its way of being Church. The first source of information is the 1985 Second Extraordinary Synod.

5.4 The 1985 Second Extraordinary Synod

5.4.1 Introduction

The 1985 Synod was held on the 20th anniversary of the end of Vatican II. It was essentially a reflection on the reception of the Council in the different parts of the world and on what remained to be done. The Final Report says the aim was “the celebration, verification and promotion of Vatican Council II” (1985:1). The Preliminary Questionnaire dealt specifically with the reception of the Council by the local Churches.

5.4.2 The SACBC Response to the Pre-Synod Questionnaire

A pre-synod questionnaire was sent to all Bishops’ Conferences. The document had four “General Questions” and a number of Particular ones. They were distributed around the Church in South Africa. Replies were discussed and a response formulated at a Plenary Session at Hammanskraal on 7-8 August 1985. The participants included all the bishops as well as priests, religious and lay delegates. The Final Report of this session (SACBC 1985B) provides a good indication of the state of the reception of Vatican II in South Africa twenty years after the close of the Council.

Before commenting on the Final report, it is important to point out that it is more difficult to assess the reception of Vatican II than any previous council. Other

councils dealt with clarifying doctrines of faith or with correcting abuses and errors. "Reception" meant one accepted a credal statement or they did not, they obeyed a directive to which an anathema is attached, or they faced the consequences. Because of the pastoral nature of Vatican II and the style used in the documents, determining the level of reception is much more difficult. The Final Report of the SACBC acknowledges this problem: Vatican II was not called to combat abuse or correct errors. Rather, it was a matter of a change in attitude and outlook to a new way of thinking about the Church. The bishops said it would have been a miracle if they had succeeded in communicating this new vision rapidly and successfully. This miracle did not happen (see SACBC 1985B:3).

I will now give the response to the four General Questions and to a Particular Question that is relevant to this research.

General Question One: What has been done to make the Council really known, faithfully accepted and implemented?

The bishops replied that the attempts had been "very uneven" (SACBC1985B:3). These attempts were listed under four headings (see:3-4):

- Teaching, including pastoral letters and directives from bishops and the new catechetical programme called *The People of God Series*.
- Publications, including the Catholic Press and the programmes published by Lumko, the SACBC Missiological Institute.
- Structures, especially priests' councils and pastoral councils that were set up as instruments of consultation and collaboration, and the introduction of lay ministries in the Church's worship.

The SACBC response said that the principal method of making Vatican II known was by means of its actual implementation in the life of the Church rather than in formal teaching (see SACBC 1985B:4).

General Question Two: What benefits for the life of the Church have resulted from the Council?

The bishops said the changes were in relation to the Church itself, in relation to other religious bodies and in relation to the world.

In relation to the Church itself, the response maintained that there was a growing realisation that the Church is not only an institution but a living community, that the description of the Church as the People of God is “acquiring some significance” (SACBC 1985B:5) and, to a lesser extent, the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation. There is a growing realisation that “the laity make up most of the Church and have an overwhelmingly important role” (:5). In spite of the above, it said that full impact of *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes* was yet to come (see :5).

The response says that there was a major overhaul of catechesis, greater emphasis on evangelisation, consultation and collaboration. There was greater awareness of the vocation of the laity to make the Church present in the modern world (see SACBC 1985B:5).

General Question Three: Have any errors or abuses crept in as regards the interpretation and implementation of the Council, and what has been done about them?

The Response spoke about “*lacunae* or shortcomings rather than glaring errors, abuses or defects”. It spoke of a false understanding of the priesthood of the faithful and of the respective roles of the laity and the ordained (see SACBC 1985B:8).

The bishops spoke about a general uneasiness about the state of catechesis, especially in the rural areas and “the widespread ignorance of the faith” (SACBC 1985B:7). “The malaise”, they said, “stems from the growing secularisation of the western world and the Church’s inability to combat it effectively” (:9).

With regard to the Liturgy and the Spiritual Life, the response says that in spite of the strides made in liturgical reform, there is “a banality which results in cold and lifeless celebration” (SACBC 1985B:9). Speaking about the spirituality of lay members, it says there is less family and private prayer. The Report does not say how they came to this conclusion, but it did suggest it may be linked to an over-emphasis on liturgical celebration that resulted in a decline in family and private prayer (see:9). Ministry by the laity is largely confined to the sanctuary and so there is “a failure to integrate the liturgical or catechetical with the pastoral dimensions of the service role in the Church” (:9).

Structures like Pastoral Councils have been set up but the people “are not properly trained or not properly disposed for the primary work of service” (SACBC 1985B:10).

General Question 4 asked Have any difficulties been experienced in the implementation of the Council because of new exigencies arising from changing times?

The Response spoke about the international situation, the situation in the country and the present state of the Church.

On international issues, the Response spoke about the fear of nuclear war and of increasing materialism coupled with great poverty, unemployment, famine and disease (SACBC 1985B:10).

On the situation in the country, the bishops mentioned the rising civil unrest and the imperative of promoting justice for the oppressed as well as, “reconciliation, brotherhood and peace” (SACBC 1985B:11).

On the Church itself, the bishops mentioned the departures from priestly and religious life and the decrease in the number of expatriate missionaries (see SACBC 1985B:12). They concluded that the way forward was through more active involvement of the laity, discerning priorities, and promoting the call to genuine holiness for all the baptised (see :12).

Beside the General Questions, the questionnaire had a number of “Particular Questions”. The following is of particular importance for this thesis.

Particular Question Two: Is the Mystery of the Church in its two-fold aspect, that is as a communion and as a hierarchical institution, being correctly understood and accepted in actual life?

The response says while the Church as a hierarchical institution is clearly understood, but the teaching of the Church as communion is either not clear to most people or is not accepted (see SACBC 1985B:13). The Response spoke about the tension between mystery and organization and the difficulty of clarifying the relationship between them. It said some members of the Church accept the communion model, while others operate out of a predominantly hierarchical one. The SACBC response suggested reasons for this tension and for the non-acceptance of the community model of Vatican II:

- clergy not being familiar with the teachings of Vatican II,
- the emphasis in South Africa on authority and law and order,
- tension between conservative and progressive elements in the Church,
- the role of the laity not being properly understood or acknowledged,
- the problem of moving from a hierarchical model of Church to one of community in which all are equal. (see SACBC 1985B:14)

It is the contention of this thesis that the above persists today: the role of the laity is not fully understood; the teachings of Vatican II are not known well; the hierarchical model (and the clericalism it begets) remains dominant. The laity are comfortable within the hierarchical model: it is the easier option and it validates their passivity.

5.4.3 The Final Report of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod

At the end of the 1985 Synod, an eleven-page Final Report was issued by the Vatican. It spoke about “lights and shadows in the reception of the Council” due, in part “to an incomplete understanding and application of the Council” (Final

Report 1985:1). It suggested that too much attention had been paid to the renewal of the external structures of the Church and “too little to God and to Christ” (:2): “The Church makes herself more credible if she speaks less of herself and evermore preaches Christ crucified (see 1Cor.22)” (:2).

The Church derives its importance from its union with Christ. It is the People of God, the Body of Christ, the temple of the Holy Spirit, the family of God. All its members are called to holiness. This call is an invitation to a change of life, to continuing conversion, and so “the Church must preserve and energetically promote the sense of penance, prayer, adoration, sacrifice, self-giving, charity and justice” (Final Report 1985:4). In particular, “the spirituality of the laity, founded in Baptism, must be promoted” (:4).

The Final Report affirmed that “The ecclesiology of Communion is the central and fundamental idea of the Council’s documents” (1985:6). This communion is essentially communion with God through His Son and must not be limited to organizational structures (see :6). On a more positive note, it said that the Vatican II idea of the Church as communion has led to increasing participation of the laity in its mission and finds practical expression in the “basic communities”, a source of hope for the life of the Church (:8).

The enthusiastic “joy and hope” of *Gaudium et Spes* of the 1960s was confronted with the realities of hunger and oppression, injustice and war, suffering and terrorism in the 1980s. The Final Report suggested that this called for a new reading of the signs of the changed times (see 1985:11). Yet, even if times have changed, “the Second Vatican Council remains the *Magna Carta* for the future” (:11). To be effective, it has to be known, fully understood and fully accepted by the local Church.

Because of the pastoral nature of Vatican II (see O’Malley 2008:95) and its emphasis on the Church as the People of God, this thesis maintains that the most effective way of assessing its reception is by way of an examination of the pastoral initiatives of the SACBC in the years following the Council. This will be done in the following section.

5.5 Selected Post-Vatican II Initiatives by the SACBC

5.5.1 The Laity and the Bishops in Dialogue

5.5.1.1 A Crisis in Evangelisation

In the years following Vatican II there developed a crisis surrounding the future of mission and evangelisation. In the words of John Power, the impression was that “missionary activity had outlived its purpose and its era” (1970:3).

In response, Pope Paul VI called an Extraordinary Synod that met in Rome from 27 September to 26 October 1974. The following year the Pope issued the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN). He insisted that evangelisation is the vocation of the Church, its deepest identity: “She exists in order to evangelise” (EN 14).⁷¹ He responds to one of the current objections to mission:

People can find salvation also in other ways, by God's mercy, even though we do not preach the gospel to them; but as for us, can we gain salvation if through negligence or fear or shame – what St Paul calls ‘blushing for the Gospel’ (Rom.1.16) – or as a result of false ideas, we fail to preach it? (EN 80)

During that 1974 Synod Bishops representing Africa and Madagascar met separately to discuss evangelisation in their home countries. They spoke about the historical link between the Churches and the old colonial powers and how liberation could lead to a rejection of both (SACBC 1974C:50). They spoke too of the need to enculturate the Christian message into African traditions and cultures (:50). They concluded that the way forward was through an acceptance of the Communion ecclesiology of Vatican II which speaks of shared responsibility for the mission of the Church. Collegiality, co- responsibility, ecclesial communion are synonyms for the same basic reality: “We are all members of the same family; each one and all together responsible for the Church of God spread over the world” (:52).

⁷¹ Pope Francis frequently refers to the Church as a community of “Missionary Disciples” (cf. Pope Francis 2013A:120).

5.5.1.2 The Bishops and Laity Meet (1975)

In an attempt to translate co-responsibility into a pastoral reality, the bishops of Southern Africa and representatives of the laity met on 8 February 1975. It was an historic occasion: “The first time that all bishops of the South African Hierarchy met with a selected group of the laity to discuss matters of common concern” (SACBC 1975A:5). The following is a summary of the outcome of the dialogue:

- that Pastoral Councils be set up in every parish and training to be organised for clergy and laity,
- that Diocesan Pastoral Councils be established and that each diocese have a full-time lay animator,
- that “serious attention” be given to the Youth apostolate,
- that serious consideration be given to the role of women,
- that the laity commission investigate what people are available for lay formation. (see SACBC 1975A:24)

The dialogue is important for several reasons:

- that it actually took place,
- that it indicates a reception in theory of the communion theology of Vatican II and of its teaching on the role and responsibility of the laity as part of the People of God,
- that the laity will not automatically change from passive to active by being told of their rights and obligations but that this must be translated into pastoral practice through Pastoral Councils and appropriate training,
- it is an acceptance in practice that the Spirit of God is active in the whole Church, “Active in the head, active in the body, active in each of its members” (MC 57).

While it is true that pastoral councils were set up in most dioceses and parishes, there is no record in the SACBC Archives of what else happened as a result of the 1975 dialogue. The findings were passed on to the Administrative Board for “consideration and implementation” (SACBC 1975C:62). There is no further mention of them.

5.5.2 The Study of Ministry

At the January 1974 Plenary the Bishops resolved to set up a commission made up of bishops, priests, religious and laity to study “the whole question of Ministry (presbyteral, diaconal, religious and lay)” and to submit its findings to the next Plenary Session (SACBC 1974A:44). The reason for the decision did not come from the theology of the role of the laity but from “the growing crisis affecting the priesthood and the religious life: (:44). The call for the study had been made by the Southern African Council of Priests and the Conference of Clerical Religious Major Superiors (see SACBC 1974B:1). The Commission was made up of one lay man, two sisters, six priests and two bishops. Its 27- page report was presented to the Plenary in February 1975. It drew the attention of the bishops to some theological and practical issues:

- Lay ministry should not be seen merely as a response to decreasing vocations to the priesthood and religious life.
- The Church in South Africa is lagging behind in implementing what is already permitted in the law and the liturgy.
- The Church is very dependent on the paid catechist who is often seen as the “presence” of the priest and who may be a hindrance to more active participation of other lay people.
- The priest is seen as an authority figure surrounded by a passive community.
- The image of the priest needs to be de-paternalised and a fundamental change is called for, both in priests’ own thinking and that of the laity.
- Some awakening of the laity has occurred with the introduction of Pastoral Councils, but these need continuing education on the nature of the Church and their role in its pastoral life.
- Basically, there needs to be a shift from a priest-centred Church to one that is centred on the entire People of God. (see SACBC 1974A:2-5)

The report concludes that “the task that awaits the Church in Southern African in the course of the next few decades is to effect a smooth transition from current parochial structures, methods and attitudes, to a parish community where mutual

service and shared responsibility for ministerial tasks will be the main feature” (SACBC 1974B:4-5).⁷²

As happens with many reports to the Plenary, further study of the report and implementation of recommendations was referred to the Administrative Board in consultation with the Commissions for Seminaries and Laity, Priests, Religious and Deacons, “and other interested bodies” (SACBC 1975B:37). The topic is not mentioned in the Minutes of the May 1975 Board meeting. The reason may be that the attention of the bishops had shifted to the ETSA project (see SACBC 1976B).

5.5.3 Evangelisation Today in South Africa (ETSA)

As they prepared for the 1974 Synod on Evangelisation (see Section 5.4.2.1), the topic was obviously very much in the minds of the bishops. At an Extraordinary Plenary held in July 1974, they instituted a consultation called Evangelisation in South Africa Today (ETSA). The following resolution was passed:

The Conference resolves that as soon as possible, the Administrative Board draw up and present to a Plenary Session of the Conference the outline of a plan for a study of what would appear to be desirable in the future development of the Church in Southern Africa, with a clear indication of priorities (SACBC 1974C:27).

In May 1975, the Administrative Board set up a committee to lead the consultation. The Committee was instructed to give “a clear indication of Priorities” (SACBC 1975-1979:7).

In January 1976 the Secretary, Fr C. Hulsen, presented a 235-page report (SACBC 1976B). During the discussion on the Report, Archbishop Stephen Naidoo of Cape Town remarked that “Because we don’t plan, people get disaffected” and Archbishop Joseph P. Fitzgerald of Johannesburg called for “a year of episcopal silence during which bishops would listen to the laity” (SACBC 1976A:39). Fr C. Hulsen was asked to make a summary of the Report and this was presented as

⁷² The Commission included Fr Fritz Lobinger who made a huge contribution to lay ministry training during his time at Lumko and later as Bishop of Aliwal.

The Church at the Crossroads (SACBC 1977). That is the last we hear of ETSA, but the reports are important in that they indicate the bishops' desire to involve the laity in pastoral planning. They also indicate what the priorities of the Church in 1975 – 76 were, priorities that have not changed much as we shall see later in this chapter.

The ETSA Report, based on 700 submissions, listed twenty priorities for the Church in South Africa. The top five were:

- Christian Community Building
- Leadership recruitment and formation
- Catechetical work
- Institutional improvements, including de-clericalisation, more involvement of the laity, functioning Parish Councils
- Youth Work, including youth in ministry and service, and providing “a real training for life” (SACBC 1977:38).

The influence of Vatican II's Community model of Church and of the role of the laity is obvious in the above. Obstacles to full lay involvement are significant:

- an historical Catholic ghetto mentality (see Section 5.2.2),
- a “Receivers” attitude (see Section 5.2.4.2),
- poor leadership and a “Father-will-do-it” mentality,
- a laity in dire need of formation,
- a Church that is clerical and conservative,
- with a great disparity within the Church between rich city “Parishes” and poor “missions”,
- and an 80% dependence on overseas funds (see SACBC 1976B:39).

The Report spoke about “the urgent need of real involvement of the Laity”, of the urgency of building a spirit of “Christian Community”, and of “developing lay ministries” (SACBC 1976B:44). It suggested that all of this “cannot be understood unless we think at the same time of concentrating far more than in the past of forming the laity and accelerating the process of making them aware of their role in the Church at all levels” (SACBC 1977:42). This thesis argues that the problem

remains in 2020.

The student unrest of 1976 and the events that it gave rise to, occupied the minds of the bishops during the following years. The ETSA project appears to have been shelved but many of the issues resurfaced during the 1980 Pastoral Consultation.

5.5.4 The 1980 Pastoral Consultation

5.5.4.1 Statement of Commitment

During the January 1977 Plenary, the bishops spent two days discussing current social issues that called for action. The outcome was a “Statement of Commitment” (SACBC 1967-1980: 41-47). Commitment 21 is of particular reference to the subject of this thesis, the passivity of the laity:

To take into account the singular situation and resultant tensions of the Church in South Africa, where 80% of the laity are Black and 80% of the Clergy White, and to investigate as a matter of extreme urgency the feasibility of the Pastoral Consultation in which lay people, religious and priests, in large majority Black, may participate with the Bishops, in arriving at a policy on Church life and apostolate but not on doctrinal and canonical matters (:Commitment 21).

And so, a new Pastoral Consultation was set in motion. It asked three major questions:

- 1) On the felt needs of every parish: Are they being met? How can they be met?
- 2) The felt needs of every diocese : Are they being met? How can they be met?
- 3) To what should the Church in South Africa attend to most in the future? (see Deep File 1979: Circular C-2-79)

The Consultation was to include the whole Church, clerical, religious and lay.

5.5.4.2 Findings of the Consultation

The reports from the Consultation were analysed and compiled by two independent sociologists into “The Church of the Eighties” and distributed to all dioceses for comment. This was followed by a meeting of 178 delegates at Hammanskraal from 28 August to 1 September 1980. The topics under discussion were Justice and Peace; Marriage and Family Life; Youth; Lay Responsibility; Adult Formation; Liturgy and the Sacraments (see SACBC 1980:50).

A total of over 100 recommendations emerged from the Consultation. I will list those that are directly linked to lay responsibility, lay formation and the family.

- That all parishes be divided into Small Christian Communities (SCCs).
- That priests and laity be educated on the importance and organisation of the parish community.
- That training and formation programmes be organised.
- That Church organisations be fully integrated racially.
- That family life be promoted, and each diocese have a family life desk.
- That family life movements be promoted and that there be regular consultation on the promotion of family life. (see SACBC 1980: 50-52).

The findings were presented to the January 1981 Plenary under the title *The Church on Pilgrimage*. The recommendations were distributed to the relevant departments of the SACBC with a view to implementation. There is no record in the archives as to what happened to any of them. Possibly the most tangible result emerges nine years later as the Pastoral Plan titled *Community Serving Humanity*.

5.5.5 The Pastoral Plan, *Community Serving Humanity*

5.5.5.1 SACBC 1983 Resolution

By now the “Pastoral Consultation” had become the preferred method of the Church of South Africa. The Consultation at Hammanskraal had recommended

that such consultations should be a regular feature of the local Church as a means of promoting shared responsibility (see SACBC 1980:51). In April 1981, the bishops appointed a Committee to follow up on this proposal. This Committee recommended widespread and ongoing consultations that would start at Diocesan Pastoral Council level, continue in each of the four Metropolitan Regions and end with discussion at national SACBC level. In this way it was hoped to develop a spirit of shared responsibility for the work of the Church (see Hartin 1991:42; SACBC 1978-1987:119). The emphasis once again was on the development of lay leadership.

In January 1983, the bishops discussed the report of the Committee. They expressed concern about ignorance of the faith, especially among the youth, and of the divorce between the faith expressed and everyday life (see SACBC 1983:129). They agreed on the following resolution:

In response to the study days on the role of the Church in the developing Southern African situation and to meet the aspirations voiced in recent major gatherings such as the Interdiocesan Pastoral Consultation and by way of implementing recent conciliar, papal and synodal documents on Christian living, the Conference resolves to establish a planning committee consisting of the four metropolitan archbishops together with Bishops Naidoo, Brenninkmeijer and Bucher, with the power to co-opt, to draft an overall Pastoral plan in sections, for presentation to the 1984 Plenary Session. (SACBC 1983:6)

5.5.5.2 Pastoral Plan Working Paper and Workbook

The Planning Committee met in May 1983 and started work on “The Guiding Vision” for the Church in Southern Africa and June 1984 saw the publication of the “Pastoral Plan Working Paper” (SACBC 1984A:37). The document had three chapters. Chapter One was “The Guiding Vision”, a vision that was based on the ecclesiology of Vatican II and in the light of the theology of creation, of sin and redemption (see.:6-16). It spoke about the Church through which Christ continues to work as priest, prophet and king; about evangelisation seeking to convert, through the power of Christ, “both the personal lives and concrete milieu which are theirs” (:11); of the love that must transcend “barriers of race and nation, class and culture” (:15).

Chapters Four and Five gave six questions for discussion by “all interested persons, organisations and communities” (SACBC 1984A:3). It would appear that parishes and dioceses were experiencing consultation fatigue: by the end of the year only 100 replies had been received.

An undated document, *Pastoral Planning: Basic Policy Statement* (SACBC Pastoral Plan Box File No.B282) speaks of three stages of pastoral planning:

- 1) Determining the overall direction, encapsulated in a key generative theme.
- 2) Working out a policy that will enable all Church activities to contribute towards realising and embodying the generative theme.
- 3) Detailed planning about deploying persons, resources, training courses, and methods of work where specific tasks, responsibilities, programmes, timetables etc. are worked out.

Instead of simply collating the responses as he had done for the 1980 Consultation, Dominican theologian Bernard Connor searched for signs of overall directions that would provide a unifying vision “through a simple imaginative theme” (Basic Policy Statement 5) that would become the Key Generative Theme. This imaginative generative theme would give a unifying focus for the diverse activities of the Church and be “broad enough to encompass all important issues” (5). It would inspire each unit of the Church to work out its own plan of action as demanded by local circumstances.

Connor found two themes running through the 1980 Consultation and the responses to the 1984 Pastoral Plan Working Paper: the need to build community in a fractured society; and the need to reach out beyond the Church to all members of that society. He, together with the Planning Committee, suggested a key theme to the June 1986 meeting of the Administrative Board: “Community Serving Humanity”. The Board recommended to the January 1987 Plenary that this be accepted.

The Plenary of January 1987 accepted “Community Serving Humanity” as the “Key Generative Theme”. To facilitate stage two of the pastoral planning as outlined above, the Conference produced a Workbook and a Pastoral Plan Kit (SACBC 1987A). These were distributed to all parishes. Later that same year it published a Theme Paper (SACBC 1987B) which spoke of:

- the Vatican II community model of Church
- the South African political and social scene
- the developing Pastoral Plan
- the need for formation.

Once again, dioceses were slow to respond. Eventually replies were received from just over 50% of them. A plan was formulated and presented to the Plenary in January 1989 and was formally launched on Pentecost Sunday that same year.

5.5.5.3 The Plan and the Ecclesiology of Vatican II

Chapter 2 speaks about McBrien’s contention that the sixteen documents of Vatican II rest on two pillars, *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes* (see Section 2.4.2 and 2008:187). McBrien recalls how during the Council Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens spoke about two inter-connected but separate strands of thought that underlay the discussion at the Council. One centred on the Church *ad intra*, on the inner life of the Church community. The other focused on the Church *ad extra*, the Church and its relationship to the world in which it lives and moves.

The Church *ad intra* as in *Lumen Gentium*, is a community of believers, the People of God, the Body of Christ. This community has its origin in the communion of the Trinity. It images the Triune God. The more it becomes community, the more it becomes Church. The Pastoral Plan says explicitly that the Church is a community that is striving to become what it is meant to be. The Plan asked that it celebrates what it is meant to be and so become more and more a community of faith through small cells of believers meeting for weekly prayer in neighbourhood groups, Small Christian Communities (SCCs) (see SACBC 1989:25-27).

But the Church is not closed in on itself. It has a mission *ad extra*, a mission to the wider world, as described in *Gaudium et Spes*. The Pastoral Plan accepts this essential element of the Church when it says the Community of the Church must reach out and serve “humanity” and so cooperate in the building of a more human and humane society (see SACBC 1989:27-33). Each SCC is supposed to move from bible sharing and prayer to a discussion on the surrounding community, on who is in need and on what needs to be done in a spirit of service.

The two pillars of Vatican II are *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*. The two pillars of the Pastoral Plan are “community” as in *Lumen Gentium*, and “humanity” as in *Gaudium et Spes*. The link is humble service at all levels of Church life.

Writing on the Pastoral Plan in the context of reception, Chris Langefeld says that *Community Serving Humanity* is an interpretation of the communion theology of Vatican II in the context of the South Africa of the 1980s:

The ecclesiology of communion advanced at the Council through such images as the “People of God” and “Body of Christ” has thus been taken up and reinterpreted in our context. From the angle of reception it illustrates that the themes of communion, the local church, solidarity, human dignity, liberation, conversion and dialogue are signs of where the Spirit wishes to lead the Christian community in our context (1997:43).

He warns that “Clericalism and an unaccountable use of power” threaten the unity and vitality of the Church (Langefeld 1997:44). The Pastoral Plan itself speaks of “an inherited system that has placed unnecessary distinctions between them (the clergy) and their brothers and sisters in Christ” (SACBC 1989:23). It called for a new sense of unity between clergy and laity and a new style of humble leadership modelled on that of Jesus (:22-23 and Matt.20:28).

5.5.5.4 The Weaknesses of the Plan

While the strengths of the Plan lay in it being firmly rooted in the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II and in its emphasis on the living of that communion at neighbourhood and parish level, its main weakness is that it omitted what the Bishops themselves agreed was the third stage of pastoral planning, namely detailed planning regarding resources, personnel, programmes of action (see

Section 5.4.6.2). It recommended three ways of building and living community: SCCs, Renew and Task Groups. It also decided that each diocese would develop its own Pastoral Plan based on that of the Conference (see SACBC 1989:12-13). Diocesan Plans were to be submitted to the Secretariat of the SACBC. Only one diocese did this.

5.5.5.5 SACBC Evaluation of the Pastoral Plan (1992)

The Pastoral Plan called for an evaluation at the end of three years. A small team of analysts distributed a questionnaire to a total of 877 parishes. Of these, 100 responded. The analysts warned against drawing definite conclusions both because of the poor response and because those who did respond were parishes that were taking the Pastoral Plan seriously.

