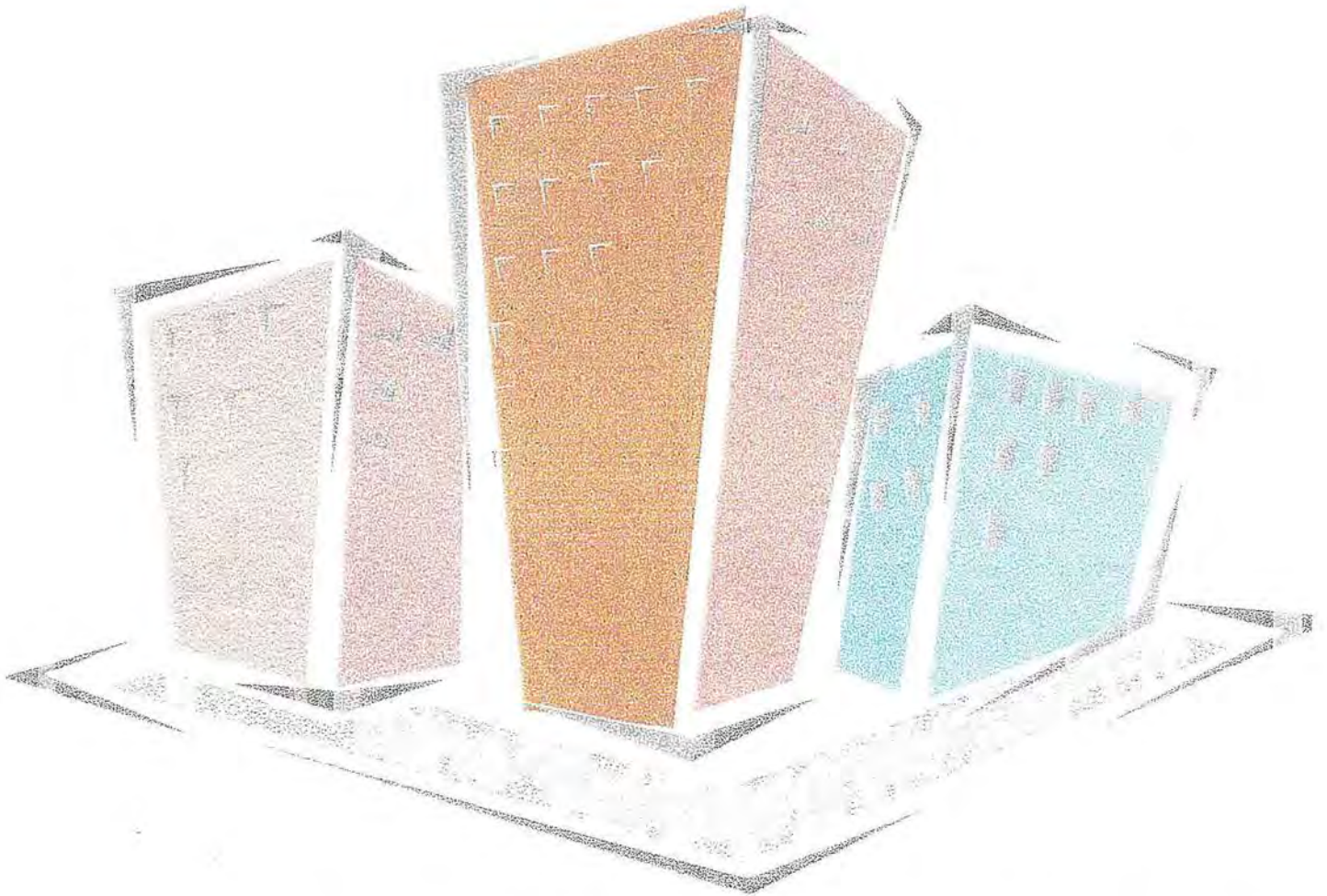# TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF INNER CITY TRANSFORMATION

## A CONTEXTUAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE CHURCH, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY IN THE INNER CITY

# TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF INNER CITY TRANSFORMATION

## A CONTEXTUAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE CHURCH, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY IN THE INNER CITY

by **STEPHANUS FRANCOIS DE BEER**

submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

## DOCTOR DIVINITATIS

in the Faculty of Theology

Department Practical Theology

University of Pretoria

Supervisor :  Professor Julian Müller

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THERE WAS A SMALL CITY WITH ONLY FEW PEOPLE LIVING IN IT AND A GREAT KING CAME WITH HIS ARMY AND BESIEGED IT...