The findings of the evaluation were summarised in SACBC 1992A. A theological sub-committee reflected on the findings, and this is found in SACBC 1992B. Both documents speak of positives and negatives.

The positives include:

- There was a growing sense of community (see SACBC 1992A:7).
- People are more involved in the liturgy (:81).
- Catechism is more community based rather than dependent on a paid catechist.
- There is a real excitement around small-group reflection on the Word of God (:9).
- There has been increased participation in parish-based task teams.
- There is greater “oneness between clergy and laity” (:11).
- Some said the Pastoral Plan helped to deal with conflict (:12).
- About 5,000 Small Christian Communities had been established, evidence of “the Spirit of God blowing in the Church” (SACBC 1992B:2).

The negatives include the following:

- The fact that only 100 responses were received from the 29 dioceses points to a certain apathy, a lack of participation (see SACBC 1992B:3).

- 5,000 SCCs may appear satisfactory, but if each has an average of 10 members, then 50,000 people belongs, 1.5% of the Catholics of the SACBC.
- The theological Committee spoke of “a singular lack of theological understanding” of the ecclesiology of Vatican II and the ecclesiology underpinning the Pastoral Plan (:3). People “have not internalised the theology of Vatican II: the Church as the People of God and the role of the Church “in the transformation of the world” (:4).
- While the model of Church on which the Pastoral Plan rests is that of communion of communities, “what we still have on the ground is clericalism and clerical domination” (:4).
- While there was some success in the building of small communities “hardly any progress has been made with regards to the task of serving humanity in order to transform the world” (:5). “*Gaudium et Spes* and *Evangelii Nuntiandi* have provided us with a very powerful theology of the Church’s role in the world, but these are not being read, studied or popularised” (:5).
- Little progress has been made in the area of social justice and work for justice is not being presented as an integral part of the Gospel (:5).

The Theological Committee spoke of the need for “theological discussions, theological reflections and theological training for everyone” (SACBC 1992B:6).

5.6 Pastoral Forums

5.6.1 Introduction

The first three-year review of the Pastoral Plan was conducted in 1992. It decided that there would be a National Conference of SCC leaders in 1993 and a new evaluation of the Plan in 1995 (see SACBC 1991:25). Neither happened. In 1994, the SACBC published a document called *We Are the Church: Pastoral Directives on Co-Responsibility*. It said two things that are relevant to this thesis. The first is that “clericalism must disappear” (SACBC 1994B:13). It speaks of it as “a way of exercising leadership in the Church” that “disregards the equal dignity of all the baptised” and that is based on an attitude that “we have nothing to learn from people” (:13).

The second is a call to “overcome passivity in the community” (SACBC 1994B:13). It called on the faithful “to get rid of any attitude that sees the priest as the only one who has care for the faithful To refrain from heaping many tasks on one member of the community while the majority remain idle” (:13). It suggested that the best way to overcome passivity is “to conduct awareness programmes in the parish” (:14).

Also, in 1994, the SACBC Plenary approved a revised version of its Statutes (see 1994A:6-7). The new statutes provided for “Forums”, a “mechanism which provides for a meeting of all or some members of the Conference with a cross-section or a sector of the rest of the Church” (SACBC 1994A:45). Four such meetings between all Bishops and lay delegates from every diocese were held in 2000, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

5.6.2 The Forum of 2000

In preparation for the forum, the following questions were to be discussed by every Parish Pastoral Council:

- What successes have been achieved in building community and serving humanity?
- What has helped to achieve this success?
- As a community serving humanity, what challenges do we face in the new millennium?

The forum took place on 5 August 2000. Delegates spoke about the increased collaboration between clergy and laity but a long list of what needs to be done was made. It included:

- More meaningful collaboration
- Listening to the youth
- Re-building the SCCs
- Empowering the laity and updating priests
- Transforming decision-making procedures. (see SACBC 2000B:40)

There was no discussion on how any of the above were to be carried out and there is no record of what happened. On a positive note, some dioceses set up a Family Life Desk, something that was already recommended in 1980 (see Section 5.4.5.1).

5.6.3 The Forum of 2007

In January 2003, the SACBC Plenary changed the Department for the Pastoral Plan to the Department for Evangelisation. It was meant to be not just a change of name but a change to a new emphasis on evangelisation as the core function of the Church (see SACBC 2003:41-45). A full-time Secretary was appointed. In December 2005 the Department organised a gathering of lay leaders to discuss the theme, "Transformation from Within: The People as Partners in Transformation". As usual, a questionnaire was sent around the dioceses. The agenda for the Forum was

- To deepen our understanding of the mission of lay Catholics.
- To enable the voice of the laity to be heard by the Bishops.
- To decide on a structure that would facilitate ongoing dialogue between Bishops and laity. (see SACBC 2007A:6)

The vision that emerged from the day's discussion was

- Christ-centre leadership of all the baptised and confirmed, living their relationship with Christ and one another so as to be the light to the Word, crossing social and cultural barriers to make the Church's work effective and give transforming witness (SACBC 2007A:7).
- A Church of well-formed, committed, confident, involved Catholics living and witnessing their faith within their context (:7).
- An active, listening structure made up of all the baptised and confirmed that facilitates dialogue, research, caring, monitoring and evaluation which engages the ever-changing needs of society (:7).

Because nothing tangible had emerged, it was decided that the Secretary of the Department would meet delegates at Metropolitan level and discuss

- Structures for lay participation.
- How to make those structures operative throughout the Conference.
- How to promote “convincing formation at all levels” (SACBC 2007B:62).

5.6.4 The Pastoral Forum of 2009

The Forums of 2000 and 2007 were important as symbols of collaboration between bishops, priests and laity but they had little impact at diocesan or parish level. The bishops decided that there should be discussion at diocesan level, organised by the Department for Evangelisation, on the role of the laity and the practical living of the priesthood of all the baptised (see SACBC 2005- 2010:15). A third Forum was held in August 2009. It began with a presentation of the theme and purpose of the day:

- To deepen our understanding of the common priesthood as the baptised.
- To explore ways in which we can live this priesthood in our daily lives.
- To explore ways of integrating our growing awareness of our priesthood into diocesan structures and adult faith formation.
- To share ideas on the future of the pastoral forums.

The participants were then asked to meet in groups and “identify one area in which the priesthood of the laity needs to have input” (SACBC 2009A:15). There was nothing new about the list: family life, formation of youth, lay formation, poverty and unemployment. There is no indication that the participants appreciated the link between these and the priesthood conferred in baptism (:15).

The second question was addressed to diocesan groups and asked for one practical way in which the growing awareness of the priesthood of the laity could be integrated into diocesan structures and adult formation programmes. Again, a list was compiled, and it contains no surprises: family evangelisation,

marriage preparation, formation of Diocesan Parish Councils, the role of men⁷³ (SACBC 2009A:16).

Metropolitan groups were asked if the annual forums should continue. All agreed that they should although one group suggested that the process had reached a *cul-de-sac* (SACBC 2009A:16).

5.6.5 Assessment of the Forums

At the end of my examination of each forum, I gave a brief assessment of its effectiveness or otherwise. The Administrative Board meeting of May 2009 made its own assessment. The positives are important (see SACBC 2005- 2010:14-15):

- The gatherings were practical demonstrations of the willingness of the Bishops to listen and the desire of the laity to be involved.
- Those who attended cannot but have benefitted from the preparatory work and from the input and sharing at the forums.
- The unrelenting emphasis on the fact that the Church exists to evangelise must have convinced at least some of the centrality of evangelisation.
- The gatherings provide an opportunity for networking.
- There is an increasing sense of ownership of the Church.

The Administrative Board's list of negatives is extensive (see SACBC 2005-2010:14-15):

- Many delegates said they were asked to attend a meeting and did not know what it was about until they got there.
- Many delegates did not come from Diocesan Pastoral Councils and had no channels for reporting back and no mechanism for implementing decisions.
- None of the forums had produced a practical plan of action.
- There was a disconnection between the preparatory work and the agenda of the forums.

⁷³ Men were mentioned specifically because they are particularly passive in Church affairs.

- Each forum lasted one day (approximately 9.00am to 4.00pm), giving little time for real discussion on any topic and leading to bishops questioning if the long journeys and the expense were justified.
- A structure that would provide a mechanism for ongoing dialogue and consultation had not emerged.
- In his own assessment of the forums, the Department Secretary said, “It is doubtful if they have made a lasting recognisable impact on the dioceses as such” (SACBC 2009A:3).

5.7 The Inter-Diocesan Pastoral Consultation 2010-2012

5.7.1 The Pastoral Cycle Method

The Pastoral Cycle method of enquiry is based on the See-Judge-Act format developed by Cardinal Joseph Cardijn for the Young Christian Workers (YCW) and the Young Christian Students (YCS). In the “see” part members of the group look at the facts of a particular situation, determine the root causes, and what are the results. Then they “judge”, assessing the situation in the light of faith and what the Bible has to say. They then decide what they can do about it, in individual and group action. The subsequent meeting starts with a “Review of Life”, checking on what has been done and on what follow-up action is called for.

It was decided that the 2010-2012 Consultation would follow this method and so ensure that the Consultation would result in practical pastoral action:

- Phase I (See) would examine the present reality (2010).
- Phase II (Judge) would reflect on what it means to be Church as a community of disciples of Christ, sharing in his priesthood (2011).
- Phase III (Act) would consist of a gathering of delegates from all dioceses to decide on a way forward and a new Pastoral Plan (2012).

5.7.2 Phase I (See): The Present Situation (2010)

The objectives of Phase I were

- To ascertain what became of the three priorities of the Forum of 2000 (see Section 5.5.2).
- To test the truth of the statement that the laity are over-sacramentalised at the expense of not being evangelised.
- To examine the present situation as regards to SCCs.
- To enquire about what formation is given to SCC leaders.
- To assess the effectiveness of communication within the Church (see SACBC 2010C:3).

Less than 50% of the dioceses sent in responses. The following are some of the conclusions of the enquiry:

- 43% of respondents had never heard of the current Pastoral Plan, Community Serving Humanity (SACBC 2010B:46).
- 31% admitted they knew nothing about the priesthood of all the baptised; 9% had a “vague idea”; 10% said it meant being a priest was open to everybody (:22).
- On the Pastoral Forums of previous years, 57% had not heard of them (:3).
- On the youth, little was being done for their formation and evangelisation (:3).
- The vast majority of people responding were involved in “internal Church ministry and ritual” and not in evangelisation (:6).
- The SCCs were floundering and receiving no ongoing leadership training (:6).
- For most, the Sunday Service was the only source of adult faith formation (:6).

The organiser of the Consultation suggested that “There is a need for a new ecclesiology in which the laity will be able to play a greater role, as is their right, in the mission of Jesus” (SACBC 2010B:37). The purpose of Phase II was to present an outline of this ecclesiology in the form of a series of discussion topics (see SACBC 2012).

5.7.3 Phase II (Judge): The Nature of the Church (2011-2012)

The purpose of Phase II was to get people reflecting on the Church as it is presented in the sixteen documents of Vatican II. The reflection was to be done at parish level, guided by a publication of the Conference (SACBC 2012). The booklet dealt with nine themes: Life in Christ; A Call to friendship with Christ; Evangelisation; the Parish Family; the Church as Instrument and Witness of God's love; the Church as the Family of God; the Church is Apostolic; the Church is Holy; Our Church.

An estimated 20,000 people participated. The findings were presented to the Plenary of January 2013 and the following recommendations were made:

1. There needs to be a greater emphasis placed on the evangelisation and formation of the youth as a long-term strategy.
2. There has to be greater attention given to the formation of SCCs, PPCs and Sodalities and leaders at all levels.
3. A positive approach to the spiritual welfare of the family and support for married life needs to be developed to help priests and those involved in this ministry.
4. The preaching skills of priests and deacons needs to be upgraded.
5. Parishes need to be helped to create an atmosphere whereby people can experience the presence of Christ.
6. There has to be a concerted effort to develop an outward-looking missionary spirituality (SACBC 2014:4)

5.7.4 Phase III (Act): Belonging to Christ; Committed to Mission (SACBC 2014)

Phase III was intended to lead towards a week-long national consultation made up of the people, mainly lay, who had helped organise and coordinate the Phase I and Phase II consultations. At this gathering the framework of a new Pastoral Plan, or for a radically revised version of *Community Serving Humanity*, would be worked out.

To prepare for that national consultation, the Organising Committee produced a third discussion booklet (SACBC 2014) that did two things. First it suggested a theme based on the two basic teachings of the Christian faith: the centrality of Christ and the imperative of mission. Christ is the “way, the truth and the life”, the only way to the Father (John 14:6). He is the “one mediator between God and man” (1 Timothy 2:5). Pope John Paul II said, “We are not saved by a programme but by a person” (NMI 3). His successor, Pope Benedict XVI, affirmed that “Being a Christian is the result of an encounter with Jesus Christ” (DCE 1). And Pope Francis said, “I invite everyone, everywhere, at this moment to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ” (EG 3). This Christ, central to our faith and our worship, founded the Church so that he would carry on the work of salvation through the community of his followers. The Church is a community of missionary disciples, a community of disciples commissioned to make disciples of all nations (see Matt.28:19; SACBC 2014:23).

Drawing those two pillars of the Christian faith together, our commitment to Christ and our mission to the world, the Committee proposed a generative theme for discussion and as the possible title of a new Pastoral Plan: *Belonging to Christ; Committed for Mission* (SACBC 2014:4).

It then outlined thirteen discussion topics featured in the Phase I and Phase II of the Consultation and that would possibly be included in a new Pastoral Plan (see SACBC 2014:7-36):

- Youth and their place in the Church
- The New Evangelisation and Renewal of Faith
- Ongoing Adult Formation in Parishes
- Social Teaching as essential to Evangelisation
- Church Renewal in the Spirit of Pentecost
- Support for Marriage and Family Life in Parishes
- Catechesis and passing on the Faith
- The Laity and the transformation of Society
- Sodalties, Movements and Church Organisations

- Support for Small Christian Communities
- Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life
- Devotional Practices and Catholic Spirituality

Shortly after the distribution of the Phase III Booklet, the Secretary of the Department for Evangelisation resigned. The Committee did not meet again. Apart from the good that was achieved during the years of consultation, the basic purpose of the entire exercise was lost. What Archbishop Naidoo said in 1976 remains true: people end up disappointed if discussion does not lead to a practical plan (see Section 5.4.6).

The momentum of the consultation was lost. Phase III did not take place. Some time later the SACBC set up a new committee to draft a new Pastoral Plan. Hopefully, the members were inspired by the consultations that took place between 2010 and 2012.

5.7.5 The New Pastoral Plan: *Evangelising Community Serving God, Humanity and Creation* (SACBC 2019)⁷⁴

Section 2.7.2.4 spoke about the 2016 Master's thesis of Gabriel Nkosinathi Ngcobo asserting that a community model of Church calls for a non-dominating style of leadership (see :20). He argued for a revision of *Community Serving Humanity* that would take account of the changes that had taken place in Southern Africa since 1989. Ngcobo argued too for the need for education in the faith (:52).⁷⁵ However, this research argues that a new plan, and not just a revision of the old one, was called for:

- Life has changed radically since 1989, as Ncgobo said.
- The title *Community Serving Humanity* has been used for so long and repeated so often that it is no longer generative as it was at the outset.

⁷⁴ The question arises, is this “generative” and inspiring in the way in which *Community Serving Humanity* was?

⁷⁵ This research speaks of two essentials if Stewardship is to succeed, namely, conversion of the heart and conversion of the mind (see Sections 7.2 and 7.3).

- It has been reviewed only once, in 1992, and never changed or updated (see Section 5.5.5.5).
- The SCCs on which it rested as its main pillar were no longer a priority in parish life (see Section 5.10.2).
- Up to 43% of those surveyed in the 2010-2012 Consultation had never heard of *Community Serving Humanity*.
- It had never been concretised by way of a diocesan pastoral plan and remained, for the most part, a vision statement.

Section 2.7.3 gave a summary of the 2019 Pastoral Plan. The SACBC refers to the new Pastoral Plan as a “concept plan” and proposes that each diocese produces its own plan in the light of “the **CONCEPT** Pastoral Plan” (2019:4). As diocesan and parish pastoral plans are being developed by the people who will implement them, it would be helpful to re-visit the three stages of all pastoral planning as outlined in Section 5.4.5.2 and by William Pickett (2007) in *A Concise Guide to Pastoral Planning*. Pickett lists the areas that need to be included: the Word and evangelisation; worship, especially the Eucharist and the sacraments; the building of community; service with and to the wider human community; and what he calls, temporalities, including finance and human and physical resources (:52-54). If this does not happen, the 2019 pastoral plan will remain conceptual rather than leading to and directing pastoral action in the dioceses and parishes of the Conference area.

5.8 A Self-Supporting Church

5.8.1 Introduction

A practical example of lay passivity is financial dependency, linked to clerical paternalism. Not only is it a sign of passivity but it is also a cause: if members do not take responsibility for finances, they do not take responsibility for anything. If somebody else does it, they will let him get on with it.

The problem is not confined to South Africa or to Africa in general. In 2006, Zech published *Why Catholics Don't Give*, the results of his research in the

United States. On a list of twelve mainline Churches, the Catholic Church came second last (see :15-16). A United States 1994 survey indicated that Catholics pay an average of \$96 per person per month while Protestants contribute \$297 (:17). As said in Section 5.2.1, missionaries transplanted the model of Church they knew in their home countries. This included that Church's tradition of giving or not giving. Secondly, because they came from relatively well-to-do backgrounds into poorer places, they provided everything for the local Church. An insidious form of paternalism and lay passivity became embedded in the missionary Church.

With the decline in the number of missionaries from Europe and America, the source of funds began to dry up. Bishops in Africa began to see the need to make their dioceses and parishes self-supporting, something that should have been promoted from the outset. In a 2004 Publication of the IMBISA Secretariat, the Bishop of Burkina Faso spoke of the need for financial autonomy if the Church is not to be led by "perpetual beggars" (2004A:3).⁷⁶ In the same publication, Fr George Elusami from the Secretariat of the Catholic Church in Nigeria is reported as saying that "until we are able to build our churches, train our priests, and run our evangelisation and development programmes with funds sourced largely from within, we do not yet have a mature African Church" (:10).

During their 2004 Assembly, the IMBISA bishops said the time had come to break the cycle of dependency, to break loose from a dependency syndrome and to develop a theology of giving (IMBISA 2004B:4-5,14). They lamented the fact that the teaching of Vatican II on the laity had not been passed on, partly because priests were reluctant to lose power and control (:1). They spoke of the principle of subsidiarity and of not depending on someone from another country who is far removed from the local Church (see :21). They spoke too of the need for formation in the Vatican II model of Church as a community in which all are equal and for which all are responsible.

⁷⁶ IMBISA is an acronym for the Inter-Regional Meeting of the Bishops of Southern Africa.

5.8.2 The Response of the SACBC

In August 2005, the Bishops of South Africa sent a letter to all members of the Church. It was titled, *Get Up! Walk without Crutches* (SACBC 2001-2009:9). They wrote:

Our parishes and dioceses in South Africa, Botswana and Swaziland have to become financially self-supporting. This means we have to raise enough money in our own parishes and dioceses to keep the fire of God's message and love burning in our midst (:10).

Lumko was asked to lead an enquiry based on the Pastoral Cycle method, described in Section 5.6.1: to determine the facts, the causes and the consequences of depending on foreign funds, to analyse those facts in the light of a self-supporting community model of Church and to plot a way forward.

Stage I, finding the facts, was in the form of a questionnaire sent to "competent persons" in each parish of a selected one third of the dioceses of South Africa (see Lumko 2007:1). The questions were designed to accomplish the following:

- ascertain the degree of self-sustainability in parishes and dioceses,
- find out the level of Christian stewardship commitment to all areas of Church life and not just finance,
- initiate reflection on the need for developing stewardship responsibility for all aspects of Church life and not just finances (:152).

A total of 293 parishes were targeted. 74% of these returned a total of 580 responses.

In 2004, the bishops had set themselves a very low target of 15% financial sustainability by February 2007. The 2009 survey found that 41% of parishes had reached that 15% level. Among the reasons given for the low level of self-reliance were:

- a tradition of giving petty cash only
- giving for specific projects in response to specific requests
- an attitude of dependency

- lack of financial transparency (see Lumko 2007:53).

The overall impression from both dioceses and parishes is “It is the Church that has to give; the people have to receive from it” (Lumko 2007:53). A section of the questionnaire asked what the lay respondents wanted to learn. The replies included the following:

- a deepening of bible-based faith,
- a spirituality of stewardship and giving in gratitude,
- a building up real community and ownership of the Church,
- a spirit of sacrifice and of God-centred giving (see :130).

Lay respondents also requested

- clarity on what is involved in self-sustainability,
- training in strategic pastoral planning at parish level,
- input on imaginative ways of fund-raising,
- learning the skills of fund-raising (see Lumko 2007:131-133).

Priests requested help on

- how to run awareness programmes,
- how to motivate people without harassing them,
- how to get the message across without appearing to be talking always about money,
- how a unified SACBC system can be developed (see Lumko 2007:136).

Lumko presented the findings of Stage I to the Plenary of January 2007. Fr Michael Wüstenburg had led Stage I of the inquiry. He offered an analysis of Stage I as the first step of Stage II of Pastoral Cycle (see SACBC 2007B:84- 85). He recommended that the process be continued and brought to a conclusion (Stage III) at a National Convention on Self-Sustainability. The only response of the Plenary was the following Resolution:

The Conference adopts the report of Lumko Pastoral Institute dealing with the formation of a self-reliant Church in Southern Africa (SACBC 2007B:12).

Nothing happened after that.

5.9 Doctoral Research in the Diocese of Port Elizabeth

The Diocese of Port Elizabeth has a very active Pastoral Centre that organises formation and training programmes at the Centre and around the diocese for a great variety of lay groups. I would expect that diocese to be more aware than others of the Vatican II model of Church and of its teaching on the role of the laity. This made the findings of the 2009 doctoral research of Fr Christopher Slater, a priest of Port Elizabeth diocese, all the more surprising:

- 75% of participants believed that most Catholics in the diocese do not have a reasonable understanding of the teaching of Vatican II.
- 70% were not familiar with Vatican II's description of the Church as the People of God.
- 82.5% maintain that the hierarchical model of Church is dominant.
- 77.5% do not think the laity understand their call, rights and responsibilities as members of the Church.
- 90% believe that Church leaders are in need of specialised training in management.
- 90% experienced a need "to be informed and to become familiar with the People of God model of Church as presented by the Second Vatican Council".
- 85% spoke of the need for a diocesan vision statement based on the ecclesiology of Vatican II.
- 77.5% said there is a growing awareness of the imperatives of Stewardship, but "more needs to be done" (see Slater 2009:284-287).

5.10 Evidence of Lay Involvement in the Church of Southern Africa

This chapter has spoken at length about the reception of the ecclesiology of Vatican II by the Church of Southern Africa and of the many good initiatives that were not fruitful because they were not pursued. What may appear a negative picture needs to be balanced by recalling some of the ways in which the laity were and are positively involved. If Stewardship is to be introduced as a way of life in the local Church, the ministry of lay groups will need to be integrated into the Stewardship movement. The impression must not be given that a member has

to decide to be in a sodality or be involved in Stewardship. Stewardship can embrace the lay movements, their apostolate and spirituality. How to do this is beyond the scope of this research. Here I will discuss the work of the catechist and a selection of the lay movements.

5.10.1 The Catechist

The history of the world Church is often the history of popes and bishops and of religious congregations. The same is true of the history of the Church in South Africa. We hear about the dioceses being erected, bishops being appointed, schools being opened. Possibly the real heroes are the catechists. On a personal note, when people in the villages I serve in rural North West Province speak of the past, the people they most mention are the catechists. These cycled from village to village along gravel roads, conducting Sunday Services and catechising children and adults.

Before Vatican II, most catechists were fulltime and given a small stipend. Most went through prolonged education and training at regional and language-based catechetical centres. Pope Benedict spoke of their importance in the first evangelisation of Africa, inculturating the Gospel message “in a natural way that has produced marvellous fruits” (AM 2011). While they were the heroes of the growth of the Church in Africa, the system had two major weaknesses. First, the parish catechist was seen as the representative of the local priest, thus contributing to entrenching clericalism. Secondly, because they were the trained ones and because they were fulltime, the work of catechesis was left to them, thus excluding the rest of the parish laity from this ministry and contributing their passivity.

With the introduction of a new community model of Church by Vatican II, a change occurred that led to what Henriques calls “the demise of the Catechists” (Henriques 1999:259). This new model called for the involvement of the whole community in the activities of the parish. The trained catechists were supposed to train a team of volunteers. The training centres were closed. By now most of the trained catechists had either died or retired. The weakness of the present

system is that the amount of education and training offered to the volunteers depends on the ability and commitment of the local priest. Hopefully Stewardship will remove the emphasis on the priest and put it on the community (cf. Appendix B).

5.10.2 The Importance of Sodalities

In 2.2.2, I spoke about Brain's emphasis on the importance of sodalities in the lives of the Catholic laity of Southern Africa. They formed a significant part of what was then called Catholic Action. Each sodality provided, and still provides, three things for its members: a spirituality that inspires their individual and group prayer life; an apostolate that gives them an active role in the mission of the Church; and a sense of belonging within the wider community of parish and diocese.

It is not feasible to examine all sodalities that were either historically present or are currently in existence within the SACBC territory. I will speak about five of them: the Sacred Heart Sodality, Sodality of St Anne, the Legion of Mary, the Knights of Da Gama, and the Young Christian Workers/Young Christian Students.

The Sacred Heart Sodality is rooted in the Catholic devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as a symbol of the love and compassion of God. The sodality came to South Africa in 1895. Originally for men, it now accepts both women and men of eighteen years and above. Presently branches are in all twenty-nine dioceses. Currently there are 5,000 members in Johannesburg alone. It supports the spiritual life of its members who are often very active in the life of the parish.

The Sodality of St Anne has as its patron St Anne, traditionally believed to be the mother of Mary and therefore the grandmother of Jesus. It was founded in Quebec by an Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) priest and came to South Africa through Lesotho in 1934. Its motto is "Serve the family, the Church and the community". The members are generally older women, grandmothers in their families. The influence of grandmothers, especially in rural areas, is enormous. Very often they are the ones responsible for the day-to-day care of children while

the mothers are at work in the cities and towns. The sodality brings together these older women, providing support and companionship in a faith environment. They come together twice a month for prayer and business. They spend a lot of time visiting the sick and housebound, and they have close links with women formations in other churches. It is at this level that ecumenism is real and practical.