THERE WAS IN THE CITY A WISE MAN, VERY POOR AND HE KNEW WHAT TO DO TO SAVE THE CITY AND SO IT WAS RESCUED...

BUT AFTERWARDS NO ONE THOUGHT ANYMORE ABOUT HIM...

ECCLESIASTES 9 : 14-15

# PROLOGUE

God loves urban people and urban places. God's body on earth - the church - is called to be an expression of this love, fleshing it out in big and small ways, serving humbly, loving tenderly and acting justly.

Humility does not exclude boldness, tenderness does not exclude toughness, and justice does not exclude love. It is in the strange paradoxes of tenderness and toughness, of love and justice, of humility and boldness, of death and life, that we might discover the wisdom of God and the power of the cross.

It is in dying into the city that we will become signs of life and hope. It is in touching the wounds of the city that we will become healers in brokenness. It is in becoming as vulnerable as the city (as individuals and as churches) that we can proclaim healing to the vulnerable.

This study wants to suggest that God's heart for cities and for the poor is big enough to match the challenge. It is in the decay of the inner city that creative alternatives emerge. It is with the inner city poor that bold partnerships unfold. It is at the bottom of society that we are surprised by signs of transformation.

> *"...but God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong."*

God has a plan big enough to match the challenge - a plan that can indeed transform the current reality. And God's Spirit wants to create within us a new imagination of the city in God's image.

This study is exploring such an alternative imagination, the spirituality necessary to sustain it, and the theology and actions required to realise it. Its focus is the changing inner cities of South Africa in general, and housing in the inner city communities of Pretoria in particular.

The poem by Harv Oostdyk is a summary of what I attempt to say in far too many pages.

# *REAL LOVE HAS A PLAN*

neighborhoods die
one block at a time

that's the only way
they will be resurrected

no decay
is irreversible
what is needed
is a force
and a plan

God has the force
in the people who love Him
what is needed
is a plan

real love
has a plan
the deeper the love
the greater the plan

arise oh people of God
and be about the plan
we must reorganize
our whole structures
that serve the poor
get the unions
get the politicians
bring the minority middle
    class
get the corporations
get the people of the ghetto
get the universities

get the churches
get the synagogues
    get everybody working together
meeting
planning
reorganizing
and then tell everyone
about our Lord
    and the people
the together people of the ghetto
those who work so hard for so
    little
and the beaten people of the
    ghetto
and those in drugs and wine and
    nothing
many will respond
to the talk of the people of God
because it has been expressed
    in good works

"faith that doesn't show itself
by good works
is no faith at all
it is dead and useless…"

*- Harv Oostdyk  1983*

*Step One : The Gospel and the ghetto
Basking Ridge, N.J.: SonLife*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Over many years God has allowed people to shape my thoughts, convictions and commitments. God has allowed opportunities for friendship and exposure that led me deeper into the realities of the inner city. God has given me communities in which I was able to find my own roots.

A study like this is not at all original, since it is a reflection of all the insights and wisdom invested in my life by those who were part of my extended "community". There are too many people and events that contributed to my life and I cannot mention everybody here. I would like to single out some, however. I do it almost chronologically, as people entered my life.

- *God* has always been there for me ! I have known God as a Father for the Fatherless, and a God who is alive and well in the midst of city life ! God's grace has allowed me to enter the ministry and to continue my studies - up to this point. All that I have are gifts from God's hands.

  To God be the glory !

- *My mother,* Isabel, has always helped me to understand God as the One that cares for the weak and that stands with those who are treated without justice. She helped me to experience God in the city ! Her love for and commitment to me and my sister will always stand as an example of what inner city mothers can achieve... her persistence and faithfulness - against all the odds - have shaped me profoundly in my personal life and in my thoughts about what the church in the city should be.

  Thank you for your commitment and investments in my life - words cannot express my deep appreciation. I love you for all of that.