The Legion of Mary, as said in 3.7.3.6, was founded in Ireland by a lay man, Frank Duff, in 1921 and rapidly spread around the world as an important part of Catholic Action. Duff was convinced that all the baptised had a double call: a call to be holy and a call to the apostolate. The Legion stipulated scheduled daily prayer for every member and an active weekly apostolic work. This weekly work was assigned at the weekly meeting and reported on the following week. It used the terminology of the army of imperial Rome, hence the name, "Legion" of Mary. It provided for lay people a well-defined spirituality and mission. It has been in decline since Vatican II.

The Knights of Da Gama was founded in Durban in 1943 as an affiliate of the International Alliance of Catholic Knights. It is for Catholic men over the age of eighteen. Begun as an association of professionals, it reflected the South Africa of the time and so was confined to white members of the Catholic Church. It removed the word "European" from its Constitution in 1952, but it was only in recent years that a significant number of other races joined their ranks (cf. Henriques: 255). Its present stated aims are to support the bishops, priests and religious in their work, to work against injustice in society and to play an active role in the life of the local Church.

The Young Christian Workers and the Young Christian Students were mentioned in 3.7.2.6. Both are lay movements open to members of other Churches. Using the See-Judge-Act method of inquiry developed by Cardinal Cardign, they provide a very effective way of reading the signs of the times in the light of the biblical faith of the members and the social teaching of the Church. The YCW members were often at loggerheads with the apartheid agents and the YCS members often got on the wrong side of school and university authorities.

Henriques suggests that the fact that both movements recruited members largely from their own racial groups meant that they were never fully multiracial. He says they went from being predominantly white (1950s - 1960s), to being predominantly coloured (1960s – 1970s), to being predominantly black (1980s – 1990s) (:257). While the movements have all but disappeared, the See-Judge-Acts method of enquiry has morphed into the Pastoral Cycle used in the SACBC Pastoral Consultation of 2010 to 2012 (cf. 5.7).

5.11 Interpretation of the Facts

5.11.1 Interpretation of the Historical Facts (see 5.2)

I wish to begin by making my own the words of Congar:

There is no question of disparaging the generations that have gone before us – each generation does what it can. But at any given time there are special circumstances and needs, and these can be better understood if attention is also paid to those of other times (1957:35).

Those who have gone before us in South Africa, including the missionaries, did what they did in the political and social context of their time and within the framework and parameters of the prevailing ecclesiology. Tlhagale quotes the saying of Bernard of Chartres: “We stand on the shoulders of giants” (2018:215). Nevertheless, mistakes were made, and pastoral initiatives and projects did not yield the expected fruit. If we can determine why we will be in a better position not to repeat old mistakes and to plan for the future in the context of changed times and a developed ecclesiology.

I offer the following as an interpretation of the facts of the history of the Church in South Africa as summarised above:

- 1) The early missionaries transplanted in South Africa the largely hierarchical model of Church of their time. A hierarchical model that is not balanced by a community model and that ignores the priesthood of all the baptised results in clericalism and lay passivity. It happened in the universal Church; it happened in South Africa.

- 2) The Church in South Africa was for many years a small and poor fringe part of the larger settler community. It was served by mainly European missionaries and supported by foreign funds. This gave rise to paternalism on the part of the clergy and religious and dependency on the side of the laity.
- 3) Because it was part of the settler community, it ran the risk of being seen as part of colonialism and, in later years, a part of the apartheid system of segregation.
- 4) Because there was a seemingly endless supply of priests and religious from overseas and because the missionaries were supported by their home Churches, little effort was made to promote local vocations or to build up self-supporting communities.
- 5) Because of the hierarchical model of Church out of which the missionaries operated, the laity were regarded as passive recipients of the ministry of the clergy and religious. It was only when the supply of overseas workers dried up that a serious effort was made to involve the laity as active workers in the vineyard.
- 6) While Church sodalities and societies provided an active apostolate for lay people, the number involved was limited. The only function of those who did not belong was to “kneel before the altar and sit before the pulpit” (Congar 1957:xxiii).
- 7) Because of the emphasis on – and the success of – the school apostolate, other areas of lay formation, particularly the family, were neglected.
- 8) Because the SACBC was so involved in the struggle against apartheid, especially in the post 1976 years, other important areas of Church life and of the apostolate were put on hold.

5.11.2 Interpretation of the Post-Vatican II SACBC Publications and Pastoral Initiatives (Sections 5.4 to 5.8)

This thesis asserts that clericalism and lay passivity are incompatible with a Vatican II model of Church. This chapter has described the efforts made by the SACBC to draw the laity out of their historical passivity and to involve them in the life of the Church. I will now give a brief summary of these efforts and speak of

their effectiveness. I list them in chronological order.

The dialogue between bishops and laity in 1975 (see 5.4.1)

This and subsequent consultations were an acknowledgement in practice that the laity are as much Church as the hierarchy and have a right and duty to be actively involved in pastoral practice. The decision at the 1975 dialogue to set up Parish and Diocesan Pastoral Councils meant that dialogue and joint pastoral planning would happen at local level. These continue to function.

Other decisions of the 1975 meeting were passed on to the Administrative Board. There is no record of what happened to them.

The Study of Ministry in 1974/75 (see 5.4.3)

This study spoke of the priest serving a passive community. It spoke too of the local paid catechist as a representative of the priest in village churches, making him an agent of a priest-centred Church. The study spoke of the need to de-paternalise the priesthood and to promote shared responsibility. Again, the findings were passed on to the Administrative for further action. Subsequent minutes do not mention them.

The ETSA Report of January 1976 (see 5.4.4)

The report speaks of clericalism manifested in a "Father will do it" mentality. It speaks too of a passive, receiver attitude and a near-total dependence on overseas funding. It advocated formation of the laity on the nature of Church so that they could be agents of change. The student unrest of that same year resulted in attention being focussed on political and social justice issues. ETSA was not mentioned again.

The Pastoral Consultation of 1980 (see 5.4.5)

The findings of this consultation advocated the Vatican II communion model of Church. It spoke of the need to take pastoral care of the family community and to integrate the different race groups into the one Church. It also advocated the

setting up of Small Christian Communities (SCCs) in each parish. Here there is an explicit reception of the Vatican II communion model of Church.

As usual, findings were passed on to the Administrative Board which distributed recommendations to the Departments of the Conference. Nothing further was heard of them, but the Pastoral Plan of 1989 took on the community model as the SACBC way of being Church.

The Second Extraordinary Synod, 1985 (see 5.4)

The SACBC response to the Pre-Synod questionnaire spoke about uneven attempts to transmit the ecclesiology of the Council, how the full impact of *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes* was still to come, of clergy not being familiar with the teachings of Vatican II and of the hierarchical model remaining dominant (see Section 5.4.2). This thesis suggests that if that was the situation twenty years after the end of the Council, there is little hope that it is any better in 2020. Those first twenty years were, I suggest, the springtime of reform when many of the bishops who attended Vatican II were still in charge of dioceses and when the documents of Vatican II were fresh in the minds of people. With the passing of time, Vatican II became a memory and its influence on Church life and practice decreased. If clergy were not familiar with its teaching in those first twenty years, I suggest they are even less familiar now. Albert Nolan says Vatican II has become “a non-event” and adds “what a terrible loss that is proving to be” (quoted in Hurley 2005:vii).

The Pastoral Plan of 1989 (see 5.4.6)

This rested solidly on the twin pillars of Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* (LG) and *Gaudium et Spes* (GS). The Working Paper (SACBC 1984A) summarised both the history of the Church in South Africa and the ecclesiology of the Council. Responses resulted in the title of the Plan, *Community Serving Humanity*. The Basic Policy Statement (SACBC Pastoral Plan Box File No. B282) spoke of the three stages of pastoral planning and of the need to be practical if a plan is to become a reality in parish life.

The strength of the Plan was in its solid theological foundation and in its two-pronged emphasis on building community and serving the world beyond its own borders. But it has weaknesses:

- It reads more like a vision than a plan in that it did not include the third element identified by the bishops themselves, namely practical planning based on resources and personnel.
- The individual dioceses did not produce their own plan adapted to local circumstances and resources.
- The envisaged three-year review happened only once.
- It was envisaged that every Catholic would eventually be a member of a small Christian community but a review in 1992 indicated that about 1.5% of the members belonged to a SCC. That could be interpreted to mean that the rest remained passive recipients of the service of the clergy.

The review of 1992 of the Pastoral Plan said that while there was some progress in building community, there was little in “Serving Humanity” (SACBC 1992B:5). It appears that the laity do not appreciate the link between faith in Christ and the transformation of society.

In 2010, 43% of Catholics had not heard of the Pastoral Plan (see Section 5.6.2). The preferred method of the Plan for building community was by means of SCCs. An article in the 2018 publication, *Priests on Mission*, says that the SCCs do not appear to be a priority any longer (McAleer 2019:33). This could be interpreted to mean that South Africa has reverted to the old-style church of a priest serving a passive congregation rather than a community serving humanity.

The Directive on Co-Responsibility, 1994 (see 5.5.1)

This is important in that it accepts a community model of Church in which all members are co-responsible. It admits that both clericalism and passivity are preventing the Church from being the community it is supposed to be. It is an admission that the ecclesiology of the Council has not been fully received.

The Four Forums, 2000 – 2009 (see 5.5)

These meetings signify an acceptance of the fact that all members have co-responsibility for their Church. The Forums, however, proved ineffective. They discussed issues facing the different dioceses and came up with a variety of suggestions and priorities but none of them produced a practical action plan. Eventually they ended in a *cul-de-sac* (see SACBC 2009A:16). It is obvious the 1976 advice of Archbishop Naidoo was not remembered: “Because we don’t plan, people get disaffected” (see Section 5.4.4).

Consultations on a Self-Sustaining Church, 2007 (see 5.7)

From the beginning the Church in South Africa depended on funds from Churches in other countries. A “dependency syndrome” developed and persists (see Section 5.7.2). The SACBC decided on a self-supporting campaign and a three-year consultation was designed by Lumko. Stage I was to be an investigation on the extent of the problem; Stage II would reflect on Stewardship responsibility; Stage III would develop a plan of action. The report on Stage I was submitted and nothing further happened. As a result, the dependency syndrome continues.

Inter-Diocesan Consultation, 2010 – 2012 (see 5.6)

As with the self-sustaining Church consultation, this one was designed along See-Judge-Act lines. The results of Stage I (See) were revealing: 43% of respondents had not heard of *Community Serving Humanity*; 31% knew nothing of the Priesthood of all the Baptised; 57% had not heard of the forums of 2000 – 2009. The report spoke of the need for a new ecclesiology that would give a basis for the involvement of the laity in the Church, making it clear that the respondents were not aware of the People of God ecclesiology of Vatican II and what it said about the laity (see Section 5.6.2).

Stage II (Judge) sought to remedy this situation and produced a discussion booklet on the themes of the Council. Up to 20,000 people participated. Stage III (Act) was to be a national gathering at which the elements of a new Pastoral Plan

would be agreed on. As with previous consultations, this “do it” stage did not happen.

Doctoral Thesis from Port Elizabeth, 2009 (see 5.8)

This research complements and confirms the findings of the 2010–2012 consultation. It found that 75% of Catholics do not have a ‘reasonable understanding’ of Vatican II; 70% are not aware of the People of God model of the Church; and 85% believe that the hierarchical model of the Church is predominant. If what is said in Port Elizabeth is true of the rest of the dioceses of the SACBC (and the findings of the 2010–2012 consultation confirms that it is), then the reception of Vatican II has scarcely begun. This is all the more surprising when one remembers that almost all of the serving clergy in South Africa received their theological education in post-Vatican II seminaries. It may mean that people accept a communion model of Church intellectually, but they act out of a traditional hierarchical mind-set.

5.11.3 Interpretation of the Role of Sodalities

This thesis does not suggest that the laity were absolutely passive at any time in history. It does propose that clericalism in the Church relegates the laity to a secondary and often passive role. The Sodalities started as an expression of Catholic Action, a way of involving the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy (cf. 2.3.1). Nevertheless, they demonstrate that there are many Catholic Lay people who play an active role in the Church. In the context of this research, three things have to be kept in mind. First, even if the Sodalities have a considerable number of members, together they form a small percentage of any particular parish. Most members do not belong to a Sodality and are not actively involved in the life of the local community. Secondly, Sodality members may be more interested in their own meetings at deanery and diocesan level than in the life of the parish. A Sodality can become self-serving and isolated from the plans and the problems of the parish. Thirdly, if a diocese or parish takes on Stewardship as a way of life a way will have to be worked out, in discussion with the Sodalities themselves, of supporting the Sodalities and of integrating them into the Stewardship movement.

5.12 Conclusion

The SACBC Department for Evangelisation led the Forums of 2000–2009 and the Pastoral Consultations of 2010–12. Its fulltime secretary was Fr Barney McAleer, who spent all of those years listening to priests and laity at diocesan and national level and reported on a regular basis to the Bishops' Conference.

With this background, his reflections on the findings of the Consultation are important:

- The laity in the Church are a sleeping giant that has still to be awakened.
- The laity are used to a passive role and do not see they have an active part to play in the evangelisation mission of the Church.
- The more active members seek roles within the Church and are not committed to the transformation of society.
- Small Christian Communities are no longer a priority.
- Many priests still work out of an old theology of priesthood while the theology of charism and the giftedness of the laity is either not understood or not accepted.
- Laity do not appreciate that their baptismal anointing has anything to do with family life or the workplace.
- What is needed is not a new programme (nor a new consultation), but a missionary spirituality based on Baptism and Confirmation.

In the light of this study of the SACBC publications and pastoral initiative since Vatican II, the following positive conclusions are drawn:

- The many consultations conducted with the laity point to an acceptance of Vatican II's People of God model of Church.
- The Pastoral Plan in particular points to a reception of the teaching of *Lumen Gentium* on the Church as a community and *Gaudium et Spes* on the Church's role in the sanctification of the world.
- The enthusiastic participation of the laity in the above indicates a willingness to play an active role in the life and mission of the Church.

In spite of the above, negative conclusions can be drawn:

- Many of the laity know little or nothing of the teachings of Vatican II on the nature of the Church as the People of God or of the Priesthood of all the Baptised.
- The secular character of lay spirituality emphasised by Vatican II (see LG 31) and explicitly promoted by CL 15 appears to be either not known or not practised. This is demonstrated in the laity, who are considered active, limiting their activity to roles within the Church community and failing to see how their faith relates to the transformation of society. It is also shown in the findings that members concentrated on the 'community' aspect of the Pastoral Plan and ignored 'serving humanity'.
- The hierarchical model of Church remains dominant, even in those who theoretically accept a People of God model. Consequently, clericalism and lay passivity persist.
- The many meetings between the laity and bishops have not led to a laity whose self-understanding is that of the People of God.
- When the Pastoral Plan was introduced in 1989, programmes were organised that aimed at a conversion of both laity and clergy to a new way of thinking about Church (see SACBC 1984A & SACBC 1984C). This kind of conversion needs to be ongoing, both for the renewal of those who have experienced it initially and for new generations of Catholic members. This did not happen.
- Because of the historical dependence on external funds and because the consequences of a community model of Church not being accepted, paternalism on the part of the clergy and dependency on the side of the laity continue.
- Active lay Catholics limiting their participation in the mission of the Church to liturgical roles is a continuation of the idea that the way to be holy and to serve God is to be a priest or to share in the liturgical work of the priest.
- Questions need to be asked about the ecclesiology being taught in the seminaries and the importance attached to a systematic study of the documents of Vatican II.
- The main reason for the apparent failure to involve the laity more actively in the mission of the Church lies in the failure of the SACBC to follow the many inter-diocesan consultations with a practical plan of action. The result was a

feeling of frustration and a feeling that the Church had arrived in a *cul-de-sac*.

The most serious conclusion is that the Church in Southern Africa has not yet fully accepted in practice the community model of Church nor the concept of the *Sensus Fidei* and the *Sensus Fidelium* as in the teaching of Vatican II (cf. LG 12 and LG 53), and as described in 5.3. The Church is a community of missionary disciples. All are equal and no one is more important than anyone else. Our communion is with God and with each other. (cf. 3.3.9). As a community, we travel together as pilgrims (cf. LG 48-51) & 4.5.5). As pilgrims, we travel together, together with God, together with each other. That togetherness needs to be reflected in parish and diocesan life and not be reduced to directives from the Chancery.

Secondly, it appears we have not accepted in practice the concept of *sensus fidelium* as found in Vatican II. The Spirit of God is present in the Church, in the totality of the faithful (cf. LG 12). The Spirit is in each person by virtue of their baptism. The initiatives described in 5.5 were undertaken by the SACBC because the bishops accepted that the Spirit of God was in the community and each initiative was an attempt to discern what the Spirit was saying to the Church of South Africa (cf. Rev.2:29). Section 5.5 of this thesis demonstrates that we meet, we consult but we do not act on what we have heard. As James said, we look in the mirror and then forget what we look like (cf. James 1:24). We set up Diocesan and Parish Pastoral Councils believing that the Spirit of God is in our parish and diocese, but when a council tells us something we do not like, we remind them they are consultative only (cf. 3.8.2.2). it belies our teaching on the *Sensus Fidei* and the active presence of the Spirit.

Chapter 6 will propose Stewardship as way out of this *cul-de-sac*.

CHAPTER SIX

STEWARDSHIP AS A WAY OF LIVING COMMUNION ECCLESIOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

Chapter Three outlined the history of clericalism and lay passivity in the Catholic Church. Both flourished when a hierarchical model of Church was not balanced with a community model and when the priesthood of all the baptised was neglected. Chapter Four examined the theology of Communion and the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II and argued that acceptance of that theology and ecclesiology would mark the end of both clericalism and the passivity of the laity. Chapter Five examined the degree to which Vatican II ecclesiology was "received" by the Church in South Africa. It examined a variety of initiatives undertaken by the SACBC to involve the whole People of God in the pastoral planning and practice of the local Church. The chapter concluded that these initiatives were largely ineffective, mainly because the discussions did not produce a concrete plan of action of what needed to be done at diocesan and parish level. The problem is compounded by the way in which the bishops run the plenary sessions: minutes are read and adopted but there is no formal discussion on Matters Arising or the implementation of the Resolutions of previous meetings.

Chapter Six will examine Stewardship as a biblical concept and as a modern Church movement. It will examine its underlying ecclesiology and its spirituality and offer it as a way of living the community People of God model of the Church of Vatican II, a way out of both clericalism and lay passivity.

6.2 Stewardship in History

6.2.1 In Ancient Greece⁷⁷

The Greek root of Stewardship is *oikos*. It stood for an entire household of immediate family, paid stewards and freed slaves. The one in charge of the management of this household was the *oikonomos*. It could be the wife or mother, but often the function was delegated to a paid steward or a freed slave. *Oikonomikos*, the way to run a household, became one of the standard virtues of Greek society and *Oikonomia* came to stand for “the art and virtue of household management” (Reumann 2014:12).

The ‘household’ was centred on a family but sometimes the word was used for a cooperative or a commercial enterprise. For example, the household of Priscilla and Aquila in Acts 18:1-3 produced leather works. Reumann says the meaning of the word was further extended to mean different things: the management of a well-ordered life; the arrangement of a writer’s manuscripts; the orderly lay-out of a public lecture. It was further extended to stand for the *polis* or city-state and even the entire *kosmos*: “the world, its various parts and its peoples were understood to have a certain order to them, an arrangement or regulation by God or nature” (Reumann 2014:15). In this world view, God is the ultimate ‘Steward’, the overall administrator of the entire universe. Apart from God as the ultimate steward, three things can be said about the steward in Greek society, and they have to be kept in mind when we come to speak about Stewardship in the Church:

- the steward was not the owner but acted on behalf of the owner,
- he or she was in a position of power and authority,
- the steward had an office of great trust – the owner trusted the steward to manage the affairs of the household with integrity.

⁷⁷ In this and the following two sections I am indebted in particular to Reumann’s *Stewardship and the Economy of God* (Reumann 2014).

6.2.2 Scriptural Background⁷⁸

6.2.2.1 In the Old Testament

The Old Testament does not have a word that corresponds to the English “Steward”. The Greek *oikonomos* was transliterated by using Hebrew characters (see Reumann 2014:11). Even though the word is essentially Greek and the Hebrew equivalent is seldom used, there are numerous examples of the idea of steward and stewardship:

- Genesis 1 & 2 speak of God as Creator and owner and man and woman are appointed to take care of creation.
- The tithe is a way of acknowledging God’s ownership and a way of saying thanks.
- God is portrayed as the one in control of all peoples and their destinies.

6.2.2.2 In the Gospels

The explicit teaching of Jesus on stewardship is in the parables:

- Luke 12:35-48 speaks of the watchful steward. Great trust was placed in him and he betrayed it.
- Luke 16:1-13 tells of the dishonest steward.⁷⁹ He wasted the property of the owner and the stewardship was taken away from him.

6.2.2.3 In the Writings of Paul

Paul used “steward” in its secular sense: Erastus was the *Oikonomos* or treasurer of the city (see Rom.16:23). Paul himself was in charge of the contributions of the Corinthian Church for the poor of Jerusalem (see 1 Cor.1- 4).

He also used the word in a spiritual sense: he and all disciples are stewards of the mysteries (see 1 Cor.4:1). The implications of this will be examined later.

⁷⁸ I will treat this in more detail in 6.3. Here I am speaking only of the historical use of the words steward and Stewardship.

⁷⁹ Even when He does not use the word, Jesus’ teaching can be examined through the lens of stewardship. Examples will be given in 6.3.

6.2.3 In the Fathers of the Church

In the New Testament and in the early years of the Christian era, the influence of Greek culture was all-pervasive. We have seen how the *oikonomia* found its way into the New Testament.

The Greeks spoke about Zeus or some other god governing the world and the events of history (see Pascoe 2013:26). Christian writers began to speak of the God of Revelation in the same way and of God managing the world and its affairs as if it were one large household. They began to speak also of the “economy of God”, of God’s unfolding plan of saving the world. That saving plan was revealed and accomplished through the People of God of the Old Testament, through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus in the New Testament, and through the New People of God, the Church, from New Testament times to the final consummation of “a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev.21:1).

Reumann gives examples of the use of the word *oikonomia* to describe God’s saving plan:

- Justin Martyr and Tatian spoke of God managing the world and its inhabitants.
- Ignatius of Antioch said the Incarnation was in accordance with the arrangement of the “economy” of God.⁸⁰
- Tertullian and Hippolytus wrote about the “arrangement” of God’s inner life as the “economic Trinity”.
- Events in the daily lives of Christians were seen as part of “God’s economy”, God’s involvement in the ordinary events of life.
- The word *oikonomia* was also used in the context of Church finances and offerings for the poor (see Reumann 2014:26-29).

⁸⁰ Ignatius asked Christians to work together as members of the same team “like God’s good stewards, coadjutors and assistants” (Prayer of the Church, Vo.3, Saturday of Week 17).

6.2.4 The Stewardship Movement in the Protestant Churches of the United States of America⁸¹

Reumann says that the modern movement of Stewardship is “North America’s contribution to Church practice and thought” (2014:52). It could equally be called the gift of the Protestant Churches to the Catholics.

The Stewardship movement began as a way of involving Church members in fund-raising for the home churches and for their missionary outreach. In 1836, a Baptist minister, Parcellus Church, wrote *The Philosophy of Benevolence*. The emphasis was on the use of wealth for promoting the kingdom of God. Later an evangelist called Charles Finney wrote on the “seven accountabilities of men as Christian Stewards” and spoke about the use of time, treasure and talents and the need to be concerned about the spiritual lives of people and not only about their money (see Reumann 2014:53). The new movement flourished in the 1840s and 1850s and went into decline during the American Civil War (1861 – 1865). It revived later in the 19th century. The emphasis was again on money with the major emphasis on tithing and on a covenant plan based on Malachi 3:10-12. The churches set up “The Joint Department of Stewardship and Benevolence” as a way of sharing information and methods.

Just as the Civil War led to a decline of the movement in the 1860s, the same happened in the late 1960s and 1970s: the civil rights movement and the debate on the Vietnam War took centre stage and united the Churches including the Catholics in a new way. When the movement revived it included issues around justice, peace, ecology and the environment.⁸²

But as Stewardship went into decline in the Churches, the secular world took over the word and used it in a secular context. People spoke of the stewardship of everybody from the local tavern manager to the State President. *The Cambridge Dictionary* reflects this secular use in its example of stewardship: “The Company has been successful while it has been under the stewardship of Mr Whyte”.

⁸¹ Here I use “Protestant” to mean all Churches other than Roman Catholic and Orthodox.

⁸² Ecumenism can grow through practical working together on a common campaign or against a common enemy. The latter happened in South Africa in the struggle against Apartheid.

6.2.5 The Stewardship Movement in the Catholic Church

As said above, the Stewardship movement is the gift of the United States to the Church and the gift of the Protestant Churches to the Catholics. It could also be said it is the gift of the U.S. Catholic Church to the universal Church.

Before the Catholic Church became actively involved in the ecumenical movement and particularly before Vatican II, Stewardship and tithing were considered “Protestant” ideas and so to be dismissed. With the openness that accompanied Vatican II, this instinctive rejection of Stewardship faded. In the United States, the bishops were finding it increasingly difficult to support their parishes and their vast network of schools and colleges. In 1992, they set up the National Council for Diocesan Support Programmes (NCDSP). Learning from their Protestant Sister Churches and realising that lay involvement in the Church should not be limited to finances, the NCDSP evolved into the National Catholic Stewardship Council (NCSC). In 1991, the Canadian Bishops’ Conference joined the movement, and they were followed by Australia and several countries of Europe, Asia and South America. In 1999 the NCSC became the International Catholic Stewardship Council (ICSC).

The USCCB published two key documents. One was on evangelisation and titled *Go Make Disciples*. The other was on Stewardship and called *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*. Though the documents were not explicitly related to each other, they are closely linked theologically: discipleship is lived out in Stewardship and an essential element of Stewardship is evangelisation. In the opening words of *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, “Once one chooses to become a disciple of Jesus Christ, Stewardship is not an option” (2002A:1).

This thesis will now examine the biblical and theological foundations of Stewardship, keeping in mind that the thrust of the thesis is how to transform a passive laity into active disciples. Obviously the biblical and theological are intertwined but they are dealt with separately in the interests of clarity.

6.3 The Scriptural Foundations of Stewardship

6.3.1 Introduction

Bible texts quoted in works on Stewardship fall into three categories: those that explicitly speak of steward and stewardship; those that imply Stewardship responsibility without using the word; and those that refer to the economy of salvation.