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- The *people of the inner city* - flat dwellers, homeless people, women, street children, residents of our housing facilities, and others; they are the people of this study. Through their eyes I see the city and in their eyes I discover God.

  The residents and role players of Salvokop, Marabastad, and Berea - and the Community Forums in these areas... In these forums I have learnt so much about organising, community, humanity, dreams and struggles... Thank you for allowing me (us) to be part of your community.

- Valuable *friends in public places* - at the Pretoria Central Police Station, Holiday Inn Garden Court, and elsewhere - you make life in the city special. And all those we daily meet between our flat and our office - gardeners, street vendors and security personnel - your friendly greetings and consistent presence provide me with affirmation, security and order, amidst so much chaos, despair and questions.

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  *Thank you for putting up with me, for listening to all my stories and struggles, for being patient, for being who you are... thank you for venturing into the risk of the city, and for doing it with so much joy - you are a great example to me and all others*

  *thank you for your great support and advice as I completed this study, for all the hours of reading and correcting - you are special.*

  *I   dedicate   this   to   you...*

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AS PART OF A HOLISTIC PASTORAL MODEL
FOR THE INNER CITY

# PART 1
# ORIENTATION

# CHAPTER 1
# THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

# 1.    THEME

The theme is capturing the goal of this study, namely the transformation of inner city communities.

It also identifies the study as a theological study, reflecting on the inner city from a theological perspective, which values the church, the community of believers as expressed in the broader ecumenical sense, the Old and New Testament as sources from which the faith community draws, and God's presence and actions in the city.

This is not in the first place a sociological, geographical or developmental study, although the theological enquiry integrates insights from other disciplines and seeks to discover a theological framework for urban development.

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***Theme***

*Towards a Theology of Inner City Transformation*

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The sub-theme also identifies a specific approach to theological activity, i.e. the contextual theological approach, which is not identical to other approaches which will be identified in chapter 2; 3.

This study will explore the role of the church in the inner city, focussing on the inner city poor, and how the church's involvement in the public arena, specifically with housing, could facilitate the transformation of inner city communities. A theology of community, a transformed ecclesiology and a public theology of the inner city, will be explored throughout this study.

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**Sub-Theme**

A Contextual Perspective on the Church, Housing and Community in the Inner City

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# 2.    BACKGROUND & MOTIVATION FOR THIS STUDY

Various experiences have contributed to the choice I have made to undertake this study. In part 2 section A this will be discussed in greater detail under the heading of "Insertion". This is a brief background to motivate my choice. ***This whole section has been written in November 1996.*** Since then many new developments have occurred.

## 2.1 Contextual Realities

The inner cities of South Africa are transitional communities and often these communities are at risk, changing from healthy communities into inner city slums.

In Pretoria the realities of limited housing stock, a declining number of low-cost or affordable housing units and the decay of existing facilities as a result of neglect, poor management, or racial and cultural prejudice, have contributed to my desire to focus on this theme. The growing number of homeless, poor, at-risk or marginal inner city dwellers, and the lack of appropriate, affordable and decent housing units, make this theme an important one to be studied and to evoke action immediately. Housing in the inner city of Pretoria is further complicated by the reality of First World and Third World coming together in one place.

The contextual dynamics will be discussed in greater detail later on in this section as well as in chapter 3, where I formulate the problems and challenges which this study will deal with.

## 2.2 Personal Ministry Experience

I am currently co-ordinating an inner city development ministry. Pretoria Community Ministries is a partnership of churches working alongside inner city communities in various ways. We are developing an integrated development model for the inner city of Pretoria in close conjunction with various other stakeholders, including grass-root community leaders and the residents of the inner city themselves. Housing has become just one of our areas of focus. We have been involved in the management of one small facility for low-cost housing in the inner city over the last 4 years (1993-1996). This facility has become a sign of hope to the city centre church, challenging the myth that low-cost housing for poor people should become slum housing. It has also challenged the trend of slum formation once the majority of residents are black.

We have developed this small facility into a ministry of low-cost housing. On the basis of this experience the local churches and Pretoria Community Ministries have decided to start a process to establish a non-profit company for housing the inner city poor. A framework and process for housing people with low incomes are being developed currently.