6.3.2 Stewardship and the Story of Creation

Ruth Ann Foster from the Baptist tradition describes Stewardship in the Bible's portrayal of God as Creator, Redeemer and administrator of a world that belongs to him: "The biblical view of stewardship is grounded in the nature of God as creator and redeemer, and as administrator of creation itself" (1995:1). The Catholic International Theological Commission (ITC) says something similar: "Human beings are created in the image of God in order to enjoy personal communion with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and with one another in them, and in order to exercise, in God's name, stewardship of the whole world" (2004:1/23). Pope Francis echoes both statements. He speaks about interconnected relationships that emerge from the Creation story: between humankind and God, between people and with the earth (see LS 66).

First, Creation speaks about a relationship with God. Genesis says that God created the entire world in an orderly way.⁸³ God created the material world and "saw that it was good" (1:9). God the Creator is the ultimate owner of everything: "To him belongs heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth and all that it holds" (Dt.10:14). The Creator is the Divine Householder and the "household" is all of creation. Having created Adam and Eve, God saw that creation was "very good" (Gen.1:31). Created in the Divine "image and likeness", Adam and Eve had a special dignity and relationship with God. In the words of Vatican II, they were created "to share in his own divine life" (LG 1).

⁸³ Section 6.2.1 spoke about how the word 'economy' was used to speak about the orderly arrangement of things and events.

The subsequent *Catechism of the Catholic Church* said that the original human beings were established in a relationship of “friendship” and “intimacy” with God (CCC 374). A symbol of closeness to the man and woman is the picture of God walking in the garden in the cool of the evening (see Gen.3:8).

Secondly, the creation story speaks of humankind’s relationship to all created things. Man and woman are told to “subdue” the earth and to have “dominion” over created things (Gen.1:31). God remains the “owner”, the “householder”; man and woman are appointed to care for all created things in the same way as the Greek householder appointed a steward to administer his house and property.

In *Laudato Si’* (LS), Pope Francis emphasises that the task to “subdue” the earth and to have “dominion” over creation does not give permission for “unbridled exploitation” and the destruction of the resources of the world (LS 67). In Genesis 2:15, Adam and Eve are asked to “till” the earth and “keep it”. The Pope says the tilling refers to cultivation and the keeping speaks of “caring, overseeing and preserving” (LS 67). The creation story, therefore, speaks of a special relationship between humankind and the rest of creation: the earth provides for human needs and each generation preserves it for future generations. This responsible care for the earth in God’s name and the name of the people of the future, this stewardship of created things, is what Pope Francis calls an essential element of the Christian faith (see LS 66).

Thirdly, the Creation story speaks about a relationship between people, between men and women, made in God’s “image and likeness” (Gen.1:26). Because they are made in God’s image, every individual reflects something of the nature of God and the human community is an image of the community that is God. All are made for communion with God and with each other (see Section 4.7.2). As said in Section 4.3, *koinonia* implies participation, participation in the life of God and in a community that is made in His likeness. This participation comes with a responsibility of care: created as a community, each has a stewardship responsibility for the welfare of the neighbour.⁸⁴ The sin of Genesis 3 damaged,

⁸⁴ The burning of the rain forests of the Amazon basin which produce 20% of the world’s oxygen is a stark reminder of the inter-connectedness of all people and of mankind and nature. The *Independent* of 25 August 2019 has a headline, “The House is on fire and nobody has pressed the fire alarm”.

but did not completely destroy, the three-pronged relationship described in Genesis 1 and 2:

- It damaged the relationship with God, symbolised with expulsion from the garden (see Gen.3:24).
- It damaged the relationship with the earth, symbolised in the thorns and thistles (see Gen.3:18).
- It damaged the relationship between people, pictured in the “enmity” between man and woman of Genesis 3:16 and the murder of Abel in Genesis 4:9.

6.3.3 Stewardship and Tithing

The United States Catholic Bishops say that a steward is “one who receives God’s gifts gratefully, tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord” (USCCB 2002A:9). The Jewish return of the “first fruits” to the Lord was a way of recognising in gratitude that the earth and what it produces is a gift from the Creator (see Dt.26:2). It was also a way of supporting the Levitical priests: “You must give him the first fruits of your corn ... “(Dt.18:3).

The practice of tithing extended throughout Jewish history:

- Abraham gave a tenth to Melchizedek (see Gen.14:10).
- Jacob promised to God a tenth of all he owned (see Gen.28:22).
- After the Exile, the people promised the first fruits and a tithe to the priests and the temple (see Mal.10:27).
- The Pharisee told Jesus he gives a tenth of all his provisions (see Lk.18:12).

In essence, the tithe was similar to the giving of the first fruits, a recognition of God’s universal ownership and an expression of gratitude. It was also a way of providing for the Levites (see Lev.27:30-33) and of helping the poor (see Dt.26:12).

Foster draws attention to the danger of legalism in tithing: it could be seen as the sum total of one’s obligations and a neglect of the “larger claims of stewardship obligations and the use of all of one’s possessions” (1995:16). Jesus drew attention to this same danger of neglecting the more important obligations of

stewardship (see Matt.23:23).⁸⁵

6.3.4 Stewardship and the Economy of Salvation

The *oikonomia* of God and of salvation was discussed in Section 4.3. There the emphasis was on the link between *oikonomia* and *koinonia*: God is a community and the human race reflects that community; the economy or plan of salvation reveals God as a community and unfolds through a community. The emphasis now is on what this plan of salvation says about Stewardship.

The economy of salvation portrays God as the master of the household, of the world and of the history of all its people. It also presents a God who has a plan to save all people. The bible speaks about how this plan unfolded in time. Reumann explains how the Swiss theologian Oscar Cullmann used the word “time”.

- the chronological (*kronos*) time-line from creation and all humanity to Christ (from the many to the one) and from Christ to all humanity and the second coming (from the one to the many);
- the times of special intervention by God (the *Kairos* times) such as the Exodus, the Return from the exile in Babylon, the incarnation, the death and resurrection of Jesus (see Reumann 2014:80-81).

In this story of salvation, God is the main actor. It is God who guides the story and intervenes in a special way at crucial times. Yet the Divine plan unfolds through the cooperation of chosen instruments and through the entire People of God (see Ps.33:12). The People of God of the Old Testament and of the New are not passive recipients of God’s saving work but active participants in that work, stewards of God’s serving plan.

⁸⁵ Apart from these warnings, there are other dangers of speaking of tithing in relation to Stewardship. In the minds of many, Stewardship is just a smart way of getting people to part with their money. There is also the danger of Church members reducing their obligations to the payment of dues. Catholics make sure that their payments are up to date so that no questions will be asked when it comes to funerals.

In the Old Testament, specific functions were assigned by God to three different groups: the priests who were stewards of worships; the prophets who were entrusted with God's word and spoke to people in God's name; the kings, "God's anointed" (see 1 Sam.26:9) who ruled God's people in the name of the God who appointed them and who removed them when they were unfaithful (see 1 Sam.13:5-14). All of these functionaries were called by God, acted in God's name and were responsible to the God who appointed them.

6.3.5 Jesus and Stewardship

6.3.5.1 Jesus as Steward

If a steward is a person who represents another and is appointed to act in the name of that other, then Jesus himself is a steward. He is the central figure in the economy of salvation that stretches from creation to the *Parousia*. He is the one sent by the Father and he always did the will of the Father (see Jn.8:29).

The will of the Father was the salvation of the world. John says that "we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son as the saviour of the world" (1 Jn. 4:14). As a good steward, he was faithful to the mission entrusted to him (see Rev.1:5) and was obedient to the will of the Father to the point of death (see Phil.2:8). While Scripture does not call him a steward, it does call him a slave (see Phil.2:7). It is to be kept in mind that the household steward at the time of Christ was often a freed slave.

The Son of God made human is Emmanuel, "God with us" (Matt.1:23). Walter Kasper calls him the "primal sacrament", the perfect sign and instrument of God's giving of self to the world and of the world's acceptance of that gift (1989:110). Jesus is the perfect representative of the Father: to see him is to see the Father (see Jn.12:45). As the one man who stands at the centre of the economy of salvation, He combines in Himself the three functions performed by three different groups in the Old Testament: He is priest, appealing to the Father on our behalf (see Rom.8:34); He is prophet, sent to bring good news to the poor of the world

(see Lk.4:18); and He is Shepherd-King, who will lay down his life for his sheep (Mk.1:14-15).

Section 6.3 speaks about the three relationships that emerge from creation: with God, with each other and with the world. These were damaged but not totally destroyed by sin. They were restored by God in Christ who was sent to restore all things, everything in heaven and everything on earth (see Eph.1:10). The “everything” includes the three relationships broken by sin.

First, the relationship with God is restored. In Jesus, God and man, humankind is once again at one with the Father. Paul says that “God through Christ has reconciled us to the Father” (2 Cor.5:18). All are called to fellowship with the Father and with Jesus His Son (see 1 Jn.1:9). All are called to adoption as sons and daughters so that each can speak to God as “*abba*”, “Father” (see Rom.8:15).

Second, the relationship with one another is repaired. Because all who in faith accept salvation and are baptised are children of the one Father, all are members of God’s family, brothers and sisters. All are one in Christ whether they be Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female (see Gal.3:28). All are members of the one Body of Christ and all are inter-dependent (see 1 Cor.12:27). All are united to Christ and through Christ to each other as the vine and the branches (see Jn.15:5).

Thirdly, the relationship with all creation is healed in Christ. Colossians says that Christ, in whom “dwelt all the fulness of God”, has reconciled to himself “everything in heaven and everything on earth” (Col.1:10). Paul says that creation itself suffered through the sins of humankind but it will be “set free from bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom.8:23).

The Son of God became the Son of Man and reconciled all things to Himself. By His death that Son of God washed away the sin of the world in his blood. He rose from the dead and is now in the presence of His Father. Brian Gaybba (quoted in 4.2) said that in the Communion of the Trinity, the Father can relate to the Son not just as God the Second Person of the Trinity but as a human being (see

1991:23). Christ is with the Father and with all that He has redeemed, with all who are joined to Him. He is with the Father as a human being, made like Adam of the dust of the earth. The “dust of the earth” is now a glorified body. In that body the earth has already begun its final transformation. The “new heaven and the new earth” have already begun. This is what Pope Francis asserts in *Laudato Si'*:

The ultimate purpose of other creatures is not to be found in us. Rather, all creatures are moving forward with us and through us towards a common point of arrival, which is God, in that transcendent fullness where the risen Christ embraces and illumines all things. Human beings, endowed with intelligence and love, and drawn by the fullness of Christ, are called to lead all creatures back to their Creator. (LS 83)

This eschatological vision of the destiny of all things provides a key to the deeper understanding of the nature of stewardship and of its scriptural foundation:

- All creation comes from God and all created things and all time belong to God.
- The Father-God directs the economy of salvation from creation to the *Omega* Point (to use Teilhard de Chardin’s expression) when all things return to the Creator.
- The Son and Saviour is the one sent by the Father. He embraces all things and in him and through him the whole of creation is led back to the Father. In his resurrection and ascension, the final return has begun.
- Human beings, because of their unique dignity and because of their being made one with Christ and in Christ, are stewards of their own and the world’s journey to fulfilment.

I argue that the above is the rock foundation of all Stewardship.

6.3.5.2 Jesus’ Teaching on Stewardship

The entire teaching of Jesus can be examined through a Stewardship lens. Three areas are considered here: the Beatitudes, parables on Stewardship and examples of teaching that implies Stewardship without using the word.

First, the Beatitudes. In *Stewardship, A Disciple’s Response*, the United States Catholic Bishops’ Conference makes two important statements: “Once one chooses to become a disciple of Jesus Christ, Stewardship is not an option” and

“The Beatitudes and the rest of the Sermon on the Mount describes the lifestyle of a Christian disciple” (2002A:1 and 19).

Stewardship has two inter-related arms, namely personal and communal. The Beatitudes are a description of the life of a committed disciple of Christ. Calling them “a programme for Christian happiness”, Raymond Deville says the first, “Happy are you poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God” (Lk.6:20) contains all the others (1982:46). In Christ, the Kingdom of God has already come. Its values are “made flesh” in Him (Jn.1:14)). Its values are intended to be “made flesh” in the life of each of His followers. Personal Stewardship is a conscious commitment to this process.

Secondly, the parables on Stewards and Stewardship. The first of these is in Luke 16:1-13. The rich man appointed a steward to manage his property. The steward was called to account for wasting the master’s goods. He used his position to secure his own future. Carroll Stuhlmueller suggests the passage is in two parts: vv 1- 8a consisting of the exact words of Jesus and 8b- 13 as early Christian moralising on what Jesus said (see 1968:149). The steward, who had full responsibility for the management of his master’s property, “wasted” that property and was called to account (Lk.16:1). As Ruth Ann Foster points out, he had failed in his position of trust and had wasted property that he was managing for the owner (see 1995 :17).

Foster goes on to suggest that verses 8b to 13 refer to the faithfulness of disciples in the early Church, the need for fidelity (vv10-12) and the single- minded dedication expected of the followers of Christ (see v13 and Stuhlmueller 1968:149). This fidelity and single-mindedness are expected of all disciple-stewards.

Luke 12:35-48 speaks of faithful and unfaithful stewards. It opens with the story of the ten bridesmaids. The nuptial banquet is a “messianic biblical theme” (Stuhlmueller 1968:146) and speaks of the need to be ready for the return of Christ.

Peter asked if the parable was meant for the leaders or for the followers of Christ. Jesus said that all are to be loyal to the task given to them, but servants who are in charge of other servants have an added responsibility of loyalty. The lesson for leadership in the Church is obvious.

Thirdly, Jesus speaks of Stewardship and its obligations without using the word.

- He himself is the servant of the Father who sent him: “He who sent me is with me.... I always do what is pleasing to him” (Jn.8:29). From the beginning he was concerned for the affairs of the Father (see Lk.2:49).
- He spoke about God’s care for the birds of the air and for all God’s children (see Matt.6:25-34).
- In the story of the man who went to his friend at midnight, Jesus says God always listens to those who persevere in prayer (see Lk.11:5-13).
- In the story of the Good Samaritan (see Lk.10:25-33), He teaches about the duty of care by all His followers for anybody who needs that care.
- He speaks too of how He identifies himself with everyone in need and how all will be judged on how they treat the poor, the sick, the imprisoned, the hungry (see Matt.25:35-45).
- His final words on earth (Matt.28:18-20), contain three things: a statement that all authority has been given to Him; a command to go and make disciples of all nations; and a promise that He will be with the Church “to the close of the age” (Matt.28:20). The Church is commissioned as “steward of the mysteries” (1 Cor.4:1).

6.3.6 Stewards of the Mysteries

Section 4.4.1 speaks about how *Lumen Gentium* used the words “Mystery” and “Sacrament” interchangeably. Both stand for the same transcendental reality, namely “a sign and instrument of communion with God and union with all men (sic)” (:1). Jesus is the perfect sacrament, the “perfect sign and instrument of God’s grace in human history” (Gaillardetz & Clifford 2012:62; see Section 4.4.2 above).

Christ is the mystery or sacrament of God, the sign and instrument of God's presence and saving work. The Church is the Sacrament of Christ, the tangible expression in time and space of God's saving work revealed in Christ (see Dulles 1987:69).

In the light of the above, two questions arise, the answer to which are crucial to this thesis: what are the mysteries of 1 Corinthians 4:1? Who are stewards of these mysteries? The mysteries refer to God's plan of salvation finally and definitively realised in Christ (see Rom.16:25-27). Paul speaks of the "glory" of this mystery, and the mystery is Christ Himself living in the community of believers (see Col.1:27) and "already a guarantee of a future community in glory" (Grassi 1968:338). Joseph Fitzmyer says Paul equates Christ with the mystery: He is the power of God at work in the world, the 'secret plan of God' (Col.1:27) revealed in His incarnate Son (see 1968B:807). He is the perfect image of God, more perfect than the first man and woman (see Col.1:15 & Gen.1:27). He is the perfect steward of the Father who does only what He sees the Father doing and only what pleases the Father (See Jn.5:19; 8:29).

The "mystery" therefore is Christ Himself and the salvation He accomplished. As Foster points out, it includes the redemption of all creation (Rom.8:21), the inclusion of the Gentiles, the presence of Christ in the Church (Col.1:27), the plan of God realised in Christ, the eschatological consummation (see 1995:19).

Christ is the mystery, the sacrament that makes the saving God present in the world. This living Christ is present in the believing community and so the Church is the mystery, the sacrament of Christ's work of saving the world, made present in every place and time. These are the mysteries of which Paul says he is steward (see 1 Cor.4:1).

The second question posed above is who are the "stewards" of this mystery, who are the human agents appointed by God at this stage of the unfolding of God's plan to serve the world?

Paul saw himself as appointed by "Jesus Christ and God the Father" (Gal.1:1).

Together with the other apostles, he is “a steward of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor.4:1) with a commission to preach the gospel (see 1Cor.9:17). In the words of Foster, “Paul sees his apostolate as a trust of stewardship from God” (1995:19).

The work of Stewardship was not confined to the apostles but was shared by all office-bearers in the Christian community. Pascoe says it is “the whole Christian Community that is to be the witness of God’s entire plan of salvation” and the whole Church has responsibility for its mission to the world (2013:25). The Letter to Titus says a bishop is God’s steward and so must live a blameless life (see Titus 1:7). But it is not confined to the overseers, the leaders of the community. Paul says each one is a servant of Jesus and “a steward of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor.4:1) and Peter says that every disciple is a “good steward of God’s saving grace” (1 Peter 4:10).

This discussion on the Stewardship of the mysteries is of particular importance to the problem that lies at the core of this thesis. The following is a summary:

- Jesus Christ is the mystery, the sacrament, the sign and the instrument of God’s saving work.
- Christ lives in the Church and that Church is the mystery, the sacrament, of the saving work of Christ made present in every time and place.
- The Church is the People of God and each member has a Stewardship responsibility for the Church and for its mission *ad intra* and *ad extra*.

Clericalism and lay passivity are incompatible with this vision of salvation and Church.

6.3.7 Principles of Biblical Stewardship

From what has been said in this section 6.3, it can be concluded that biblical Stewardship rests on the following principles: ownership, gratitude, trust, responsibility, accountability, fidelity and reward.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ I wish to acknowledge indebtedness for these headings to Hugh Whetshel’s *Four Principles of Biblical Stewardship* (2012) [available at tifwe.org] and *Making Stewardship a way of Life* by Andrew Kemberling and Mila Glodava (Kemberling & Glodava 2009).

First, Ownership. Genesis 1 says God is Creator and so “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein” (Ps.21:1). God is the ultimate “householder” and human beings are God’s stewards who cultivate and care for the earth. All people belong to God and all talents and abilities are God’s gifts. Paul said, “You are not your own” (1 Cor.6:19). All is gift and each person is gift and gifted.

Second, Gratitude. Being conscious of one’s gifts and talents does not lead to pride. Paul asks, “What have you that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?” (1 Cor.4:7). Recognising that all is gift leads automatically to gratitude and gratitude leads to joy. The Psalmist says, “It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praise to your name, O Most High” (Ps.92:1). Stewards are joyful people and a stewardship parish is a happy one (see USCCB 2002A:40).

Third, Trust. Scripture presents an image of a God who not only can be trusted but who trusts. The creating God trusted Adam and Eve; the Redeeming God trusted the People of God of the Old Testament and trusted the stewards appointed as priests, prophets and kings. Jesus trusted the Twelve and He trusted the Church to be the stewards of the mysteries and to be a sign and instrument of His continuing work of salvation. The challenge to all is to be “trustworthy”, to not disappoint the God who trusts them.

As God trusts the stewards, the stewards trust the God who believes in them, the provident God who beautifies the flowers and feeds the birds (see Matt.8:26). Stewards not only trust God but they trust each other and must be found to be trustworthy (see 1 Cor.4:27). Stewardship depends on this trust.

Fourth, Responsibility. The steward of Luke 16 had full responsibility for the management of the owner’s property. He also had the freedom to make important decisions regarding that property. He is accused of being irresponsible and for not safeguarding the assets of the owner. Like the steward of Luke 16, a Christian steward has both freedom and responsibility, and so is challenged to a right use of that freedom in the management of the gifts they have been given:

the money they earn, the time at their disposal, the talents they are blessed with, the Church that is theirs, the world that is their home.

Fifth, Accountability. This is closely related to responsibility. It points to the consequences of both responsibility and irresponsibility: the responsible steward who used wisely the ten talents was made steward of ten cities; the one who buried his one talent had his stewardship removed (see Matt.25:18-30). Christian stewards are accountable to the Church community, to authority structures in the Church and, ultimately, to God.

Sixth, Fidelity. Jesus spoke about the wise and faithful steward who took good care of the owner's household (see Lk.12:42-44). He also said that those who demonstrate fidelity in small things will be faithful in more serious affairs (see Lk.16:10). Again, the implications for Christian stewards are clear: the priest faithful to the community he serves; each one faithful to God, to their Church at local and wider level; everybody faithful to worship with the community; faithful to prayer; faithful to the poor; faithful to the obligations that flow from Baptism. Mother Teresa is credited with saying that God does not require us to be successful but only that we be faithful.

Seventh, Reward. God is worshipped and obeyed because God is God. God is loved because "God is love" (1 Jn.4:8): human beings are made in the image and likeness of Love and so they exist to love God and each other. Believers in this God do not love and obey merely because of a promise of heaven or a fear of hell. Nevertheless, the promise of reward is real. Jesus will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant Enter into the joy of your master" (Matt.25:23). Paul said he and all who look forward to the coming of Christ will receive "a crown of righteousness" (2 Tim.4:8). In the meantime, those who walk with Him are happy stewards. As said above when speaking of gratitude, stewards are joyful people and Stewardship parishes are happy parishes. Jesus himself said that those who follow with generosity receive both a hundredfold now and will enjoy eternal life (see Mk.10:30).

6.4 Stewardship and Communion Ecclesiology

6.4.1 Introduction

Yves Congar said that a theology of the laity must be grounded in a “complete ecclesiology” (1957: xxxviii and Section 4.1). It must be integrated into a clear vision of the nature and mission of the Church. The same is true of Stewardship: it must be clear that it is grounded in a complete ecclesiology.

This thesis argues that the ecclesiological foundations of Stewardship are as follows:

- Vatican II is the Church’s most up-to-date and authoritative self-awareness of what it is and what is its mission in the world.
- Communion ecclesiology is the “central and fundamental idea of the council’s documents” (Final Report 1985:6).
- This same Communion ecclesiology undergirds Stewardship. Writing on “Communion and Stewardship”, the International Theological Commission says that “Human beings are created in the image of God to enjoy personal communion with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and with one another in them, and in order to exercise, in God’s name, Stewardship of the created world” (ITC 2004:4).
- In the light of the above, the thesis asserts that Stewardship is an authentic way of “receiving” and living the Communion ecclesiology of the Council and a way out of the clericalism and lay passivity described in Chapter Three. In other words, Communion ecclesiology provides the theological foundation for the Stewardship way.

Avery Dulles said his favourite model of the ecclesiology of Vatican II was that of “Community of Disciples” (see 1987:204ff). That model spoke of the nature of the Church but not its mission and so Pope Francis has offered a new model: the Church is “a Community of Missionary Disciples” (EG 24). The following sections will examine the three elements of this definition (community, discipleship and missionary) through the lens of Stewardship.

6.4.2 Community and Stewardship

The following is a summary of communion ecclesiology as described in Chapter 4 and in Section 6.3:

- God is a community, “a web of interwoven relationships” (Doyle 2000:12 and Section 4.3).
- Creation is the work of God and reflects something of the Divine glory (see Ps.19:1).
- Man and woman are the image of God, reflecting God in a unique way and created for communion with God and each other (see ITC 2004:24).
- Sin damaged the three-pronged relationship with God, each other and all created things (see Section 6.3.2).
- Christ, the incarnate Son of God, is the perfect “image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation” (Col.1:15). In Him the three-fold communion with God, with each other and with all creation is restored (see Section 6.3.5.1).
- Christ is the sacrament of union with God and communion with people, the sign and instrument of God’s gift of the God-self and humankind’s obedient acceptance of that gift (see Dulles 1987:68). He is “the mystery” of 1 Cor.4:17 and the perfect steward of these mysteries (see Section 6.3.6).
- Christ gave the gift of the Church as a sacrament of His continuing presence and saving work, a sign and instrument of communion with God and each other (see Section 6.3.6).
- Like Christ, the Church is both the mystery (sacrament) of salvation and the steward of that mystery (see Section 6.3.6).
- Just as Christ is the *Imago Dei*, so each of the baptised is the *Imago Christi*. The baptised have “put on Christ” (Gal.3:27). Paul could say “Be imitators of me as I am of Christ” (1 Cor.11:1) (see Section 6.4.2).

Christ is the mystery or sacrament of God, the saving presence of God in the world. The Church is the mystery of Christ, the saving presence of Christ in every place and time. The Church is the community of Christ’s disciples and each member of the Church is a steward of the mystery that is the Church. All members of the Church are radically equal: all are equally adopted children of God; all are called to the same holiness (see Section 4.7.2) and to the same destiny; all share

in the one priesthood of Christ (see Sections 4.5.4 & 4.8). Because all are equal, in dignity and vocation, all have the responsibility to guard the treasure entrusted to them (see 2 Tim.1:14). Each one is expected to be “a good steward of God’s saving grace” (1 Peter 4:10). Each is a steward of the gift that is the Church, receiving it with gratitude, caring for it with responsibility and tending it with care (see USCCB 2002A:9). That responsibility extends from the family (the Domestic Church) to the parish, the diocese, the universal Church. It leaves no room for passivity by anyone.

6.4.3 Stewardship and Discipleship

As already noted in Section 6.2.5, the Catholic bishops of the United States say that once one chooses to be a disciple, Stewardship is not an option (see 2002A:1). The basic choice is to become a disciple. Stewardship is a consequence of that choice.

In the Gospels, a disciple is one who was called by Jesus and has accepted the invitation. Some did not accept because the cost was too great, as with the rich young man of Mark 10:17-22. Others found it difficult to break away from what bound them to home, as with the man who wanted to wait until he buried his father and the one who wished to go home to say goodbye (see Luke 9:59-62). The call to discipleship was radical and demanded a radical response. Those who did follow him were continually with him and were sent out (see Mark 3:14). They lived as a community, sharing a common fund (see Jn.12:6). They spent time in prayer together (see Mark 6:31) and he taught them how to pray (see Luke 11:1-4). As he sent them on mission, He told them to be like Him, always dealing with people “with compassion, humility, generosity and suffering service” (McBrien 1994:68). After the washing of the feet they were told to serve as they had been served and that their love for each other would show that they were real disciples (see Jn.13:35).

In the post-resurrection Church discipleship became “more ecclesial” (McBrien 1994:68). Jesus was present where two or three met in His name (see Matt.18:20). As they did when Jesus was with them, “they held all things in common” (Acts 2:44). They came together in the temple and in the homes of

people (see Acts 2:46), united as one by the common teaching, fellowship in the community, the breaking of bread and prayer (see Acts 2:42). They were called “The community of disciples” (Acts 6:2). They believed the risen Christ was still with them and that His grace was at work in them (see Acts 3:33). Jesus told Saul that what was done to the disciples was done to Him: He and they are one (see Acts 9:4).

The call to discipleship today is still a call to follow Jesus and still demands a radical response. The response is a life of faith, hope and love, and “the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor.13:13). Richard McBrien says this discipleship “encompasses whatever is intrinsic to the Christian life, including worship and moral behaviour. The outcome of faith, par excellence, is discipleship” (1994:68).⁸⁷

The response to the call to be a disciple demands conversion. That conversion may be sudden, as with Saul (though even he had to go to the desert to process what had happened on the way) (see Gal.1:17). It may be what Bernard Häring termed a “fundamental option” to live as a follower of Christ (Quoted in McBrien 1994:923) or it may be seen as a life-long process. Like the Church itself, always in need of reform (see Section 3.2), so it is with each member. Eamon Bredin says followers of Christ are in perpetual exodus, always leaving, setting out on a new journey, a fresh commitment to Christ. They are perpetually crossing over thresholds, perpetually in a liminal state, always accepting to be changed by the transforming grace of God, continually being led by the indwelling Spirit to a fuller commitment to God and his Church (see 2006:138-139). The thesis will speak later about the conversion required for a commitment to a Stewardship way of being an active disciple. It is a way of life that accepts with gratitude the gift of discipleship and accepts too the responsibility that accompanies that gift.

⁸⁷ For a comprehensive exposition of “what is essential to the Christian life”, see the 1992 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It is in four parts: What Catholics believe, how they worship, how they live the moral life, how they pray.

6.4.4 Stewardship and Mission

Section 4.10.4 speaks about the imperative of mission under the heading “The Call to the Apostolate”. Vatican II said all are apostles by virtue of baptism (see AA 1). Pope Paul VI asserted that the very purpose of the Church is to evangelise and evangelisation must proclaim the teaching and the mysteries of Christ (see EN 14 & 22). Pope John Paul II spoke of the permanent validity of mission and said that a decline in missionary drive is a sign of a decline in faith (see RM 2). Proclaiming Christ, he said, is “the supreme duty” of all believers (RM 3).

Section 4.10.4.1 quotes Pope Francis: All the baptised are “missionary disciples”, the work of mission is not the work of professionals only “while the rest remain passive”; each of the baptised must be personally involved in mission (EG 67).

In his recent book titled *Pope Francis: Go Forth. Towards a Community of Missionary Disciples*, William Gregory (2019) says that Pope Francis makes five distinct contributions to the discussion on the Church as missionary (see 2019: xviii – xxiii).

First, he moves beyond the theological discussion on mission to the practical question of how each of the faithful can be “stimulated and awakened so as to engage effectively in mission” (Gregory 2019: xix).

Secondly, Francis emphasises the importance of mission and ministry to the wounded Christ, suffering in the poor, the oppressed, the hungry, the overburdened, the spiritually lost. He speaks of the Church as “a field hospital” in all places where people suffer (quoted in Gregory 2019: xix). This kind of Church gives a human face to the mercy of God and is the direct opposite to a triumphalist self-centred Church.

Thirdly, the Pope brings together the two arms of proclamation, namely the direct and explicit passing on of the faith and the development of the world into a better place by “proclaiming peace, feeding the hungry, defending the

vulnerable, engaging in inter-religious dialogue, and befriending the lonely” (Gregory 2019: xx).

Fourthly, Pope Francis emphasised the importance of preaching (see EG 135 - 159). He reminded preachers that the word of God must be a word that draws people close to a God who is compassionate and close to God’s people in their struggles.

Fifthly, the Pope challenges the Church to examine all its structures and all its programmes so that all it does is done in a missionary key. The Church cannot say, “we have always done it this way” but must continually “re-think its goals” (EG 23). The challenge is to both individual members and to every administrative unit of the People of God (see Gregory 2019: xxii).

The following conclusions may be drawn from the teaching on mission from Vatican II to Pope Francis’ contributions above:

- 1) Each baptised person is called to discipleship and is sent on mission to proclaim the good news.
- 2) The good news of liberation is preached whenever and wherever the poor, the over-burdened, the oppressed are helped to liberate themselves or whenever the Church is like a field hospital in solidarity with those who suffer.
- 3) Each baptised person is a missionary and, therefore, is a steward of the good news of liberation and salvation.
- 4) The laity are in a privileged position to be bearers of the message of God’s saving love in the midst of the secular world and to give a human face to the mercy of God in a wounded world (see Section 4.10.3 on the secular character of the layperson’s journey to holiness).

Vatican II and each Pope quoted above speak about mission as the reason for the existence of the Church. Pope Francis says we cannot just do as we have always done and is concerned about how to involve each of the faithful in this mission. This thesis proposes Stewardship as a way of conscious and intentional commitment by each member and by every local community to the mission of the Church.

6.4.5 The Eucharist and Stewardship

As the Church is central to the mysteries of 1 Corinthians 4:17, so the Eucharist is central to the life of the Church as community. As Vatican II asserts, the Eucharist perpetuates the sacrifice of Christ in every age and place until Christ comes again (see SC 47). It is entrusted to the Church as a memorial of His death and resurrection, “a sacrament of love, a bond of clarity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace and a pledge of future glory is given to us” (SC 47). Each member of the worshipping community is invited to “full active and conscious participation” (14). The emphasis of the Council is on community and unity. The Eucharist is both a celebration of that oneness and a source of ever-deepening communion. Joseph Ratzinger says that each celebration of the Eucharist accomplishes three things:

- It unites people to Christ and in this way makes them Church.
- It unites them to each other, binding them into the one body of Christ.
- It unites the local Eucharistic community to the whole Church so that the Church of Christ is truly present in this local worshipping community (see 2002:4).

The risen Christ has united the whole of creation to Himself and has filled the whole universe with His presence (see Eph.4:9-10). That “cosmic” Christ is present in the sacramental signs of bread and wine and in the community of disciples gathered in His name. It could be said therefore that each Eucharistic celebration unites the local praying community with the whole of creation, already filled with the presence of the risen Christ. From this cosmic viewpoint, Stewardship of “the mysteries” and of creation takes on a deeper and more universal meaning. It connects to a universe that, in the words of Teilhard de Chardin, has already become a “living flame” (1965:29).

6.5 Stewardship as a Way of Life

6.5.1 Stewardship Spirituality

Pope Francis calls the Church a community of missionary disciples (see EG 40).

The basic word in this definition is disciple. The Christian vocation is a call to follow Jesus. That call is personal as it was for the first disciples in John 1:35-50 and it unfolds in the changing circumstances of our lives. The call is to follow Christ and to become like Him, to be “conformed to His image” (Rom.8:29). That process is lifelong. Paul admitted he was not perfect, had not yet reached the goal, but he would continue to press on to the end until the final transformation would be accomplished, and his body would be like the glorious body of Jesus (see Col.3:12-21). At the end, each will be what they were destined to be from Genesis, the *Imago Dei*.

This pilgrimage of being a perfect image of Jesus calls for repeated “conversions”, a continuing “leaving” from where we are to where God is calling us to be. As said in Section 6.4.3, each pilgrim disciple is in a state of liminality, always on the threshold. This journey towards being perfect as the Father is perfect (see Matt.5:48) is what is called Christian spirituality. It is defined by Joann Wolski Conn as “One’s entire life as understood, felt, imagined and decided upon in relation to God, in Christ Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit” (1988:972).

Disciples are called to discipleship within a community and they travel the pilgrim way to becoming perfect images of Christ together with that community of disciples. Nourished in the community by Word and Sacrament, they continue their journey of putting on Christ (see Rom.13:14), living according to the mind of Christ (see Phil.2:5) in the concrete circumstances of family and work. This is what Vatican II and *Christifideles Laici* call the “secular character” of lay spirituality (see 4.9.8 above). It is a way of life modelled on the life of Jesus. As the bishops of the United States say, “Stewardship Spirituality is not an action, not even a number of actions over a period of time but is an entire way of life. It means committing one’s very self to the Lord” (USCCB 2002A:1).

Viewed through the lens of Stewardship, this commitment involves acts of faith, trust, worship and belonging:

An Act of Faith which professes that all of creation comes from God and belongs to God.

An Act of Trust which submits to God as a provident God who looks after the birds

of the air (see Matt.6:26) and who is never outdone in generosity (see 2 Cor.9:8-10). The treasure is God himself (see Matt.6:19).

An Act of Worship, because God is acknowledged and worshipped as the source of all that is good (see James 1:17).

An Act of Belonging, because we support one another and the community of disciples to which we belong. We also support all who are in need, especially the poor and marginalised. (see USCCB 2004:6)

6.5.2 Stewards of Creation

Section 6.3.2 speaks about the designation of Adam and Eve as stewards of the earth, God's gift to them and to all who would come after them. It also spoke of the three-pronged relationship with God, with each other and with all creation that existed from the beginning, a relationship that was damaged by selfishness and sin and that was restored in Christ. Pope Francis says that this network of interconnected relationships must be kept intact: one cannot speak in an authentic and holistic way about a relationship with God without taking into account the relationship between people and with all creation, and one cannot speak of the care of creation and climate change while excluding God and inter-personal relationships and responsibilities. The Pope insists that "There can be no ecology without an adequate anthropology" (LS 118). He adds, "A correct relationship with the created world demands that we do not weaken this social dimension of openness to others, much less the transcendent dimension of the 'Thou' of God" (LS 119). Strategies to protect the environment and protect nature must be integrated into drives to alleviate poverty and restoring the dignity of those on the margin (see LS 139).

If the above is to become a reality in South Africa – and not be forgotten when a new Pope takes over – it needs to be integrated into the pastoral priorities of the Church at SACBC and diocesan level. Those policies will be fleshed out with practical action at the level of the parish.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ It is beyond the scope of this thesis to go into the details of this. But the details must be spelled out and regular reviews conducted if the mistakes discussed in Chapter Five are not to be repeated.

6.5.3 Stewards of the Church

Chapter Four speaks about the nature of the Church and the role of the laity: it is the People of God that exists for mission; all are equal and all share responsibility for the life and mission of the Church; all are called to holiness, to community and to the apostolate; all form the vineyard of the Lord and each is a labourer in that vineyard; all are stewards of God's varied grace (CL Chapter IV and 1 Pt.4:10). Pope Francis says the Church is "a community of missionary disciples" (EG 24): all are called to live as disciples, to "walk as Jesus walked" (1 Jn.2:6), to build community and to be always on mission. Passivity as described in Chapter Three above is a practical rejection of this vision of the nature and mission of the Church. Stewardship is an intentional and conscious decision to accept it as a way of life. It is an acceptance in theory and in practice, in the mind and in the heart, that each one is responsible for the life and mission of the Church. It is an acceptance by the clergy of the gifts of the laity and by the laity of the gifts and the roles of the clergy. The gifts are "varied" and, like all other gifts, are to be accepted with gratitude and used with responsibility. The United States bishops say "We are all stewards of the Church ... As 'to each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit' (1 Cor.12:7), so stewardship as an ecclesial reality means cherishing and fostering the gifts of all, while using one's own gifts to serve the community of faith" (2002A:31).

Each baptised person is a disciple, called to "walk as Jesus walked" (1 Jn.2:6); each is an equal member of the community of the Church, the Body of Christ, each unit of the Church, each local community and each individual member has a Stewardship responsibility of trust for which they will be held responsible and for which they will be rewarded when they are welcomed into "the joy of the Lord" (Matt.25:23). This Stewardship responsibility is concretised in the traditional categories of Time, Talent and Treasure. This thesis adds a fourth T, namely Testimony.

6.5.4 Stewards of Time

A steward is "One who receives God's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible manner, shares them in justice love with others, and returns them

with increase to the Lord” (USCCB 2002A:9). Time is one of God’s most precious gifts. The story of creation in Genesis 1 is told in terms of time: God worked each day, and each evening rejoiced in the work done. On the seventh day God rested, rejoicing in a world that mirrored the divine goodness.

Speaking of the passing nature of time, Psalm 144:4 says it is like a passing shadow. Ecclesiastes 3.1 says there is “a time for every matter under heaven”.

The disciple regards all time as a gift. Like all gifts, it is to be accepted with gratitude and used with responsibility in the service of God and of God’s people. Like the ‘first fruits’ of the land, the steward gives the first fruits of time to God and not the remnants left over in a busy life. In Luke 14 Jesus tells of the invited guests who were too busy to come to the wedding. God can be crowded out in the life of one who is “busy about many things” (Lk.10:41). Section 6.3.4 speaks about *kronos* and *Kairos* time, the latter designating times of special intervention by God in salvation history. There are *Kairos* times also in the lives of individuals, times of grace when crucial decisions have to be made, times when God is intervening in the life of an individual or community. The steward learns how to be sensitive to what is happening at these moments and what the Spirit is saying to the individual or the community. It calls for both sensitivity and discernment.

This discussion on Time and its significance is of particular importance to the Church in South Africa in which up to two thirds are not “practising” (see McAleer 2019:2), in which many give up regular attendance after receiving Confirmation and in which neighbourhood Bible Sharing groups have all but ceased to exist (see Section 5.6.2). Stewards on the other hand, decide to give time directly to God and to the local community of God’s disciples, and this under a variety of headings such as Sunday worship, private prayer, SCC weekly meetings, sodality work, Sunday School organisation. It also involves time spent with the family, in recreation, in helping the neighbour in need. This will be re-visited in the following chapter.

6.5.5 Stewards of Talent

The International Theological Commission said that Stewardship rests on the theology of communion, that a basic element of this theology is that human beings are created as the *Imago Dei*, reflecting something of and sharing in the beauty, the glory and the power of God (see 6.4.1). Christ is the perfect image of God and all who are baptised into Him are transformed into copies of that image. Consequently, each baptised person becomes an *Imago Christi* and is intended to reflect the face of Christ just as the glory of the Father is reflected on the face of Christ. *Imago Dei* defines a human being; *Imago Christi* defines a Christian (see ITC 2004:3/23 and 2 Cor.3:18).

The above is of paramount importance for an understanding of Stewardship and particularly the Stewardship of talent: the gifts and talents given by nature amount to a sharing in the beauty, goodness and creative power of God; the gifts of grace given in baptism by the power of the Spirit of God incorporates one into the Body of Christ, makes them the image of Christ and appoints them as co-workers in His work of salvation (see 1 Cor.3:9). The gifts are given freely. While the gifts are free, the warning of Dietrich Bonhoeffer about what he calls “cheap grace” (quoted in USCCB 2004:15) is appropriate. Gifts that lie dormant and are not used do not reflect the glory of God. Jesus spoke about burying talents and warned that they will be taken away if not used (see Matt.25:14-39). Following again the definition of Stewardship given in Section 6.5.4, talents are to be received with gratitude, used responsibly and returned with interest to the divine giver. In this case the use of each talent reflects something of the creative power of God and the redeeming presence of Christ, and the disciple becomes in reality the *Imago Dei* by being the *Imago Christi*.

As they serve God and people, they are not just sharing their talents; they are sharing who they are (see USCCB 2002A:66).

6.5.6 Stewards of Treasure

When people hear the word 'Stewardship' they think of money and fundraising. For them, "stewardship and money are synonymous" (Zech 2006:96). While this is a fundamental mistake, it remains true that stewardship of treasure is an important element of stewardship. "Treasure" is not limited to money. The Treasure of the disciple includes the treasure of faith, the treasure of the Church, the mystery enshrined in word and sacrament revealed in scripture and faithfully transmitted and received in Church tradition. The final treasure is the beatific vision (see Matt.6:19-21). In this section, however, 'treasure' stands for finances and all the material things the Church needs to exist.

Section 5.7 speaks of the findings of Charles Zech's survey of the giving habits of Catholics in the United States. His book, *Why Catholics Don't Give*, says that the average Catholic gives \$96 per month to the Church as against \$297 for the average Protestant (2006:17). The same section of this thesis spoke of the situation in South Africa: in 2004, the SACBC set a target of 15% sustainability for all units of the Church; by 2009, 41% of parishes had reached this low target. There was no discussion on where the balance of 85% came from.

The historical circumstances that gave rise to this low level of self-sustainability are discussed in Section 5.7: the historical poverty of the Catholic members, the availability of overseas funds through the missionaries, the paternalism and dependency that existed from the beginning. But much has changed in the lives of people and in their standard of living since those early days and people would be expected to have been working out of a new community model Church since Vatican II. Yet the problem remains. A 2006 survey revealed that a dependency mentality persists. Replies said that the belief is that it is the Church that gives; the laity receive from it (Lumko 2007:130). Some respondents proposed a solution: the building up of a real community according to the Vatican II model of Church and of taking ownership of the Church and "a spirituality of Stewardship and giving in gratitude" (:130). Ten years later it is being taken up by this thesis.

Charles Zech says, "Stewardship is not about something we do; it's about who we are, and whose we are" (2006:97). He goes on to speak of disciples as God's

children, “co-heirs with Christ” (Rom.8:17), people who depend on God for everything. He emphasised that Stewardship is not about an annual giving campaign but about “transformed visions, changed attitudes and altered lives” (2006:98). Stewardship of treasure comes from a recognition that all is from God, that God’s gifts must be used in a responsible and accountable way, and that we actually have a need to give as our way of acknowledging who we are and of saying thanks to a generous God.⁸⁹

6.5.7 Stewardship and Testimony

Historically, Stewardship has been spoken of in terms of Time, Talent and Treasure. This thesis argues that there are good reasons for adding Testimony. As said in Section 5.4.5.3, the SACBC Pastoral Plan, *Community Serving Humanity*, rests on *Lumen Gentium* with its People of God image of Church and *Gaudium et Spes* with its emphasis on the role of the Church in world. The Forums of 2000 – 2009 (see Section 5.6) revealed that the laity are not active in evangelisation; that they are more willing to take on liturgical roles than to be involved in the transformation of society; that many do not appreciate the connection between their faith and life in the family and the work place; that the major emphasis is on building the Church “community” and not on “serving humanity”.

As discussed in 4.9.3, Vatican II and *Christifideles Laici* emphasised the secular character of the layperson’s journey to holiness. They, the laity, stand on the line where the reality of the world and the reality of salvation meet and they make their journey to holiness “in marriage, in a profession and in the various activities of society” (CL 15).

Each member of the Church, itself the “Sacrament of Salvation” (LG 1), shares in the priestly, prophetic and kingly roles of Christ (see 4.8.2 and 4.9.3). As priest, everything they do becomes a “spiritual sacrifice” offered to God (LG 34). As prophet, each is a living icon in society of what it means to be a disciple in the

⁸⁹ Even though Stewardship differs from Sacrificial Giving, the principles of the latter can be helpful: Giving must be planned, proportionate, sacrificial, free and an expression of thanksgiving.

family and in every area of political, social and economic life. As king, they take the values of the kingdom into the human *milieu* of which they are part and become agents of justice, love and peace. Pope Francis speaks of the Church as a field hospital in wartime: each one who helps the poor, the disadvantages, those denied basic rights, becomes a living sign of the merciful face of Christ (see Gregory 2019:37ff). As Jesus shows the merciful face of God, so the mercy of Jesus becomes visible in a compassionate Church.

The argument of this thesis is that if the practical way of living Stewardship is limited to the use of Time, Talent and Treasure, it could give the impression that we continue to concentrate exclusively on the internal life of the Church and fail to be a leaven in the society in which we live and for which we have a duty of service. The image of the “field hospital” is the antidote to an inward-looking and self-serving Church.

Each member of the Church shares in the Priesthood of Christ. Each is Priest, Prophet and Shepherd King.

As Priest, each is expected to participate in a full, active and conscious way in the Church’s liturgy and offer everything they do as a “spiritual sacrifice” to God (LG 34). All of life is holy, and each one gives testimony to that holiness where they live and work.

As Prophet, each disciple is a living icon in the *Areopagus* of today of what it means to be Christian so that each can say to see me is to see Christ, just as Jesus could say “To see me is to see the Father” (Jn.14:9). The life of one who walks as Jesus walked gives silent testimony to their faith. But the testimony must also be explicit. The Church exists for mission and each member is sent as Jesus was sent (see Jn.20:21). Each is a “steward” of the Gospel and “the mysteries” as discussed in 6.3.4. Each disciple is missionary. They give testimony to this by the silent witness of their Christian lives, by building up the parish and SCCs, by seeking out the lost sheep, for being able and willing to give to others a reason for the faith that is in them (see 1 Pt.3:15).

This chapter has spoken about the meaning of Stewardship, its history, its biblical foundation, its underlying theology and spirituality. The questions that now arise are: How would one recognise a Christian steward? What are their basic characteristics?

6.6 Conclusion: Portrait of a Christian Steward⁹⁰

God is a loving community of relationships. Creation revealed something of the divine power and glory. Because man and women were created in God's image, they were created for community, for relationship with God, with each other and with all creation. The self-revelation of God continued in the history of salvation and it reached its climax in Christ, the perfect "image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation" (Col.1:15). The three-fold relationship damaged by sin was restored in Christ and in Him the return to God of all created things has already begun.

Christ's saving presence continues in the Church. It is the sacrament of Christ, the sign and instrument of His continuing saving work. That Church is, like God, a community. In the words of Pope Francis, it is "a community of missionary disciples" (EG 24). All the baptised are called to walk with Him as His disciples, to be an image of Him as He is an image of the Father. All are disciples within a community and each one has Stewardship responsibility for building up that community. The Church exists for mission within and beyond the community and each one has a responsibility for that mission. The disciple who is actively involved in this mission is linked directly to God's "sending love" (Bosch 2012: 400)

As the bishops of the United States said, once a person becomes a disciple, Stewardship is not an option. It is a way of living discipleship, of being community, of being missionary. That way is concretised in the four Ts: time, talent, treasure and testimony. It is given flesh in the following portrait of a Christian steward. The

⁹⁰ This section is indebted to *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response* by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) and *Characteristics of a Christian Steward* by the Diocese of Wichita, United States (1999).

listed characteristics flow from what is said in this chapter about the nature of Stewardship, about the biblical teaching on Stewardship and its underlying theology and spirituality. They are not given in order of importance. They are rather like the different faces of a multi-faceted diamond. Together they present a portrait of a Christian steward.

Full of Faith: The Christian steward believes that all is gift: the world and all it contains; the Church and all it offers; the individual, him or herself, with all they have with all they have and own, their talents, their treasure and the time that they have been given.

Grateful: Because all is gift, the steward lives in gratitude, grateful for everything, for everybody and for each day.

Joyful: Joy is the child of gratitude. The United States bishops say, “The life of a Christian steward is charged with intense joy” (2002:40).

Generous: The steward knows that what he or she has is given for their own benefit and that of others. The steward, on a journey to becoming more truly the image of God and of Christ, is generous like the Father who gave his “only begotten Son” (Jn.3:16) and like the Son who gave His life with great love (see Jn.15:13).

Merciful: The Christian steward knows they are a forgiven sinner and must forgive without reservation. Each steward is a person of mercy and shows the merciful face of Christ as they seek out and serve the poor and those on the margins of society.

Servant and Humble: The steward learns to walk like Jesus (see 1 Jn.2:6) and become like Him, meek and humble (see Mt.11:29). They serve as He served, symbolised in the washing of feet (see Jn.13:1-17). They do not boast of what they do but say “We have done no more than our duty” (Lk.17:10). Bosch said disciples of Christ are “not high-powered salespersons but [...] ambassadors of the Servant Lord” (2012:489).

Prayerful: The steward continually gives God thanks and praise. They pray with the community, with the family and alone. Prayer is woven through their entire life. “The heart and soul of Stewardship is prayer” (Diocese of Wichita 1999:11). Sharing in Christ’s priesthood, everything they do becomes “a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God” (Rom.12:1).

Disciple: The Christian steward has made a conscious decision to live as a child of God, a brother or sister to Christ, a member of the People of God, a status conferred in Baptism and strengthened in Confirmation and the Eucharist. The steward knows it is the task of a lifetime as they strive to become more like Christ, the perfect image of the Father.

Faithful: The dedicated steward is faithful to the task, faithful to God and the Church. He or she does not give up when it becomes difficult or appears worthless. They remember the promise: “Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of the Lord” (Matt.25:23).

Accountable: The Christian steward realises that an account will be demanded: “Give an account of your Stewardship” (Lk.16:2). The Stewardship Church depends on the accountability of each individual steward: the bishop, the priest, the Church Council, Sunday School teachers, finance committees.

Trusting & Trustworthy: The steward trusts in God who takes care of the birds of the air (see Matt.6:26). They trust in Christ who promised to remain with His Church until the end of time (see Matt.28:20). They trust in the Spirit of God who abides continually in the Church (see Jn.14:16). While stewards trust God, they themselves must be trustworthy (see 1 Cor.4:2).

A Stewardship parish has will flourish only if there is mutual trust, a trust that has to be earned and nurtured, between priests and laity and among the laity themselves.

Sense of Belonging: The steward has a sense of belonging to the parish, to the diocese and to the universal Church. They do not feel less “Church” than anybody else. They are convinced that the Church is theirs and that they have an

indispensable role to play in its mission.

Missionary: The committed steward is committed to mission: to pass on the Good News as it has been passed on to them; to build up the local faith community; to reach out to those who may have lost contact with the Church; to make the message of salvation available to all. The Christian steward models what it means to be a follower of Christ. They may be the only 'Bible' that many people will read.

The missionary disciple knows he or she is not perfect, just as the seventy-two were not. Jesus has said to them, "Go your way" (Lk.10:3) and they know they go in His name, and on His authority.

If all disciples, ordained and lay, live the Stewardship described above, then the historical problem of an "active" clergy and "passive" laity will be consigned to history. If the ordained treasure the priesthood they share with all the baptised and treasure their own ministerial priesthood as a service to all, then clericalism will be no more. If the laity treasure and live their own priesthood and accept the Stewardship obligations of discipleship, then lay passivity will come to an end.

Chapter Seven will make some practical suggestions on the introduction and maintenance of Stewardship in the Church of Southern Africa.