On the basis of these practical experiences certain theological questions have been raised which I would like to explore in this study within the framework of a specific theological method.

## 2.3 The Church : Global Exposure & Local Neglect

I have been exposed to various church-based and secular housing initiatives in Atlanta, Chicago, Washington DC, Mexico City, Hillbrow, Alexandra, and so forth. The power

of these initiatives, the stability it brought into the lives of individuals and communities and the transformational effect it had on the city, have challenged me personally to consider the role which the church could play with regard to inner city housing.

Generally the church in South African inner city communities has not seen herself as a potential agent of change in inner city housing and has not considered her institutional strengths and / or gifts as resources to really impact inner city communities and housing processes. This is an important motivation for this study : to determine to what extent the local church in the inner city could be involved in inner city housing and through housing in the transformation of inner city communities and people. I suggest that the church is neglecting the inner city in terms of its real issues.

## 2.4    Strategic Importance of Housing

Globally inner cities tend to deteriorate. Often the first signs of decay are the deterioration of its housing stock. Inner cities turn into slums one block at a time. If one building deteriorates it affects the neighbouring building, and if this is not addressed the whole block will change. This study would like to consider an alternative vision. Just as inner cities deteriorate one block at a time, I would like to explore the healing or reconstruction or transformation of inner city communities, also happening one block at a time. In other words, starting with individual buildings and erecting signs of hope in the name of Christ, which will spill over into the whole community. The *yeast-principle,* used by Jesus to explain the nature of God's kingdom, will be explored later in this study.

## 2.5    Spirituality & Biblical Understanding

I have come to understand the Biblical vision of ministry and life to be holistic, integrating private and public, sacred and secular, evangelism and social action. I understand the ministry of Jesus to be about the redemption of individuals and society, about love and justice. I understand ministry in the city to be about personal salvation, but also about the salvation of the soul of the city. The totality of life falls within the scope of Christ's ministry.

Within such a holistic understanding of the Bible and a spirituality which emphasizes the poor and marginal, which celebrates the city, and which seeks for the integration of love and justice, words and deeds, individuals and communities, housing has become to me a sector of society in which all these things can be brought together. Within housing as a church-based ministry various ministerial gifts and disciplines could be integrated such as evangelism and counselling, social or diaconal ministry, leadership development, advocacy and justice, human development and community organising.

## 2.6    Search for a Theology that Makes Sense

In reflecting on the realities of the inner city and its challenges to the church, I did not

find traditional theological thought and method adequate to provide me with a framework from which to operate. I experienced traditional theology to be static, rigid and operating within a vacuum, not connected to or rooted in specific realities which I have experienced in the city.

My exposure to contextual theology and also to the innovative praxis of ministry done in other contexts than the context I was used to in the white South Africa church, have challenged me in various ways. Some of the challenges was to explore theologically beyond what I have known, to discover a method for doing theology which would make sense to me and the context in which I work, which would inform my ministry praxis, and to move beyond the initial attempts at urban theology which were offered, especially by American and European sources (cf. Maluleke 1995 : 176).

## 2.7 Personal Background

I grew up in one of Pretoria's inner city communities in an area dominated by high-rise residential facilities. For the past 26 years I have lived in this area - first in Sunnyside and now for the past 6 years in Berea-Burgerspark. Our ministry centre is in the Berea-Burgerspark area and my wife and I have just bought property in this community ourselves. This personal journey of ours has brought us face to face with the dynamics of the inner city, the forces of change, and the reality of the present transition in Pretoria's inner city communities.

Personally we had to consider issues relating to housing in our search for a flat which will be appropriate to our needs. We had to consider the pros and cons of ownership and rental, the transitional nature of the community in which we purchased property, the Biblical call for incarnational ministry, the desire to live out our vision of community in the city, and so forth. This study will not be unaffected by this very personal journey.

## Summary :

- The contextual realities, challenges and needs which we encounter in the inner city on a daily basis require an urgent response.

- My grass-root experience with the management and development of an inner city housing facility with low-income people from different racial and cultural backgrounds, has raised fundamental questions as to the role, priorities and purpose of the church in the inner city.

- My exposure to global models of church-based housing initiatives has challenged me and provided seeds of hope and vision. Local neglect and / or lack of public involvement by inner city churches requires a study that will motivate theologically what role the church could play.

- The assumption that housing is strategic in the decay or transformation of inner city communities, has further motivated the importance of such a study from the perspective of the church and theological reflection.

- My personal understanding of the Bible and my own spirituality call for a holistic response to the city. Housing offers a tremendous potential to affect the city, its systems and people on different levels.

- My exposure to contextual theology and alternative ministry praxis, have challenged me to discover a theological method for myself and my context, which I could use to do theology in the inner city. It has also challenged me to explore the relationship of the church and the city in greater depth theologically.

- My personal upbringing in the inner city and the fact that we have chosen to make the inner city our home, have added the element of self-interest to this study.

## 3. FORMULATING THE PROBLEM / CHALLENGE

### 3.1 Inner City Decay

World-wide many inner city communities experience great transition and social decay. In the South African context a variety of factors have contributed to inner city decay in places such as Johannesburg and Durban. In Pretoria the slower transitional process has provided an opportunity to prevent slum formation, but in some areas and in some individual properties a process of deterioration has unfortunately set in.

The decay of inner city communities eventually leads to the flight of businesses from town, poor quality of life and an environment not conducive especially for children, women and old people. In responding to these problems, removals or renewal programmes often deal with the inner city poor in unjust ways, shifting the problem from one community to another, without dealing with the causes.

The first serious issue has to do with the quality of life in the inner city. The inner city could either become a slum (problem) or remain a healthy, viable community (challenge) which provides a home to all of its people.

*The challenge is for healthy, viable and sustainable inner city communities where all people can live decent lives.*

## 3.2   Housing and Inner City Decay

Housing stock and inner city decay are closely related. In the housing environment one often sees the first signs of decay as property owners neglect their properties, management withdraws, overcrowded facilities are allowed, lease agreements are not enforced or even signed, and so forth. Slum formation often sets in starting with the housing stock.

Housing tends to have a ripple effect. The renewal of one facility tends to work contagiously, encouraging neighbouring owners and residents to do something about their facilities as well. At the same time the deterioration of one facility influences property values in surrounding buildings, decreasing property values stimulate disinvestment, an exodus from more resourceful inner city people, and eventually a breakdown of an entire community.

In South Africa another serious factor that contributes to inner city changes is the formation of inner city informal settlements and the growing number of homeless people living on and around railway stations, in parks, and on city pavements. The changed socio-political system in the country has contributed to these dynamics since poor people (predominantly black) who were kept by law from living in inner city communities in the past, now have access and seek for job opportunities closer to town.

Local authorities have not, at least in Pretoria, spent much time thinking about and planning for urbanisation and its effects as reflected in the inner city. The infra-structure for housing (transitional & low-cost) is not in place and it is almost too late to be able to deal with the in-migration of poor and vulnerable people pro-actively. Yet, this is an enormous challenge and an essential task in order to develop healthy, sustainable inner city communities, reversing the trend of decay.

In Pretoria some of the specific factors contributing to the challenge with regard to inner city housing, include :

- Rezoning of existing, low-cost residential facilities reducing the already small number of available low-cost housing options.

- Demolition of low-cost and medium-cost housing units to make way for roads and other developments are increasing the lack of housing for the inner city poor.

- In many residential facilities in the inner city a steady process of decay has set in as the racial make-up of the buildings changed. Managers and owners have not kept up the maintenance of the properties adequately, and the new clientele has posed serious challenges in terms of intercultural issues which the traditional owners or managers do not always respond to appropriately.

> Local government structures recognise that they themselves have not thought through the challenge of housing the inner city poor; it has not been on their agenda and it was never integrated into their planning for the future of the inner city (cf. town planners & local councillors).

Ultimately the process will lead to a lack of decent, affordable housing in the inner city. Housing will either be decent, but too expensive for the inner city poor, or it will be affordable, but people will have to live in undignified slum buildings. Not one of these options provide long-term solutions.