CHAPTER SEVEN
INTRODUCING AND MAINTAINING STEWARDSHIP IN THE CHURCH OF
SOUTHERN AFRICA

7.1 Introduction

Chapter Five spoke about the degree to which the ecclesiology of Vatican II was received in the Church of Southern Africa. The findings need to be kept in mind if mistakes are not to be repeated. Chapter Six proposed Stewardship as a way out of clericalism and lay passivity, a way of living the ecclesiology of Vatican II. This chapter proposes practical ways of introducing it in a sustainable way in the local Church.

Luke 8:5-15 speaks about the good seed that fell on different kinds of ground. The seed was good; the problem was with the soil. This research maintains that if Stewardship is introduced hurriedly after a weekend workshop or merely as a way of increasing income, it may flourish for a while like the seed that fell on stony ground, but it will not survive. As with the farmer, two things are needed: careful preparation of the soil and patience with gradual growth (see James 5:7-8).

The soil is the hearts and the minds of people. The Church appears to act on the assumption that if people have enough knowledge, comprehensive catechesis, then practice will follow: if they know all about the Eucharist, then they will never miss mass; if they fully understand the Church as a community, then they will be a community; if the laity know what their duties are, they will be active. While not denying the need for catechesis and information, this research prefers the belong-believe-behave paradigm proposed by Ron Huntley and James Mallon in *Unlocking Your Parish* (2019:26): an encounter with Christ in the community leads to faith and to a new way of living. The journey is from heart to mind to living.

The journey of the Emmaus disciples is informative – and possibly normative (see Luke 24:30-35). The disciples had lost hope. They were going away from

the community at Jerusalem. In their encounter with Jesus on the road their hearts were set on fire. As He explained the scriptures, their minds were opened. They offered Him the hospitality of their home. They recognised Him in the breaking of bread. Their hearts were set on fire; their minds were opened; they went back to Jerusalem. This is the journey of the disciple: conversion of heart as they encounter Christ; conversion of the mind as the scriptures are opened; new life in the community of disciples.

Huntley and Mallon say this is the paradigm that guided the early Church, evidenced in the distinction between the *Kerygma* and the *Didache*, between the “proclamation” of the message of salvation in Christ and the “catechesis” which deepens the initial faith and roots the convert in the Church community (2019:29). Pope Francis insists that this first proclamation or *Kerygma* “needs to be at the centre of all evangelising activity and all efforts at Church renewal” (EG 164). When the Pope says “first”, he does not mean it is proclaimed to new converts and then forgotten about. Rather, it is “first” in the sense of being of primary importance and an essential element of all renewal in the Church (cf. Huntley & Mallon 2019:30). It is an essential element of the preparation of the soil if the seed of Stewardship is to grow, an essential part of the conversion of the heart without which there is no renewal. The next section deals with this conversion of heart; the following section will consider the conversion of the mind to a new way of thinking about the Church and the role of all its members.

7.2 Conversion of the Heart to Discipleship

7.2.1 Conversion as an Encounter with Christ

Section 6.4.3 said that a disciple is one who is called to follow Christ and who has responded to that call. The response is not just an intellectual assent but a commitment of the heart to live like Christ. It involves what Pope John Paul II called “a personal and profound meeting with the Saviour” (Quoted in Huntley & Mallon 2019:22). Pope Benedict XVI says it is not merely an ethical choice or the pursuit of a lofty ideal “but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction” (DCE 1). This encounter leads to a

life-changing surrender to Christ and to new life in the Spirit (see Rom.8:5). The encounter involves a decision by individuals and a community to follow Jesus and to live discipleship. In the words of Sherry A. Weddell (2012), the decision and determination are “intentional” (:171) in the sense of being a deliberate and conscious response to the call to be holy, to be saints of today, holy people through whom the Almighty will do “great things” (Lk.1:49).

In the Gospels the call to discipleship was personal but more than personal. It called for an individual response, but it also involved becoming part of a community of disciples. This remains true – discipleship is bound up with community. Huntley and Mallon say that experience has taught them that those who encounter Christ “clamor for community” (2019:19). They say that the same is true of discipleship and mission: those who encounter God in Christ become missionary because they have encountered “a missionary God” (:16).

As said in 6.4.3, conversion to discipleship is a continuing process: the disciple is always “leaving”, always “crossing over” to a new place, always in a state of liminality. Weddell speaks of five main “thresholds” that are crossed on the way to discipleship (2012:129-130):

- 1) The Threshold of Trust. If the Church loses the trust of people, those people will find it difficult to trust God. If one finds a Church member trustworthy, they will find it easier to have trust in the Church and in God.
- 2) The Threshold of Spiritual Curiosity. The person becomes “curious” about Jesus, wanting to know more about Him and His teaching.
- 3) The Threshold of Spiritual Openness. The person becomes open to spiritual change. They accept that change is a possibility.
- 4) The Threshold of Spiritual Seeking. The person becomes a “seeker”, actively engaged in getting to know God, Christ and the Church.
- 5) The Threshold of Intentional Discipleship. The seeker decides to follow Jesus in and through His Church, to “leave their nets behind” ((Mt.4:20).

While Weddell is speaking mainly about the journey from non-belief to intentional discipleship, the five thresholds can also describe the journey of a Church member who is indifferent and passive to active and committed discipleship. She admits that for people who are already Christian, the passage from one threshold to another could be accomplished in a short time, for example, during a weekend retreat (2012:131).

7.2.2 Alpha as the Proposed Way

Alpha began in Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Brompton, London in 1977. It is now run in 65 countries around the world, including South Africa, and by all major Christian denominations (see *Alpha: God Changing Lives*. sa. 8). As a presentation of the *kerygma*, the core teaching of the gospels, it is non-denominational. In the Catholic context Alpha is an initial evangelisation tool; catechesis comes later (see Huntley & Mallon 2019:29).

Alpha is proposed by this research as a way of conversion, a way of crossing over the thresholds listed above, Huntley and Mallon point out that it is not a catechetical tool but a tool of evangelisation rooted in the kerygmatic proclamation (2019:29). It is an introduction to who Jesus is, a process to help people encounter Jesus, to fall in love with Him and to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit (:30, 39).

Essentially, it will consist of a ten-week encounter with Christ through a presentation of the essentials of the Christian faith.⁹¹ Each session begins with a shared meal. This is followed by a talk or a video on the topic of the week, followed in turn by discussion in small groups. Based as it is on the Belong-Believe-Behave paradigm, Huntley and Mallon say it changes the culture of a parish in five ways (Huntley & Mallon 2019:41-47).

⁹¹ The ten themes are given in Appendix 1.

The first is Hospitality. The meal that starts the weekly session makes people feel they belong. This spills over into the weekly worship of the parish to which members are welcomed at the door of the Church and made to feel part of a hospitable community.

The second is Participation in the Liturgy. The weekly Mass becomes an event where people want to be and in which they participate in a full, active and conscious way (see SC 14).

The third is Sharing. As members share food and thoughts at the weekly sessions, they want to share their time and talents and what they have with the community. They give because they want to give, not because they are obliged to.

The fourth area in which Alpha changes the culture of a parish is Prayer. As people encounter Christ in the weekly sessions and as they learn to pray together, prayer becomes a natural response to their new relationship with God.

Fifthly, as members experience community at the sessions and as they discuss in small groups, a spirit of fellowship develops in the parish. The parish becomes in reality a community of disciples. The soil is almost ready to receive the seed of Stewardship.

7.2.3 Not Limited to Alpha

Alpha is proposed as a path to conversion that leads to a renewed commitment to Christ and to a life led by the Spirit of God. It is available and well organised in South Africa. However, individual groups and parishes may find other ways. The Ignatian Spiritual exercises, rooted in the Scriptures and especially in the life of Jesus, is well known and available. Parish “Missions” as presented by the Redemptorists are aimed at the same conversion of the heart. Many parishes already run weekend renewal courses that aim at a renewed commitment to living the faith. Most of the Sodalities have annual retreats that put new life and enthusiasm into their members.

7.3 Conversion of the Mind to a New Way of Thinking about the Church and the Role of the Laity

Just as catechesis followed the *kerygma* in the early Church, the proclamation that happens through Alpha has to be followed by a catechesis on the nature of the Church and the dignity and role of the laity as outlined in Chapter Four of this thesis. In Chapter 5 Section 5.6.3 I spoke about Phase Two of the 2010 – 2012 Inter-diocesan Pastoral Consultation. It consisted of a discussion booklet on the nature of the Church and the role of the laity. This research recommends that a similar information and discussion booklet be published as a sequel to the Alpha Course that will help the Church members reflect on the nature and mission of their Church as a community of missionary disciples and of their role in that community. Appendix 2 gives a list of topics that need to be covered.

7.4 Organisation at SACBC Level

7.4.1 Introduction

Chapter Five examined selected pastoral initiatives of the SACBC to make the ecclesiology of Vatican II a reality in the lives of parishioners. It spoke of the apparent failure of many of these initiatives. While Stewardship is not just another initiative, still less a new Pastoral Plan, the mistakes pin-pointed in Chapter Five must be kept in mind if they are not to be repeated. Plans and programmes initiated at Conference level that are not implemented in the parish are of little value. While this is true, visioning and planning at Conference level is important: it draws on the combined wisdom and experience of the bishops and their staffs; it holds up a vision that becomes a source of unity, energy and inspiration for the individual dioceses and parishes; it offers research and resources to dioceses that have limited staff; and it links local initiatives to a national drive to make Stewardship a way of life for the entire Conference.

7.4.2 Presentation and Proposal to the SACBC

The SACBC has an Administrative Board that has week-long meetings in May and November. One of its functions is to prepare the agenda for the two Plenary Sessions in January and August. An offer will be made through the Administrative Board to present the findings of this research to a Plenary Session.

The SACBC works through five Departments: Christian Formation, Clergy, Finance, Ecumenism, Social Action. Each has a bishop-chairman. It also has a Pastoral Institute called Lumko, mentioned in Section 5.2.6.⁹²

This research maintains that Stewardship should not be part of any one department. Putting it under a department would give the message that it is just another programme that will be reduced to a paragraph in the department's report to the Administrative Board. The proposal to the SACBC will be that a Stewardship National Office be based at Lumko. Its mission would include the following:

- 1) To facilitate the drafting of an SACBC comprehensive Pastoral Letter on Stewardship.
- 2) To promote the ongoing study of Stewardship and to disseminate information throughout the dioceses.
- 3) To maintain contact with the Stewardship movement internationally.
- 4) To liaise with the Stewardship coordinator in each diocese and with the SACBC Departments.
- 5) To organise the production of newsletters, pamphlets and programmes for use in dioceses and parishes.
- 6) To help organise Stewardship conferences and workshops throughout the SACBC.

⁹² At the time of writing, Lumko is officially "Parked" and acts solely as a Conference Centre.

It is recommended that the person appointed to head this office spend at least three months in a diocese where Stewardship has become a way of life.⁹³

7.4.3 Presentation to the Southern African Council of Priests (SACOP)

SACOP is a body that represents all the priests ministering in Southern Africa. It operates at diocesan, Ecclesiastical Province and SACBC level. It offers fraternal support to the priests and is an instrument of collaboration between the priests and the bishops in the mission of the Church. The priest is at the “coalface” of the pastoral life of the Church. If the local priest is not interested in Stewardship, then it will not happen in that parish. If the Southern African Council of Priests does not fully understand and enthusiastically support it, then its chances of success are greatly reduced. It is recommended that a comprehensive presentation on Stewardship be given at an Annual General Meeting of SACOP and at a SACOP meeting in each of the five Ecclesiastical Provinces.

7.5 Introduction at Diocesan Level

Section 7.1 speaks about the need for careful preparation, planning and patience. The process of conversion of heart and mind cannot be rushed or reduced to a few power point presentations.

Information on Stewardship as a way of becoming a community of missionary disciples should be disseminated and discussed through the structures that exist in every diocese: the body of Bishop’s Consultors, the Synod of Priests, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Diocesan SACOP. To ensure this happens and is ongoing, the diocese will appoint a Stewardship Coordinator who will work with a team of laity, priests and religious. This diocesan team will work in close collaboration with the SACBC Stewardship office. In particular it will be responsible for:

⁹³ A search will be conducted to find out if there is any diocese in Africa that has successfully introduced Stewardship. If no diocese is found, the diocese of Wichita, Kansas is suggested. History and culture may be different, but that will not prevent learning.

- 1) The study and dissemination of the bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship.
- 2) Working with parish coordinators in organising the conversion process of sections 7.2 and 7.3.
- 3) Organising annual reviews of Stewardship in the dioceses.

7.6 Introduction at Parish Level

7.6.1 Introduction

It is at the level of the parish that Stewardship will succeed or fail. The priests, religious and laity have to be prepared to make a journey together before Stewardship is formally launched in the parish. This journey may take up to three years. The stages of the journey are as follows:

- 1) General introduction on the concept of Stewardship to the Parish Pastoral Council. Appointment of interim coordinator and team.
- 2) The conversion of the Heart process through Alpha.
- 3) The conversion of the Mind through discussion groups at SCC level. If the parish does not have SCCs, it will be decided how the discussion can be done in geographical sub-divisions of the parish.
- 4) Group study of the SACBC Pastoral Letter on Stewardship.
- 5) Workshops on Time, Talent, Treasure and Testimony.
- 6) Formal launch of Stewardship.

7.6.2 A Parish Pastoral Plan

The SACBC has produced a new pastoral plan titled *Evangelising Community, Serving God, Humanity and all Creation*. It was approved at the SACBC Plenary in January 2020 (SACBC 2019). It has eight focal areas: Evangelisation; Laity Formation and Empowerment; Life and Ministry of Priests and Deacons; Marriage and Family; Youth; Justice, Peace and Reconciliation; Care of Creation and the Environment (:2)

The Plan stipulates that each diocese is required to draft its own plan in the light of the SACBC concept Plan.⁹⁴ This research maintains that each parish needs to work out its own Pastoral Plan. It needs to be dovetailed into both the Concept Plan of the SACBC and the diocesan Pastoral Plan. It is imperative that the whole parish be involved in its compilation. The King James Version of Proverbs 28:18 says that “If there is no vision, the people perish”. The New Jerusalem Bible says “If there is no vision, the people go their own way”. This research says that if a parish does not have a plan it will continue to do what it has always done and drift from one year to the next.

Drawing up and implementing a Parish Pastoral Plan is “a process of praying and thinking together about the actions of the Body of Christ in a specific time and place” (Pickett 2007:22). Because it is a process, it involves the whole community in a reflection on the mission of this particular parish, on a vision for the parish and a practical plan on how to make that vision a reality. Also, being a process, it involves periodic review and revision in the light of changing circumstances. Because the Church is a community of equals, each member of which is endowed with particular talents and insights, the Pastoral Plan should not be something handed down by the priest and a few helpers to a passive community.

In a Stewardship Parish, each element of the Pastoral Plan will be viewed through a Stewardship lens. Its compilation and implementation will be seen as a way of each person assuming Stewardship responsibility for the life of their local Church.

The Plan should cover all the areas and functions of parish life. These include the following: evangelisation; prayer and worship, the building up of the community, service within the Church community and service directed towards the poor and those without a voice; finance and maintenance of property.

⁹⁴ The 1989 Pastoral Plan, *Community Serving Humanity*, contained the same stipulation, but the records indicate that only one diocese complied.

7.6.3 Parish Discussion on the Introduction of Stewardship

In the spirit of communion, the decision on whether or not to adopt Stewardship needs to be a decision of the entire parish. Discussion will be done at SCC level, or in geographical units where SCCs do not exist. It will be conducted in two phases. The first will be based on the SACBC Pastoral Letter on Stewardship. The second will be a series of workshops on the following under the heading of Stewardship: the Church, prayer, faith, time, talent, treasure, and testimony. Preparation for each of these will consist of the following:

- 1) an article in the Parish Bulletin on the topic, or in a letter to all families where there is no bulletin,
- 2) a homily on the topic,
- 3) a talk by a lay member of the parish Stewardship committee which will include input on commitment forms (see Mallon 2016:180).⁹⁵

7.6.4 The Parish and Stewardship of the Church

The Church is mystery (see 4.4). Each baptised member is a steward of this mystery (see 6.3.6). The role of the Church is to teach, govern and sanctify (see 3.2.1) and every member is obliged to play an active part in each of these functions. No one is supposed to stand around passive and idle (see Matt.20:6).

Each baptised person shares in the priesthood of Christ. This priesthood gives them both the right and the grace to teach, govern and sanctify. Each function belongs to them by right and the priesthood that is theirs empowers them to perform these functions. Each is prophet and so is commissioned and empowered to witness to Christ by word and the example of a Christian life. Each is king/shepherd, and so is commissioned and empowered to care for the community. Each is priest, and therefore is an active participant in the public worship of the Church and empowered to make the whole of life a sacrificial

⁹⁵ I emphasise again what was said in Section 7.1, the need for careful preparation of the soil and for patience with gradual growth. If it is hurried, it will fail.

offering to God, and in this way sanctify the world through their very presence (see Rom.12:1). With the task given in baptism comes the power of the indwelling Spirit to fulfil that task.

Stewardship of the Church itself is expressed in planned giving of Time, Talent and Treasure. When introducing Stewardship in a parish, it must be emphasised that each of these is a practical way of living the priesthood conferred by baptism. Otherwise, they become isolated and lifeless programmes and lose their link to Stewardship as a way of living discipleship that is rooted in baptism.

7.6.5 The Parish and Stewards of the Faith

“Faith” has many meanings: a gift, a theological virtue given at baptism; belief in God as revealed in Scripture and in Christ, the perfect revelation of the Father (see Heb.1:2-3); trust in a provident God; commitment to God of the entire self, heart and mind, obedience to the Commandments and the two-fold law of love (see Lk.10:27; McBrien 1994:39-40).

Faith is personal but, like discipleship, it has a communal and ecclesial dimension. Each believer is linked to every other believer to form a community of faith (see LF 22). All are making the same pilgrim journey, supporting each other on the way. Consequently, each believer has Stewardship responsibility for their own faith and that of the faith community. That faith community and each of its members has been given a mission mandate to pass on the faith to the next generation and to those outside the household of the faith. The Church exists to make disciples (see Matt.28:19). As with the obligations of priesthood (see Section 7.6.4), so with the transmission of the faith: the Church and each of its members has the duty to transmit and they are given “power from on high” (Lk.24:49) through the Holy Spirit who abides in the Church and in each of its members to fulfil this duty (see John 14:16).

Faith is not static. It calls for continuing conversion and renewal. As with discipleship, this is a process that involves both heart and mind (see 7.2 & 7.3). The Holy Spirit speaks to the heart so that the disciple can “believe with the heart”

(Rom.10:18) and deepen his or her commitment to the Father and to Christ. The Spirit speaks to the mind so that understanding of the Scriptures and the truths of revelation is continually developing and deepening (see DV 5). If the conversion of mind and heart, the developing and deepening of faith is not to remain an aspiration, each member of a Stewardship parish is invited to make an annual commitment to it. Appendix 3 offers a way doing this.

7.6.6 The Parish and Commitment to Prayer⁹⁶

Paul advised the Ephesians to “pray at all times” (Eph.6:18), but as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us, if prayer is to animate every moment, we need to pray at specific times (see CCC 2697). These specific times make prayer part of the rhythm of each day, each week, each liturgical season.

Prayer can take many forms: vocal, bible-based meditation, *Lectio Divina*, mystical contemplation, centering prayer. It can be in the form of novenas or private devotions; it can be liturgical or para-liturgical. Whatever shape it takes, McBrien says all Christian prayer is “trinitarian, Christocentric, ecclesial, pneumatological and eschatological” (McBrien 1994:1067). Even when the disciple prays alone they are never totally alone. They are praying as members of the Body of Christ and are one with all members.

As with Faith, so with prayer: input on prayer needs to form part of the introduction to Stewardship and of the ongoing formation that Stewardship demands. People have a right to know the different form that prayer can take, to be taught how to pray as John and Jesus taught their disciples, and to be led into a deeper understanding and practice of prayer (see Lk.11:1-13).

Members will be asked to make a commitment to prayer so that it truly becomes part of the rhythm of their lives and so that their prayer becomes part of the prayer of the whole community. Appendix 4 gives a sample commitment form.

⁹⁶ This may be included under Stewardship of Time, but it is so essential to the life of a steward that it is considered here under its own heading.

7.6.7 The Parish and Stewardship of Time

First, a general remark on the three Ts of Time, Talent and Treasure. *Characteristics of a Stewardship Parish* published by the Diocese of Wichita of the United States (Diocese of Wichita 1997) says each of these, Time, Talent and Treasure, ought to have five qualities: it is planned and renewed on an annual basis; it is proportionate to what God has given; it is given as a free gift without expecting something in return; it is sacrificial and so has an impact on one's life; and it is given in gratitude to God for all God has done (see Diocese of Wichita 1997:13).

Section 6.5.4 speaks about *Kronis* and *Kairos* time as gifts that are to be accepted with gratitude and used responsibly. Chronological time is a "wasting asset": once it is gone it cannot be retrieved and the amount remaining is reduced. As part of the preparation for introducing Stewardship of Time, people will be helped to reflect on how much time they spend waking and sleeping, working and relaxing, praying and doing nothing.

Kemberling and Glodava suggest giving a tithe of all one's time directly to God and Church (2009:169). All that this research suggests is that account be taken of the five characteristics listed above, planned, proportionate, freely given, sacrificial and given in gratitude. To help make Stewardship of Time planned and proportionate, a sample commitment form is given in Appendix 5.

7.6.8 The Parish and Stewardship of Talent

Section 6.5.5 says that talents that are used reflect God's glory; talents that are buried do not (see Matt.25:14-30). Those who share their talents share not just their gifts but who they are.

To accept Stewardship as a way of life is to accept all God's gifts with gratitude and to use them for the honour of God and the good of the community. In this way they become "fellow-workers" with Christ (1 Cor.3:9).

In a 'passive' parish, everything is done by the priest and a few faithful helpers who are involved in everything. The first thing a parish needs to do is help people to recognise that they do have a variety of talents (see Clements 1997:55-56). The list given in Appendix 6 may help. The second step is to help people realise how the parish needs those talents. Thirdly the parish will provide whatever training is required, not as a once-off exercise but in an ongoing way.

Appendix 7 provides a sample commitment form for Time and Talent which parishes will adapt to their own circumstances (see Kemberling & Glodava 2009:114-116).

7.6.9 The Parish and Stewardship of Treasure

Section 5.7 discussed the dependency on foreign funds of the Catholic Church in South Africa and the passivity of the laity in relation to Church finances. While the situation is serious, Section 6.5.6 emphasised that Stewardship should not be reduced to being a smart way to raise funds. Stewardship of Treasure must be presented as a part of total Stewardship of all God's gifts that are accepted with gratitude and returned to the Lord with joy. Stewardship of Treasure emphasises the need to give more than giving to a need and the joy that giving generates in the individual and the community.

While the above is true, people need to know what they are giving to. Three things are essential:

- A Pastoral Plan for the Parish (see 7.6.2).
- A Parish Finance Committee and an Annual budget.
- An annual financial report.

The Parish Priest and the Finance Committee are the Stewards of the Parish Finances. Like all Stewards, they are expected to be responsible, accountable and trustworthy.

While the Catholic Church does not insist on tithing, it does accept it from those who wish to be Stewards in that way. Nevertheless, the ten percent can provide a useful benchmark. Charles Zech speaks of different ways of tithing, for

example 5% to the parish, 5% to other causes (see Zech 2008:81-82). As with time, all this research says is that the amount should be:

- proportionate to one's income,
- sacrificial in the sense that what is given is not what is left over after all other needs are met,
- be given as a free gift,
- given in gratitude for all that God has done.

Appendix 8 offers a sample commitment form that will be adapted to local conditions by the local Stewardship Committee.

7.6.10 The Parish and Testimony

Section 6.5.7 gives the reasons for adding Testimony to the traditional Time, Talent and Treasure. Without it, the Church and its members could appear inward-looking and self-serving. Pope Francis speaks of the temptation of Christians to “withdraw into themselves and into their closed groups” (Gregory 2019:24). He reminds all of the two dimensions of the Gospel: “to awaken faith and to transform the world” (:7). Neglecting the social dimension could amount to limiting the priesthood given in baptism to liturgical roles in the Church. Each one is Priest, Prophet and King in the home, the workplace, the recreation centre and it is in these locations that Christian laity transform their world. If this is not understood by the laity, the secular nature of their spirituality will remain neglected (see 4.10.3).

Areas to be covered in input sessions will include evangelisation, holiness in the home and the workplace; concern for justice and the poor; the environment; the disciple's prophetic role in politics, public service and social life.

While it is not easy to quantify Testimony in the same way as Time, Talent and Treasure, Appendix 9 may be used as a starting point.

7.7 Stewardship and a New Model of Clerical Leadership

7.7.1 Leadership as Influence

Writing in *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Role Model of All Times*, Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges speak of leadership as “a process of influence” (Quoted in Phelps 2009A:33). In this sense, all disciples are called to be leaders. Each person no matter what their position or status has influence on those around them. The follower of Christ is a light that shines for all to see (see Matt.5:16). Lay people living in the heart of the secular world act as a leaven in that world (see LG 31). In the Church, each disciple, simply by living as a disciple, encourages others to grow in discipleship. Disciples make disciples by living as disciples; Stewards make Stewards merely by living as Stewards. In this sense of leadership as influence, all are called to be leaders.

While the above is true, the Church as a community has leadership, clerical and lay. It is both a community of equals and hierarchical (see LG 18). If Stewardship is to flourish then bishops, priests and laity must be able to hold these two elements in equilibrium and dynamic tension. Clerical leadership does not have to lead to clericalism or domination or lay passivity.

7.7.2 Clerical Leadership in a Community of Disciples⁹⁷

As said in Section 7.7.1, Vatican II spoke of the Church as both a communion of equals and as hierarchical. It did not comment on the qualities of a hierarchical leader required by a Church that is a communion. That task was left to future ecclesiologists. Michael McCabe suggests we can find the beginning of an answer through reflection of three of Dulles’ models, namely, People of God, Body of Christ and Servant (2018:17).

First, the Church is the People of God (see Section 4.5). All are equal; all share equally in the priesthood of Christ; all are called to be holy and all are sent on mission.

⁹⁷ This is a major issue that calls for in-depth research. Here it can be addressed only in summary form.

Secondly, the Church is the Body of Christ (see Section 4.6). This speaks of unity and diversity, of a variety of organs that work in harmony for the good of the body. So it is with the Body of Christ.