Inner city communities where housing is not of primary importance on the agenda tend to fall apart. The lack of decent and affordable housing options in the inner city might lead to a greater number of homeless people on the streets, family breakdown, higher crime rates, disinvestment, the overpopulation of existing facilities, the marginalisation of the most vulnerable people, and economic breakdown of communities. This will give birth to a community trapped in an on-going cycle of poverty. This is a global trend where housing of the inner city poor is not taken seriously.

There is another side to the story :

> A simple, decent place to live can break this vicious cycle of poverty and hopelessness. I've seen it happen over and over again.
>
> (Fuller 1995 : 8)

There is a simple principle, expressed clearly by Millard Fuller (1995 : 9), the president of Habitat for Humanity International, a Christian housing agency :

> I have always felt that a house is to a human family what soil is to a plant. We all seem to know this deep down. You can pull a plant up out of the soil, pour all the water in the world on it, give it plenty of sunlight, and it will eventually die because it is not rooted. A plant needs to be rooted. A family is like that. If a family is not rooted, it will not flourish. It will not grow... will not blossom. But once a family is well-rooted, all kinds of wonderful things will begin to happen.

*Poor housing or the lack of housing will lead to individuals and families trapped in poverty, which in turn will lead to communities of decay. This needs to be reversed.*


## 3.3 The Church in Response to Inner City Decay

The church ministering in inner city areas facing cultural transition and social decay, is also a church-at-risk. Churches experience the transition and decay in its own buildings, the loss of membership, financial problems, and so forth.

Many inner city churches find themselves in a kind of suburban, middle-class, Western and religious captivity, not geared for the multi-cultural environment in which they suddenly find themselves, and not able to contextualise the gospel for the emerging poor in the public arena of the (African) city. The church is not able to formulate a clear vision with regard to "new" issues affecting the people it is supposed to serve. This captivity leads to an irrelevant church, not being salt and light, and quiet with regard to

vital public issues, which in turn leads to the loss of membership or the lack of new members joining the church.

To put it in other words : the gospel is not always good news to people in the inner city, because the gospel does not seem to have anything to say to their existential misery. So the gospel of the church is dismissed and people rather revert to the gospel of the shebeens or pubs or brothels, which is also not liberating to them.

Where churches respond to social problems in the community it is usually in the form of service ministries, not necessarily dealing with the causes of poverty and marginalisation. The church tries to provide relief on the surface, while the community is slowly disintegrating underneath. The church is not involved, in other words, in the transformation of the inner city into a better environment, and therefore it becomes part of the downward spiral.

In some cases churches just become so disillusioned that they decide to close their doors. The more they serve people, the worse the community becomes, and it seems like an irreversable spiral in which the church is also caught. Inner city churches generally adapt or die. There is not really a middle road. The question is how and in what ways inner city churches can maintain a hopeful and liberating presence in their communities.

Perhaps it is a problem of inadequate insight into the social context and the factors contributing to its transition.  Very few inner city churches actually do a proper social analysis of the communities in which they are supposed to serve. The gospel's far reaching effects are thus limited to what the church leadership *assume* the problems or issues are.

At its heart it is a theological problem. The church in the inner city has not developed a theology appropriate to the unique challenges of the South African inner city. I suggest that it goes even deeper to the epistemology and methodology applied by ministers (practising theologians) in the inner city. Contextual theology offers a new epistemology and the way of doing theology has been a radical departure from traditional theological activity.

The church lacks a sense of identity and destiny (vision), lacks an ecclesiology which makes sense in the city, and lacks a theology to sustain its ministry. This is prevalent in the church's inability to develop a holistic and transformative ministry praxis, to engage in the public arena in critical-prophetic, but also constructive-transformative ways.

## 3.4    A Theological Problem / Challenge

The decay of inner city communities becomes a theological issue when reflecting on God's presence in (or absence from) these communities, the impact inner city decay

has on humanity, the lack of social justice, the way in which power is used and abused in urban planning and development, the impact of decay on the inner city church, the absence of the church in the inner city, and so forth.

When God is seemingly absent from the inner city, when people cannot discover themselves as created in God's image because of their living environment, when the church finds it impossible to remain in a community, and when powerful people use their mandates contrary to biblical values, serious theological questions need to be asked. These questions have to come from the context, and reflection upon these questions must be translated into appropriate formulations, policies, and above all actions for ministry.