Third, the Church is Servant. *Gaudium et Spes* says the Church is interested only in bearing witness to the truth of Christ, in serving all humanity (see GS 40). Jesus was a person for others. His Church exists for others, especially for the poor, the oppressed, those denied their right to a life that is truly human (see Lk. 4.16-21)

McCabe speaks about the kind of leader implied in these models, of ways in which the hierarchy can exercise their leadership that are compatible with the Vatican II image of Church, ways in which leaders can encourage and nurture the full participation of everybody. He speaks of the new model of leadership under five headings: leadership that is in the midst of community, that is shorn of its privileged status, that encourages diversity, that releases power in the community and that searches for answers together with people.

First, the new model of leadership is exercised in the heart of the community, not above it, not separated from it but organically and spiritually one with it. All form the same community of faith and discern together what is required at a particular time. McCabe spoke of the letter of St Cyprian which said Cyprian made no decision without getting the advice of his clergy and receiving the approval of the people (2018:22).

Secondly, McCabe says the new model is a leadership shorn of privileged status (2018:22). Pope John XXIII said the Church needed to get rid of the dust of the empire that began to gather after the conversion of Constantine and that accumulated throughout history as the Church took on the style and the titles of Feudalism of Feudal Lords and political systems (see Section 3.5 and McCabe 2018:22-23)). In Matt.23:8-11, Jesus said leadership is not about status but about humble service. This is not to deny different functions or the role of the clergy. It does say that leadership is for the people and not for the exaltation of the leader.

Thirdly, the new model of leadership encourages diversity and a recognition of the variety of gifts in a modern Catholic community. James and Evelyn Whitehead put it well: “The priestly leader was somehow expected to possess every ability of religious leadership – from preaching to financial management, from the care of souls to the development of social programmes ... (These) do not match the demands of the larger, more diverse and better educated parish of today” (1986:25). The clerical leader cherishes and promotes the diversity in the parish. His model is Jesus, meek and humble (see Matt.11:29).

Fourthly, the leadership that is emerging is one that releases power in the community (see McCabe 2018:25). In the old model all power was vested in the leader. A community model recognises that no one person has all the gifts and talents. Each member is encouraged to recognise their own gifts and make them available to the community. Even what may appear an insignificant talent is important (see Matt.26:24-25). When the energy of each one is released, a new energy is generated in the group that is greater than the sum of its combined talents (see 2018:26).

Fifthly, the new style of leadership is one that searches together with all members for answers to questions and formulates plans for the future. There is always a danger of bishops doing the thinking and planning for priests and priests doing it for the laity, and the old clericalism and passivity persists.⁹⁸

7.7.3 Formation of Lay Leaders

If laity are to live their mission as outlined in Chapter 4 of this research and if Stewardship is to be maintained, then ongoing education and formation is essential. This formation will cover the areas listed in PDV 43-59, namely human, theological, spiritual and pastoral. The education and formation in Stewardship will be planned on a yearly basis with scheduled input and discussion each month

⁹⁸ I use the term “emerging leadership” but it may already exist in many parishes. Yet, as Section 6.5.1 says, continuing conversion is needed. There is always a danger of an enthusiastic priest deciding that the fastest and most efficient way is for he himself to make the plan or find the funds or do the work. When this happens, the laity say, “Father will do it” and so become entrenched in their passive and comfortable role.

and regular and scheduled talks during Sunday Mass by lay leaders. The Portrait of a Steward of Section 6.6 and the following Portrait of a Stewardship Parish provide some guidance in the selection of topics.⁹⁹

7.8 Conclusion: Portrait of a Stewardship Parish

This Chapter has spoken about the conversion of mind and heart that has to precede the introduction of Stewardship. That conversion is both initial and ongoing. The Chapter has also spoken about what needs to be put in place at Conference and Diocesan levels if Stewardship is to flourish. While these provide inspiration, support and strength, it is at the level of the parish that people live their day-to-day lives. It is in the home, in the workplace, in the local parish that Stewardship becomes a way of life. When this happens the historical passivity of the laity will have been greatly diminished.

The Chapter concludes with a Portrait of a Stewardship Parish. The characteristics listed are the building blocks. They include structures such as a Liturgy Committee and a Parish Council that are part of the traditional parish. But the difference is crucial. Each member of every Small Christian Community, of the Parish Council, of every committee and sodality, has made a commitment to Stewardship as a way of life. Each reflects in some way the picture of a Steward presented in Section 6.6. This means, for example, that the Sunday School teacher will see his or her function as an exercise of Stewardship. The Stewardship Committee continually holds up before the community this Stewardship way of life. It does this throughout the entire year and through an annual re-commitment by everybody. A suggestion is given in Appendix 10 for topics to be covered throughout the year so that members will be reminded regularly about their commitment to Stewardship.

⁹⁹ Two training publications are recommended. The first is I by Fritz Lobinger (Lumko 1983). The other is *The Catholic Vision of Leading Like Jesus: Introducing S³ not clear Leadership Servant, Steward, Shepherd* by Owen Phelps, and its accompanying workbook (Phelps 2009A; Phelps 2009B).

The following are the characteristics, the building blocks of a Stewardship parish.¹⁰⁰

Eucharistic: The Eucharist is the great mystery of faith, the sign and the instrument of union with God and communion with each other and with all of creation (see Section 6.4.5). It both celebrates and leads to an ever-deepening union with God and with one another.

Prayerful: Prayer is woven into the fabric of the Stewardship parish (see Section 6.6). The parish is sustained by the sacraments, by private and community prayer, *Lectio Divina*, and shared prayer. The Stewardship parish prays together and introduces members into the different forms and traditions of Christian prayer.

A Clear Mission Statement: While every parish shares in the universal mission of the Church and everybody shares in the one priesthood, the mission statement of a Stewardship parish reflects the commitment to Stewardship as a way of life for each one and for the community. It also reflects the particular social, economic and pastoral characteristics that are unique to this parish.

A Pastoral Plan: Even if the SACBC and the diocese have published pastoral plans, the Stewardship parish crafts its own three-year plan that reflects its unique features and its stewardship status. Areas covered include the Word of God, Worship, Building Community, Service to the poor and those on the margins, and the physical and financial needs of the parish (see Pickett 2007:52-54). Because it affects everybody, because all are stewards of their parish, the crafting of the Pastoral Plan will involve everybody.

A Functioning Pastoral Council: As an expression of the community nature of the Church and as a conscious rejection of both clericalism and passivity, the community elects a Parish Pastoral Council according to regulations approved by the Diocese. All, including the priest and deacons, see themselves as stewards,

¹⁰⁰ This Section is indebted to *Characteristics of a Christian Steward* (Diocese of Wichita 1999); to *Stewardship: Joyful Receiving and Sharing* published by the Diocese of Boise (2017); *Characteristics of a Stewardship Parish*, published by the Diocese of Rapid City (2016) and *Parish Stewardship Guidelines* by the Diocese of Green Bay (sa).

servants and shepherds (see Phelps 2009A). Decisions are reached by way of consensus.

A Finance Committee: Canon 737 stipulates that each Parish has a finance committee. It assumes Stewardship responsibility for the Parish finances. As with all stewards, the Committee recognises that it is in a position of trust, like the steward in the household of ancient Greece (see Section 6.2.1). It is accountable to God, the owner of everything, and to the members they serve (see Section 6.3.3).

Produces an Annual Budget: The Stewardship parish assumes responsibility for the upkeep, maintenance and the works of the Parish. It produces an annual budget showing all foreseen expenditure and income. The Finance Committee and the Parish Priest and staff keep account records and provide periodic reports to the community.

Has a dedicated Stewardship Committee: Each member is committed to Stewardship as a way of life. Each models for the community the Stewardship of Time, Talent and Treasure. It works closely with the Parish Council.¹⁰¹ It is key to the success of Stewardship. It organises workshops and retreats to ensure that the conversion of mind and heart spoken of Sections 7.2 and 7.3 is ongoing. The committee, in collaboration with the Church Council, organises an annual programme of formation in Discipleship and Stewardship (see Appendix 11). It keeps in contact with the SACBC Stewardship Committee (see Section 7.4.2) and sources material from other dioceses and countries. It designs and facilitates an annual re-commitment to Stewardship of Time, Talent, Treasure and Testimony in the parish.

Lay Driven: While the role of the Parish Priest and his commitment to Stewardship is crucial, the main players are the laity. They are directly involved in the crafting of the Pastoral Plan and the Budget. They run the Stewardship Committee and

¹⁰¹ They are not directly linked to the Finance Committee because of the danger of equating Stewardship and fundraising.

selected members give personal witness regarding their own conversion and how Stewardship has changed their lives.

Generosity: The members of a Stewardship Parish give not just to meet a need but because they need to give in a spirit of gratitude. They give without counting the cost. Their giving of Time, Talent and Treasure is proportionate, sacrificial and joyful.

Hospitality: In a Stewardship Parish all feel welcome in their Father's home (see John 14:2). Each knows that they are accepted, that their presence is important, that they are important. Each believes that they have talents and gifts, and these are needed, appreciated and welcomed. In a welcoming parish, each is treated with kindness, feels loved and accepted, and never judged. The Stewardship Parish notices when someone is missing or sick or in any kind of trouble. No one experiences the Church as an unequal society (see Section 3.7.2.3). All experience the fellowship that marked the early Church (see Acts 2.42 and Section 3.3.1). in that atmosphere of love, acceptance and appreciation, neither clericalism nor lay passivity can survive.

CHAPTER EIGHT
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Introduction

Vatican II described the Church as the People of God (see LG Chapter II). All members of the People of God are equal (see LG 32) and all share in the one priesthood of Christ (see LG 10). All are called to be holy (see LG Chapter 4) and all are responsible for the mission of the Church (see LG 33).

While all the baptised share in Christ's priesthood, the Church has a hierarchical element, a ministerial priesthood that is essentially a priesthood of service (see LG Chapter III). The ordained priests remain members of the People of God and retain their baptismal priesthood. They lead like Jesus and serve as He served (see Mk.10:45).

Clericalism is an aberration of priesthood. It isolates the ordained from the rest of the People of God, assigns him a position of superiority and is based on the assumption that he is holier than the rest of God's holy people. The temptation to the cleric is to believe that this is true; the temptation to the lay person is to believe that they are not called to the same holiness as the priest and to leave the mission of the Church to the priest because that is why he was ordained. The temptation is to what this research calls passivity.

This research investigated the history of lay passivity and how passivity and clericalism are inter-related. It also examined the ecclesiology of Vatican II, the extent of which this ecclesiology was received theoretically and in practice in the Church of Southern Africa and how Stewardship offers a way of translating the ecclesiology of the Council into pastoral practice.

Section 1.4 presented the Central Research Question of this research and five sub-questions that flow from the basic key question as follows:

Key Research Question is:

How can the Catholic Laity of Southern Africa be enabled to change from being passive recipients of the ministry of the clergy to being active missionary disciples, thus translating the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II into authentic pastoral practice?

The sub-questions to the above are:

- 1) What are the historical roots of clericalism and lay passivity?
- 2) What does Vatican II reveal about the nature of the Church and the dignity and role of the laity?
- 3) Has the Vatican II model of Church been received theologically and in pastoral practice by the Church of Southern Africa?
- 4) What are the biblical and theological foundations of Stewardship?
- 5) How can Stewardship be an effective way of translating the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II into authentic pastoral practice in the SACBC Church?

I will now review the themes of each Chapter. Each one deals, in the main, with each of the five sub-questions.

8.2 Literature Review: Chapter Two

The research was literature based. Chapter Two reviewed the main works consulted under the following headings: Historical works; works on Stewardship; writings on Clericalism; the documents of Vatican II and related ecclesiological works; the reception of Vatican II communion ecclesiology; works on the nature of Stewardship, its introduction and maintenance.

Because the research was literature-based, the literature review was crucial. It was conducted around the key issues of the thesis, namely, the historical roots on lay passivity and clericalism, the ecclesiology of Vatican II and subsequent relevant Vatican documents, the reception of this ecclesiology by the Church in

Southern Africa, and Stewardship as a way of living the ecclesiology of the Council.

The review indicated that clericalism and lay passivity have been embedded in the Church throughout history, starting as early as the beginning of the second century. It also made clear that communion ecclesiology pervades all of the sixteen documents of the Council. Vatican II describes the Church as the People of God (see LG Chapter II) and therefore a post-Vatican II Church must be a People of God Church in which all are equal and all are active.

Documents in the SACBC archives indicate that many attempts were made by the Bishops' Conference to introduce the community model of Church and to receive the ecclesiology of the Council in theory and in pastoral practice. The findings of this research are that many initiatives were undertaken but did not bear much fruit because decisions made were not implemented or consultations begun were not completed.

Finally, the chapter reviewed the literature on Stewardship. While much is available on the practice of Stewardship, most of it from the United States, little is available on the link between the ecclesiology of Vatican II and the ecclesiology that would provide a solid theoretical foundation for Stewardship. The research is a contribution to the body of literature on Stewardship. Apart from some leaflets from the Archdiocese of Durban, I found nothing substantial on Stewardship in the Southern African context. The research is a contribution to filling this *lacuna*.

8.3 The History of Clericalism and Lay Passivity: Chapter Three

Chapter Three described the long and complicated history of the rise of clericalism and the increasing passivity of the laity (see sub-question 1).

The Church of the New Testament was an egalitarian community. All formed the *Laos Theou*, the People of God; all were God's chosen, a *Kleros* set apart for the worship of God (see Faivre 1990:7). The infant Church did have a

distinct leadership structure (see Section 3.3.2). By the end of the first century, *Laos* and *Kleros* had come to designate two distinct and unequal groups in the Christian community. The *Kleros* were associated with worship and the things of God; the *Laos* were involved in the world and its secular life. The former were considered more holy and were given special privileges; the latter were contaminated by 'the world' and therefore not even expected to be holy. Clericalism and lay passivity had entered the People of God.

Chapter Three analysed the historical factors and movements that facilitated the growth of clericalism and consequent lay passivity: dualistic heresies; monasticism; the conversion of Constantine and his empire; feudalism and the three-tiered division of all society; the Reformation and the Counter- Reformation.

It also examined more positive movements that point to a more active laity and a desire for a lay way to holiness: the *Vita Apostolica* and the Beguines; the influence of the Franciscans and Dominicans and their lay associates; the influence of Ignatius and his Spiritual exercises, originally designed for the laity; the growth of Catholic Social Teaching, starting with *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII in 1891. They included too the growth of the lay apostolate at the beginning of the 20th century, even if that apostolate was seen as a participation in the apostolate of the hierarchy.

The chapter spoke of the years preceding Vatican II that saw the liturgical renewal which encouraged active participation of the laity. It saw too a return to Biblical theology that spoke of the Church in terms of the People of God and the Body of Christ. Pius XII said we do not speak because so much of the role of the laity in the Church because they are the Church (see Section 3.7.2.5). The way for Vatican II had been made ready.

The purpose of this chapter was to trace the history of lay passivity and clericalism. It discovered that the roots are old and deep. It made clear that it is important to keep in mind the historical nature of the Church if we are to understand why some practices are introduced at a particular time or why some

element of ecclesiology gets particular emphasis at particular times. For example, the relationship of clergy to laity changed after the conversion of Constantine when privileges were conferred on the Church and the clergy were left free to do their priestly work. During the monastic period, the ideal Christian was the monk or nun and the laity came to appear as second-class Christians. The position of the laity was profoundly influenced by the pyramidal structure of feudal society. In the post-Reformation Church, the Catholic emphasis on hierarchy led to a neglect of the priesthood of all the baptised and the community nature of the Church. While history may be the “blood of the Church” (O’Meara 1999:82), we can also speak of the ‘curse of history’ and its legacy (see Section 1.8.1). A passive laity is part of that legacy. It is important to acknowledge the mistakes of history and be willing to reform (see Section 2.2.1). That reform must be ongoing.

8.4 The Communion Ecclesiology of Vatican II: Chapter Four

Chapter Four examined the nature of the Church and the position of the laity in the light of the documents of Vatican II (see sub-question 2).

Section 1.7 of Chapter One said that the theological framework of this thesis centres on three words: *Imago Dei*, *Koinonia* and *Oikinomina*. Because man and woman are made in God’s image, they are made for communion and are God’s stewards of God’s world.

The theology of Communion is basic to the theology of Vatican II. Chapter Four examined the concept of communion and the ecclesiology of the Council. Vatican II speaks of the Church as mystery and sacrament, a sign and instrument of union with God and communion with each other (see LG 1. It is the People of God, the *Laos Theou* (see LG Chapter II). It is God’s chosen people, God’s *Kleros*, elected by God to share in the priesthood of Christ (see LG 10). The Church is the Body of Christ (see LG 7). All members are equal (see LG 32); all are called to holiness (see LG 39 & 40)); all are responsible for the work of the Church (See LG 31). The Spirit lives in every member and in the entire Church (see LG 4).

Papal documents issued after Vatican II elaborated on the Council's teaching. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN) by Pope Paul VI said the Church exists to evangelise (EN 14) and the laity have a role in the world that only they can play (see EN 7 & 70). *Christifideles Laici* (CL) of Pope John Paul II speaks of the laity as "stewards of God's saving grace" (CL 45-56). No one is to stand around all day idle (see Mt.20:3-4; CL 3).

Yves Congar said that any theology of the laity must be an integral part of a "complete ecclesiology" (1957:xxxvii). Vatican II is the most up-to-date authoritative presentation of Catholic ecclesiology. The objective of Chapter Four was to examine the nature of the Church and the position of the laity as revealed in the Council documents. These documents speak of the Church as a community, the People of God. All members of that community are called to "full active and conscious participation" in the Church's liturgy (SC 14). The Council emphasises the equality of all members and reaffirms that all share in the one priesthood of Christ, that all are called to the same holiness, and that all are responsible for the mission of the Church. The conclusion is that there is no room in a community model of Church for a dominant clergy or a passive laity.

8.5 The Reception of Vatican II Communion Ecclesiology in the Life of the Church in Southern Africa: Chapter Five

Chapter Five examined the nature of reception and the degree to which the ecclesiology of Vatican II was received by the Church of Southern Africa (see sub-question 3).

The chapter begins with a discussion on the nature of reception. Because Vatican II was a Pastoral Council, reception in Southern Africa was assessed by way of an examination of the 1989 Pastoral Plan and a series of pastoral consultations with the laity of South Africa, Botswana and Swaziland.

The 1989 Pastoral Plan is a good example of reception, at least in theory. It is called *Community Serving Humanity* and rests on the two pillars of Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*. This vision of Church was to become a

reality by way of a Diocesan Pastoral Plan in each diocese and through Small Christian Communities (SCCs) at parish level. The chapter examined what became of the Plan. A 2010 survey revealed that 43% of Catholics had never even heard of it (see Section 5.6.2).

Based on the belief that the Holy Spirit dwells in each member and in the whole Church, and in the spirit of a community model of Church in which each one has a voice, the SACBC engaged in a series of consultations with the laity. Apart from that leading up to the 1989 Pastoral Plan, the following were examined and assessed in Chapter Five:

- Evangelisation Today in South Africa (ETSA) held between 1974 and 1976. Nothing happened after the submission of the report in 1976.
- A meeting between bishops and laity in 1975. Decisions were arrived at but there is no record of what happened to them.
- A consultation at Hammanskraal in 1980. Decisions and Resolutions were passed on to Departments of the SACBC. Again, there is no record of what became of them.
- Four Forums, joint meeting between bishops and laity, held between 2000 and 2009. At the end people spoke of “consultation fatigue” (see Section 5.4.5.2).
- A three-phase consultation on a self-supporting Church between 2007 and 2009. The third phase did not take place.
- A three-phase inter-diocesan consultation from 2007 and 2009 that was intended to culminate in a plenary meeting that would produce a new Pastoral Plan. The third phase did not happen.

The chapter, dealing with the reception of Vatican II in and by the local Church, ended with the findings of a doctoral research in the diocese of Port Elizabeth. 70% of respondents were not aware of the People of God model of Church and 75% had only a vague idea of what Vatican II was about (see Section 5.8).

The conclusion of this thesis is that the reception of Vatican II has scarcely begun in Southern Africa. Stewardship is offered as a way of achieving it.

There were positives and negatives in the reception of the Council in Southern Africa. The positives include the 1989 Pastoral Plan, *Community Serving Humanity*, resting as it did on the pillars of the Council, *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*. They also include the many consultations with the laity, a recognition of their being the Church and a willingness to listen and to plan together. However, there are weaknesses. These include the failure of dioceses to develop diocesan pastoral plans based on that of the Conference. A second is the failure to do the three-yearly reviews envisaged by the national pastoral plan. A third is the absence of a system of checking up on what happens to Plenary resolutions and what is done at diocesan level about decisions taken at Conference level. The fourth, and very serious negative, is the failure to complete phased consultations, for example, that on a self-sustaining Church as described in 5.5.8. As Archbishop Naidoo said in 1976, "If we don't plan people get disillusioned" (see Section 8.7). The delegates at the 2009 forum spoke about "consultation fatigue" (see Section 5.6.4).

8.6 Stewardship as a way of Living the Communion Ecclesiology of Vatican II: Chapter Six

This chapter focussed on Stewardship as the most appropriated strategy to invigorate the laity and minimise clericalism (see sub-question 4).

In Greek society the Steward had full responsibility for the *Oikos*, the household. The Greek word *Oikinomina* found its way into the Semitic languages and the idea of Stewardship was applied to God, the maker of all things and the Steward of all creation and all time. Because Adam and Eve were made in God's image, they shared in the Divine Stewardship.

The word *Oikinomina* was also used by the Greeks to mean the ordered arrangement of things and events, so the word came to stand for God's unfolding plan for the salvation of the world, and so we speak of the economy of salvation. That economy unfolded through the People of God in the Old Testament, reached its fulfilment in Jesus and continues in the Church. The Church is the mystery or sacrament of the saving work of Christ continuing in space and time (see

Section 6.3.6). Each member of the Church is a steward of that mystery (see Section 6.5.7).

The modern Stewardship movement started in the Protestant Churches of the United States. It was taken up by the Catholic Church and spread from the United States to Canada and to many countries around the world. It is generally spoken of in terms of Time, Talent and Treasure, to which this thesis adds Testimony to care for the secular character of lay spirituality.

Chapter 6 spoke of the scriptural basis for Stewardship: the creation story and humankind made in the image of God and therefore made for communion with God, one another and all creation; the economy of salvation and the gradual revelation of God and God's plan of salvation; Old Testament tithing as a way of recognising God's ownership of all things and humankind's duty of care and gratitude; the teaching of Jesus on stewards and stewardship; the teaching of Paul on stewardship of the mysteries.

According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Stewardship is based on discipleship: once one becomes a disciple, "Stewardship is not an option" (USCCB 2002A:1). A disciple is a member of a community of disciples and according to the International Theological Commission, Communion ecclesiology provides the theological foundation for Stewardship (see ITC 2004:1/23).

The conclusion of this thesis is that if the theology of Communion is basic to both the ecclesiology of Vatican II and to Stewardship, then Stewardship is a valid way of translating Vatican II into pastoral practice. It is a valid way of receiving the Council, in theory and in practice.

If it is to succeed in this, it has to be seen as a way of life, a spirituality that involves responsibility for the mystery that is the Church, and a spirituality that each member takes with them into the heart of the home and into the heart of the secular world of which they are part. Chapter Six ends with a "portrait" of a Christian Steward. It is offered as an instrument for personal reflection on the

quality of one's life as a steward.

Chapter Six aimed at establishing the biblical and theological foundations of Stewardship. Without a clear understanding of what Stewardship is and how it is based on scripture and the communion ecclesiology of the Council, Stewardship will be merely another programme to involve the laity rather than a way of living discipleship.

Chapter Six presented Stewardship as a way of translating the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II into "authentic pastoral practice" (CL 2). It traced the origin of Stewardship back to the creation of man and woman in the image of God. Because they are the image of the Triune God, they are made for communion with God, with each other and with all creation. That three-fold communion was damaged by sin and restored by Christ. He left us the Church, itself a communion of disciples, as the sacrament of His presence and saving work in the world.

Just as communion is rooted in the creation of humankind in the image of God, so too is Stewardship. Because they were made in God's image, Adam and Eve shared in God's stewardship. Jesus, the perfect image of God, is Himself the perfect steward, always doing the will of the Father, watching over those entrusted to His care and faithful to the mission given to Him by the Father (see Section 6.3.5.1). The Church is "mystery", the "sacrament" of Christ's continuing saving presence (see LG 1 and Section 6.3.5.1). All are stewards of that mystery (see 1 Cor.4:1). Each one has a role to play in the restoration of all things in Christ, of rebuilding the three-fold relationship with God, with one another and with all of creation.

The modern Stewardship movement is a practical way of building and living community. Through the use of the gifts of Time, Talent and Treasure, each disciple commits himself or herself to building up the Church of Christ and to bringing the saving presence of Christ into the secular world. All are called to the same holiness, but the call of the laity has a special secular character. Each person who commits to Stewardship as a way of life makes a conscious

commitment to taking the values of Christ and His gospel into every aspect of life. Stewardship, therefore, is not just a way of getting people involved in the apostolate of the hierarchy. Neither is it a way of increasing the income of the Church. It is a way of living as the image of God and of being a disciple of Christ. It is a way of living communion. It is a way of being Church, itself a community of missionary disciples. In other words, it is a way of living the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II. This will work only if the clergy and religious are themselves committed to a life of Stewardship.

8.7 Pastoral Suggestions for the Introduction of Stewardship into the Church of Southern Africa: Chapter Seven

Chapter Seven charts the way forward for the Church in Southern Africa (see sub-question 5).

One of the reasons for the ineffectiveness of the various consultations reviewed in Chapter Five is the absence of practical planning and of regular review (see Section 5.9.2). Chapter Seven of this thesis offers a practical suggestion on the introduction of Stewardship at SACBC, Diocesan and particularly at Parish level.

Another lesson we have learned from the past is that discussion, consultation, workshops and circulars are not enough. Knowledge of the commandments does not guarantee obedience. Knowledge of the theology of the Eucharist does not fill churches. What this thesis calls a “conversion of the heart” is a *sine qua non* (see Section 7.2).

The other element that is essential if Stewardship is to succeed is organisation at SACBC, Diocesan and Parish level. Chapter Seven proposed the following:

- an SACBC Stewardship Organiser and office,
- a Diocesan Stewardship committee,
- a parish Pastoral Plan, Annual Budget and Stewardship committee,
- a renewal, conversion experience that will, by God’s grace, involve an encounter with Christ and a commitment to intentional discipleship,

- a number of sessions on the nature of the Church as the People of God and the consequent responsibilities of all members,
- a commitment by each person to Stewardship of time, talent, treasure and testimony that is renewed annually, using adapted versions of the forms given in the Appendices,
- regular input at parish level, aided by the national diocesan offices, on various aspects of Stewardship in theory and in practice.

The chapter concluded with a Portrait of a Stewardship Parish which will help with a periodic self-examination by the parish and its leadership.

Chapter Seven aimed at avoiding what I consider to be the mistakes of the past: the failure to complete consultations, the failure to make plans that are practical and implementable at national, diocesan and parish level, and the failure to hold regular reviews to determine what is working and what calls for a different approach. If practical plans are not made, people get disillusioned. The ongoing and regular planning, renewing and recommitment suggested in this chapter and in the appendices involve not just a few generous souls or a small group of elected leaders, but every member of the parish. Nobody is left standing around idle.

8.8 Conclusions

In an article in the 22 April 2020 edition of *La Croix International*, an Australian writer, Justin Stanwix, spoke about the need to reimagine the Church in the post-Covid-19 world. That reimagining was already needed; Covid-19 simply added urgency. This research has been part of that process. I argue that the reimagining needs to focus, not so much on the theory and the ecclesiology, but on what shape the Church must take if it is to reflect and live communion ecclesiology in the realities of parish life. If it does not take flesh at that local level, the theory will remain theory, ecclesiology will remain with the theologians and Vatican II will be studied merely as an event of history.

As said in Section 1.7.4, Vatican II offers the most recent and authoritative self-awareness of the Church, of what it is and what is its mission in the modern world. The Church of Vatican II is a community of disciples, the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit. Established by Christ, it is the sacrament, the sign and the instrument of His continuing saving work in an ever-changing world. It is a community of believers in which all are equal and in which each shares in the priesthood of Christ. Each baptised person is priest, prophet and king. All are called to be holy, but each walks along a way that is unique and personal. The way of the lay person has what the Council calls a uniquely secular character. It is nourished by the liturgy in which each is called to participate in a complete, conscious and active way (see SC 14). It is lived in the secular world in the individual circumstances of daily life.

All are called to discipleship and all are sent as Jesus was sent. The lay person in particular is in a unique position of taking the gospel and its values into the secular world. Each one as a member of the Church, becomes, like the Church itself, a sign and an instrument of the saving presence of Christ in the streets of the world.

This research has demonstrated that the Vatican II vision of the Church has not taken flesh in the pastoral life of the Church in Southern Africa. Stanwix maintains that the same is true of Australia, that there has been a lot of commentary on the Council but little application in real life (2020:2). It would appear that the problem of reception is not confined to Southern Africa.

The reimagining that is required is a reimagining of what a diocese and a parish that have accepted the ecclesiology of the Council would look like. Also required is a reimagining of what an individual missionary disciple who truly lives his or her baptismal priesthood, both in the worshipping community and in the realities of daily life, would look like. For this reimagining to happen, a two-fold conversion of all members, clerical and lay, is required. One is the conversion of the mind which will lead to an informed and conscious acceptance of the Vatican II community model of Church. The other is a conversion of the heart which will result in the living of that model in the realities of the local parish and the realities

of work and home (see Sections 7.2 and 7.3).

As already said, this research has been an exercise of this reimagining. It proposes Stewardship as the way to live discipleship. It is a way of involving every person and the whole of life in the task of living as a disciple and of being missionary through the use of Time, Treasure and Talent. It is a way of life that encompasses the whole of life, and not just an hour or two in the church on a Sunday morning. I suggest that the portrait of a steward and of a parish given in Sections 6.6 and 7.8 offer a portrait of what an individual disciple and a parish would look like in a reimagined Church.

8.9 Finally, there may be Objections

While the material of this research comes from an objective study of relevant Church documents and literature, there may be objections to some of the affirmations made and the conclusions reached. The following are some of the objections I foresee.

The first centres on power. Clericalism is an abuse of power. Priests will say, “But I do not have power. I do the bidding of the bishops and I am always at the disposal of the parishioners”. As said in Section 3.1.1, all society has its clerical groups, its guilds. Each has its own culture. By the very fact of belonging, one shares in its culture and enjoys its privileges. They are given a status in society just because they belong to the clerical group. Because they are a member of a world-wide body of priests, priests share in its iconic status.¹⁰² Power comes with membership.

Priests are seen as the representatives of God, “mediators” with God, and this confers a special brand of spiritual power. The power itself is not being questioned here but its abuse.¹⁰³ By virtue of his ordination and appointment to

¹⁰² They also share in the guilt when any cleric anywhere misbehaves or commits a crime.

¹⁰³ Pope Francis explicitly linked clerical child sexual abuse to clericalism, essentially an abuse of power (see Section 3.1.2).

a parish, each priest has power in the local community. If he leads like Jesus led, the parish – and Stewardship – will flourish.

The second objection may say that “all the talk about clericalism does not affect me. I just serve as best I can, and I never do anything major without consulting the Parish Council”. This may be true of most priests, but it is also true that if clericalism exists as a culture in the Church, it affects everybody. The individual priest cannot but be affected by it. Secondly, each of us priests has to admit to having elements of the clericalist mentality and way of dealing with people. It may manifest itself in the domineering way in which a bishop relates to his priests or a priest relates to the members of his parish. Also, as said in Section 5.2.4, clericalism may also manifest itself in paternalism (something often associated with missionaries who appear to have a limitless supply of money). This paternalism results in dependency among the laity with the result that many rural parishes cannot survive without a monthly grant from the diocese. The diocese itself cannot survive because it is not supported by the parishes. This paternalism and dependency are not compatible with Stewardship as described in Chapter Six of this thesis.

A third objection may be linked to the meaning applied to passive and passivity. A priest may say that the laity in the parish are very active and very involved. While it is good to be able to say this, there is always a danger that we can be deceived by a certain kind of activity and by the actual number involved. Phase One of the 2010-2012 Pastoral Consultation revealed that the vast majority of those who were seen as active were “involved in internal Church ministry and ritual” (see Section 5.6.2). Evangelisation and social justice work were neglected. The SCCs, which are intended to make the Church a reality and active beyond the Church building and, in each neighbourhood, had almost disappeared (see 5.6.2).

Passivity manifests itself in different ways, even in “active” parishes: difficulty in finding catechists for Sunday School; SCC Bible Sharing groups reduced to a few older women; young people not attending Church after Confirmation; “active” members seeking liturgical roles only and becoming clericalised laity, social

justice issues being neglected; congregations being made up mainly of women; a congregation that is not self-supporting but depends on monthly grants from the bishop as the bishop depends on yearly grants from Rome. A small number of active members doing everything may give the impression of a vibrant parish. The Stewardship commitment described in Chapter Six is expected of all members. No one is to stand around idle all day (see Matt.20:6).

A fourth objection may refer to the apparent failure of other SACBC pastoral initiatives. It may be asked, what is the difference between this and the other initiatives described in Chapter Five? The response says there are valid reasons why Stewardship will be accepted and will succeed:

- It is based on what Congar called “a total ecclesiology” (1957:xxvii), on the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II, and not merely on what is normally called “the role of the laity”, a phrase which may imply that the laity have some kind of supportive role for the clergy.
- An SACBC office and a Diocesan Stewardship coordinator will be resources at the service of the diocese and parish respectively.
- Stewardship dovetails with the new Pastoral Plan with its emphasis on the involvement and the formation of the laity.
- The main focus is on what happens in the parish and not the SACBC Secretariat or the diocesan chancery.
- It acknowledges the supreme importance of conversion of the heart, a new commitment to Christ and His Church, a conversion that must be ongoing and without which the message of Stewardship will fall on barren soil.
- It asks for the commitment of every member of the parish, a commitment that covers all the areas mentioned in Chapters Six and Seven. It is not limited to a few generous volunteers.
- It provides simple commitment forms that can be adapted by the diocese or parish.
- Commitment is renewed every year.
- It calls for input throughout the year on various aspects of Stewardship so that enthusiasm will be maintained.

The final word of this thesis is addressed to the clergy, bishops, priests (including myself) and deacons. First, Stewardship demands of us the same conversion of heart and mind as it does of the laity. Secondly, it demands that the clergy be good stewards of all God's gifts, including the gift of the Church and the gift of ordination. The United States bishops described a steward as one who lives in gratitude for all God's gifts, who cherishes and nourishes these gifts and returns them with increase to God (see USCCB 2002A:9). Each member of the clergy lives a life of gratitude, for the Church and for the people entrusted to his pastoral care. Each cherishes the gift of priesthood, the priesthood of all the baptised and his own priesthood of service. All is returned to the Lord in gratitude as he does all he can to enable each disciple to be good stewards of their own priesthood as they gather for the Eucharist and as they sanctify the world by their very presence and the quality of their own lives. In this way, the clergy themselves are stewards and they model Stewardship for the flock entrusted to them.

It is Jesus who will have the final word: "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matt.25:23).

8.10 Postscript: Stewardship in a Post COVID-19 Church

The early chapters of this thesis were written during the Covid-19 Lockdown. At that time it was being said that the world would never be the same again. The pandemic raised fundamental questions about the providential care of a loving God, about the unity and inter-dependence of the human community, and about our duty to care for a fragile world. Stewardship as a way of life offers a response.

In the light of the above, I applaud the initiative of the Practical Theology Programme of the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, inviting the students to start research on the response of the Church to the pandemic. In his circular dated 15 April 2020, Professor Herbert Moyo offered a list of questions that need to be answered if the Church is to respond adequately to the present crisis and its aftermath. The list includes questions on the role of the Church and the challenges facing it at this time; the

best practices introduced during lockdown; what scripture has to say about the pandemic and what the Church has to say about healing. Other questions ask about what it means to be a pastor at this time of crisis and uncertainty; how to ensure that members are not left alone in their suffering and bereaving families left alone in their sorrow; what are the effects of the closure of churches when people needed them most (see Moyo circular dated 15 April, 2020).

One of the questions proposed by Moyo is about the use of the Bible by the Church as it responds to COVID-19. In the 29 March 2020 edition of Time Magazine, the Anglican biblical scholar and retired bishop of Durham in England, Nicholas Thomas Wright, proposed a re-discovery of the biblical concept of *Lament*. Wright says that lament happens when questions are asked of God and there are no answers. He gives examples: “Why do You hide Yourself in time of distress?” (Ps 10.9); “How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?” (Ps. 13.1); “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Ps. 22.1). Wright says that it is not only the psalmist who is lamenting but God Himself. God laments over an unfaithful people and the Spirit of God “continues to groan within the pain of creation” (:3). As the Spirit within us groans and laments, we recognise a caring God in “the tears of Jesus and the anguish of the Spirit” (:3). As we lament in this way we become “small shrines where the presence and healing love of God can dwell” (:3). This biblical way brings consolation in time of upheaval and gives assurance that God is present in our anguish and in the groaning of the world, even if we do not understand what is happening or why (see Rom. 8.19).

On 20th March 2020, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences published a statement titled, *Responding to the Pandemic: Lessons for Future Actions and Changing Priorities*, signed by the President, Joachim von Braun and all the members (von Braun 2020). While world leaders may say, ‘we are all in this together’, von Braun laments “the selfishness of uncoordinated national responses” (3.2) and the danger of the unattended threat to migrants and refugees (3.4). While there is much talk about the inter-connectedness of peoples (and the spread of the virus demonstrates this in a dramatic way), van Braun speaks of people retreating into isolation (4.1). The Pontifical Academy document warns that the post COVID-

19 world cannot return to 'business as usual' (4.1)¹⁰⁴. Von Braun points out that the pandemic is a global problem and calls for a global response (4.4 and see LS 169). The statement asserts that "If we want to survive, we will need a society that is more responsible, more prepared to share, more caring, just and equal" (4.4). This research says that these are values that are basic to Stewardship, resting as it does on the conviction that every man and woman is made in the image of God, that all are made for communion with God, with each other and with all of creation, that all share in God's own stewardship of all things, that we were never intended to subdue the earth but to steward it with humility and love (see LG 1).

I have spoken in Section 8.7 of an article by Justin Stanwix from Wollongong in Australia titled *The People of God in a Post-CORONA-19 Church* published in the 22 April edition of *La Croix International*. Stanwix says the pandemic is a providential wake-up call to the Church and presents a unique opportunity to reach out to people in a new way of communion and solidarity. He says that the Church has failed to "incorporate the vision of Lumen Gentium into its pastoral practice, its governance and its structures (see 2020: 2).¹⁰⁵ He suggests that the way forward for the post-COVID-19 Church lies in the re-imagining and deepening of the communion that has its source in the community of the triune God. This calls for dynamic leadership that will lead the People of God into deeper communion and a new way of being Church (see :2).

Russell Pollitt, director of the Jesuit Institute in Johannesburg, says that the pandemic should teach us that we should never have tried to subdue creation (see Section 6.3.2)) and that COVID-19 demonstrates with frightening clarity that we are not in control (see Pollitt 2020). This study says that the way forward is the way of servant stewardship, not the way of arrogant dominance and control.

Another local voice is that of Günther Simmermacher, editor of *The Southern Cross*, Southern Africa's Catholic paper. He speaks of the callousness of leaders

¹⁰⁴ And neither can the Church.

¹⁰⁵ It is the contention of this research that the failure mentioned by Stanwix, the failure to translate the ecclesiology of Vatican II into pastoral practice, has facilitated the continuance of clericalism and lay passivity. See Section 4.11)

who appear to be making a choice of letting people die over allowing the economy to flounder (see 2020:6). While admitting that the expression, 'a new normal' is fast becoming a cliché, he gives it a new meaning: in the post- COVID-19 society: the 'new normal' must mean that the weakest and the poorest are the new priority. It is the hope of this research that the 'new normal' for the Church in Southern Africa will be that each member of the People of God assumes stewardship responsibility for all the blessings they have received and the priesthood that is theirs, responsibility for the world of which they are part, for the Church to which they belong, for the mysteries entrusted to them. That is the 'new normal' envisaged by the research.

At a Press Conference held at the Vatican on 16th May 2020, Cardinal Peter Turkson, Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Development, spoke about how Covid-19 is not just an isolated health issue but has affected the whole of society, including economics, employment, governance and politics. Turkson said that it has validated the teaching of Pope Francis on the inter- connectedness of everything (see LS 70, LS 138 & LS 240). All people and the whole environment are intrinsically linked.

While Covid-19 does not provide a foundation for Stewardship, it does point to the relationship with God, each other and all creation that flows from our being made in God's image. It adds a new urgency to take Stewardship responsibility for the Church of Christ, for each other and for the world in which we live and to which we owe a living.

A final voice I add to this insert is that of Joseph Kizito, ordained bishop of Aliwal, South Africa, three weeks before the pandemic-related shutdown. In a 2020 article in *Priests on Mission, Vol.8*, he speaks of the efforts made by him and the priests of Aliwal to help parishioners make their families what they are supposed to be, the Domestic Church. He spoke about lessons that must be learned from the pandemic and especially the need to pay more attention to the teaching on the priesthood of all the baptised, the evangelisation of families, the secular nature of lay spirituality, the nature of the Church as the People of God and the co-responsibility of all its members. His final appeal is that "We should not lose

the grace of this time". Bishop Kizito is, in effect, calling for the same reimagining of the Church in South Africa as was advocated by Justin Stanwix for Australia, a reimagining that does not so much seek to develop a new ecclesiology but to promote a Church that lives the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II through the practice of Stewardship as a way of life.

APPENDIX 1

Topics covered in a Ten-Week Alpha Course

- Week 1: Who is Jesus?
- Week 2: Why did Jesus die?
- Week 3: How can we have faith?
- Week 4: Why and How do I read the Bible?
- Week 5: Why and How Should I Pray?
- Week 6: How does God Guide Us?

Alpha Weekend: The Holy Spirit (3 talks); How can I make the most of the rest of my life?

- Week 7: How can I resist evil?
- Week 8: Why and How should I tell others?
- Week 9: Does God heal today?
- Week 10: What about the Church?

Alpha Celebration Supper Party: Christianity boring, untrue and irrelevant?

Source: Alpha: God Changing Lives
Alpha Head Office
Holy Trinity Brompton,
Brompton Road,
London.

Alpha South Africa: www.southafrica.alpha.org

Talks on all of the above units are available online.
They are also available in DVD Format.

APPENDIX 2
TOPICS FOR WORKSHOPS ON THE CHURCH AS A COMMUNITY OF
MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

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1. God is a Community of Relationships

- The Holy Trinity
- All Creation a Reflection of God. God as Steward
- The Human Family is the Image of God
- Man and Woman are stewards.
- The People of God in the Old Testament

2. The Church is a Community

- The Community around Jesus
- The Community in Acts
- Baptism and Discipleship
- Life of a Disciple
- Mission of a Disciple
- A Disciple as Steward

3. Priesthood

- The Priesthood of Christ
- The Priesthood of all the Baptised
- The Priesthood of the Ordained

4. The Call to be Holy

- What it means to be holy
- A life of Prayer
- In the praying community
- In the home and the workplace

¹⁰⁶ Phase II of the Inter-Diocesan Consultation produced a discussion booklet on the nature of the Church (SACBC 2011A). I recommend that a similar booklet be made available for these discussions on the Nature of the Church as a Community of Missionary Disciples. The Theme Paper for *Community Serving Humanity* (SACBC 1987A) and the Pastoral Plan, *Community Serving Humanity* (SACBC 1989) have useful sections on the ecclesiology of communion.

5. The Church is Missionary

- Sent as Jesus was sent, as the Apostles were sent
- The Church exists to evangelise
- Evangelisation in the local context

6. The Role of the Laity

- In the Church
- In the Family
- In Society

APPENDIX 3
STEWARDSHIP OF THE FAITH

Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that your divine Son became man and died for our sins and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches because you have revealed them who are eternal truth and wisdom, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. In this faith I intend to live and die. Amen. (Kenyan Episcopal Conference 2008:340)

Hebrews says, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb.11:1). It is God's gift. As Stewards, we accept it with gratitude, care for it responsibly and share it with others. Through Stewardship, Faith becomes a way of life.

Commitment

- Read Bible passages assigned to each day
- Attend workshops arranged by the parish or the diocese
- Join a Church Sodality/Society
- Attend SCC weekly meetings
- Attend retreats organised by the parish
- Purchase the Southern Cross
- Share the Faith with a friend
- Be a Sunday School teacher
- Offer each day to God and promise that my faith will be reflected in what I do
- Purchase a Catholic Catechism
- Check daily on the Zenit website ([HTTPS://Zenit.org](https://zenit.org))

APPENDIX 4

STEWARDSHIP OF PRAYER

Jesus began His mission with forty days of prayer and fasting (see Lk.4:1-13). He often went away to a quiet place to pray (see Lk.5:16). He told His disciples to pray at all times (see Lk.18:1). Because all the baptised share in the priesthood of Christ, everything we do can be a prayerful sacrifice to God (see Col.3:17).

Commitment

Private Prayer

- Morning Prayer
- Night Prayer
- Rosary ____ times per week
- Prayer before meals
- Prayer of the Church
- Private visits to the Church
- Daily Scripture reading
- Prayer before and during a journey
- Novenas as proposed by the parish
- Others _____

Public Prayer

- Mass each Sunday
- Mass ____ times during the week
- Benediction when available
- Retreats when available
- Prayer with the family
- Charismatic Prayer Group
- Bible Sharing in the SCC
- Sacrament of Reconciliation every _____

APPENDIX 5
STEWARDSHIP OF TIME

Time is precious and it is limited. Its use needs to be planned and proportionate. The following questions may help:

1. What proportion of my time is spent in the following activities: Sleeping? Watching TV? Working? On the Internet? Praying?
2. How much time do I spend with my family each day?
3. How do I spend my time at my official employment?
4. How much time do I give to prayer?

Commitment¹⁰⁷

- I commit to Sunday Mass each week
- I commit to Mass _____ times per week
- I commit to time with my family each day
- I commit to working honestly during the time for which I am paid
- I commit to the following time for prayer each day _____
- I commit to the following ways of helping others _____

- Other _____

¹⁰⁷ Note that this commitment of Time overlaps with the commitment of Talent and Prayer. Each diocese or parish will design its own. This is given as a sample.

APPENDIX 6

TALENT

Each one is made in the image of God. Each talent, each gift, reflects something of God. Recognising and acknowledging these gifts gives glory to God, the one who gave them. The following list is far from exhaustive. Circle the ones you acknowledge in yourself and add others that are not listed.

singing typing/Computer work gardening

accounting/budgeting painting decorating

teaching communicating cooking

organising working with youth ushering

reading serving at the altar welcoming people

playing a musical instrument working on justice issues

teaching adults teaching young children work with schools

speaking on careers organising prayer groups planning events

providing transportation on Sunday visiting the sick

comforting the bereaved editing a parish bulletin

assisting the handicapped

relief for the poor

visiting the lapsed

organising youth camps

websites

others: _____

APPENDIX 7
TIME AND TALENT

Stewards live lives of gratitude for all of God's gifts. They use these gifts for the glory of God and the good of God's people both in the Church and in the whole of life. As the talents are used, they grow and develop and in this way God is glorified. As we share our talents we share who we are in a spirit of communion with God and with each other. We become co-workers with Christ in the work of redemption (see 1 Cor.3:9). The use of talent includes the generous use of the gift of time. The following is a conscious, intentional commitment of time and talent.

Commitment

1. Faith Formation

- Sunday School teacher
- Sunday School helper
- Teenage Formation
- Adult Catechumenate
- Youth Leadership
- Adult ongoing faith formation
- Flowers/decoration

3. Administration

- Budgeting & Finance
- Parish Bulletin
- Office work
- Fundraising
- Budgeting & Finance
- Parish Bulletin

2. Liturgical

- Proclaiming the Word
- Leading Sunday Service
- Altar Server
- Choir
- Liturgy Committee
- Sacristan
- Musical instrument
- Usher
- Hospitality

- Office work
- Fundraising

4. Social

- Parish functions
- Work with the poor
- Social issues
- Care for the environment
- Legal professional help
- Medical

6. Pastoral

- Ministry to the sick and homebound
- Ministry to the bereaved
- Ministry to families
- Home visitation

8. Other

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

5. Communication

- Parish website
- IT advice and help
- News Bulletin
- Art/Graphic Design
- Photography

7. Maintenance

- Building maintenance
- Church grounds
- Carpentry
- Water
- Electricity
- Sewing
- Painting

APPENDIX 8

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

God blessed Adam and Eve with a beautiful garden that had all kinds of fruits. Our First Parents, made in God's image, were made stewards of the earth and told to look after it. God continues to bless us with this earth and its fruits. The money we earn, the property we own, is the fruit of God's providence and our labour. We use it for our own sustenance and that of our families. Because we are made for community, we have an obligation to help those who have not enough to live on. Because we belong to the community of the Church, we have a responsibility for the maintenance and mission of that Church community.

Stewardship of Treasure means we acknowledge with gratitude that all we have is God's gift and that we are expected to use it with responsibility and return it to God through helping the Church that is ours and the poor among us. The amount we give is proportionate to what we earn, is sacrificial and planned. This commitment is part of that planned giving.

Commitment¹⁰⁸

In gratitude to God for all the blessings of my life and to support my parish and its mission, I make the following promise:

SURNAME _____ **FIRST NAMES** _____

TELEPHONE: [H] _____ **[W]** _____ **[C]** _____

EMAIL ADDRESS [please print] _____

¹⁰⁸ Adapted from form of parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Durban,

In thanksgiving for God's work through the parish and in direct support of this work I/we pledge the amount of:

		✓	FREQUENCY
Dedication	R		Monthly
			Annually

✓	METHOD OF PAYMENT
	Monthly Debit Order
	Electronic Payment
	Envelope

SIGNED _____ **DATE** _____

APPENDIX 9
STEWARDSHIP AND TESTIMONY

Pope Francis says the two dimensions of the Gospel are “to awaken faith and transform the world” (Gregory 2019:7). Each disciple is priest, prophet and king not just in the Church but in the whole of life. Each is responsible for the spreading of the faith and for taking the values of the gospel into the home and the whole of life. Everything we do can be “a spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God” (1 Pt.2:5). Each one becomes a sign and an instrument of the saving presence of God everywhere we go. Stewardship is a way of life that extends to the whole of life. The following is given as a help to periodic self-examination and a commitment to live discipleship in the midst of the secular world.

- 1. My Body:** How do I take care of it? _____
How do I look after my health? _____
Do I have a healthy lifestyle? _____
I will do the following: _____

- 2. My Mind:** What do I read? _____
What do I watch on TV? _____
Do I read Catholic material? _____
I will do the following; _____

- 3. My Family:** How much time do I spend with my family? _____
Do I contribute financially? _____
Do we go to Church as a family? _____
Do we pray at home? _____
I commit to the following: _____

- 4. My Work:** Am I honest in my workplace? _____
Do I help fellow workers? _____
Do I help promote justice in the workplace _____

Do I take the values of the gospel into my profession? _____

I commit to the following: _____

5. The Environment: Am I damaging the environment in any way?

Do I waste water, electricity, fuel?

Am I doing anything positive to take care of the world?

I commit to the following:

6. The Gospel: Am I like leaven in the society in which I live? _____

Am I a light that leads to Christ? _____

Baptism makes me an image of Christ.

When people see me, do they see Christ? _____

Do I help with the teaching of the faith? _____

Do I ever speak to others about Christ and my Church?

I commit myself to the following: _____

APPENDIX 10

FORMATION PROGRAMME FOR THE YEAR

Faith Formation, Formation for Stewardship and the process of conversion need to be ongoing. The Parish Stewardship Committee will draft a programme each year. The following is given as an example. The suggestions for monthly March to September inclusive are based on *Forming Generous Hearts* by Leisa Anslinger and Victoria Shepp (2007). This publication could be a useful resource for formation in Discipleship and Stewardship.¹⁰⁹

- January: Renewal of Commitment to Stewardship by the parish and each member.
- February: The Parish Pastoral Plan for the Year. The Budget for the Year.
- March: Hospitality and a Sense of Belonging.
- April: The Paschal Mystery – Conversion.
- May: Faith and Life in the Family, the Neighbourhood, the Place of Work.
- June: Full, Active and Conscious Participation in the Life of the parish.
- July: Being a Disciple. Being a Steward.
- August: Service in the Parish. Service in the community beyond the Church.
- September: Link between Faith, Justice, and the Care of Creation.
- October: Gratitude and Stewardship.
Generous giving without looking for a return.
- November: Stewardship of the Faith. The imperatives of Evangelisation.
- December: Stewardship and Prayer. Preparing for Christmas.

¹⁰⁹ James Kelley's *Sustaining and Strengthening Stewardship* (1995) may be helpful.

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