We need to ask the right theological questions for our praxis to be transformed. It is possible to be in ministry, but never asking the appropriate questions which will transform us, our churches, and eventually our communities.

Heitink speaks about practical theology as "integratieve praktische theologie"(1993: 93). He distinguishes between three perspectives or Christian mediations, namely an individual, ecclesiological and social perspective. An integrative practical theology explores the mediation of Christian faith in the life of an individual person, in the life of the church, and in the life of society. This translates into three approaches or lines in practical theological activity, namely an anthropological, ecclesiological and diaconal / social approach. The first approach has its focus on the individual, the second approach has its focus on the church and the third approach has its focus on the public sphere (1993 : 93-94).

The theological questions arising from the inner city include *anthropological, ecclesiological and social dimensions* (cf. Heitink). It also asks *theo-logical* or *God*-questions : Is God in the city ? Where is God in the city ? How does God make Himself known in the city ?

- God's presence in a community which is seriously deteriorating becomes a *theo-logical* question which the church has not been able to answer adequately, especially since the church in many instances also left the inner city. When the church remains in the city, their leadership is generally unprepared to live there themselves. The integrity of the gospel message, proclaiming Christ's presence in our difficult circumstances and the gospel's liberating power, is under serious suspicion. People rather believe that God is not in the inner city and that the gospel is not good news for inner city problems. We need a theology and a spirituality that makes sense in the

  South African inner city communities. As part thereof we need to discover a Christology and pneumatology which relates to urban life. We need to meet the God of the inner city afresh in the inner city.

- Furthermore the decay of inner city communities, the affect it has on inner city people, the marginalisation of the poor, development that relocates the poor, and the lack of decent, affordable housing where people can develop healthy life-styles, raise vital theological questions with regard to social justice, human dignity, the Biblical vision for community, stewardship, and the Biblical perspective on cities and the poor. Both the *anthropological* and *social dimensions* (in Heitink's definition) of Christian mediation have to be explored. We need to develop a theology which will value the city, humanity and especially the poor within the city. We also need to consider the development of inner city communities which has social justice at its heart. At the same time we need to develop a public theology, indicating how Christian faith can be mediated in urban society.

- Basic theological questions with regard to the church, its identity and its calling, are raised. The church's own captivity needs to be identified in order for it to be an agent of transformation. It has to be liberated from this captivity in order to flesh out the gospel in the inner city. The church itself must be transformed before it can develop transformational ministry.

  The church will have to rediscover the gospel of Christ for the city, so that it can indeed become messengers of good news. It is important to discover an *ecclesiology* that will make sense in the inner city, implying that the church will have to redefine or rediscover its identity and calling. The church and the poor, the nature of church leadership in the inner city, the church's diaconate, the church in the public arena, and the church in politics, are important theological questions to be explored. The ecclesiological dimension has to be explored specifically, but then in relation to individuals and systems in the city.

## 3.5 The Problem Summarised

- This study deals with the global problem of inner city decay, and focusses on the way in which decay is expressed in the housing environment, especially with regard to housing of the inner city poor.

- This study will deal with it as a challenge, however, indicating how the development of decent, affordable inner city housing with marginal, at-risk or low-income people, can contribute to healthy, sustainable communities in the inner city, reversing the global trend of inner city decay. It requires a commitment from the church to the inner city poor, fleshed out in the public arena of the city.

- This study is done from a theological perspective. It assumes that we need a theology of the city and a spirituality of urban transformation, that will grow from the contextual issues we are faced with. Attention will be given to theological, anthropological, ecclesiological and social dimensions, and the notions of community, human dignity, an urban ecclesiology, the church in the public

arena, holistic ministry, stewardship, social justice, development and liberation, and so forth, will be explored as part of this study.

- I suggest the development of a theology of inner city transformation, focussing on three themes, which will run like threads throughout the study :

  | | | |
  |---|---|---|
  | i. | Towards a theology of community | (anthropological-social) |
  | ii. | Towards a servant church | (ecclesiological) |
  | iii. | Towards a public theology | (social) |

  Implicit in all three themes is the active (sometimes "hidden") presence of God in inner city communities.

## 4.    GOAL OF THE STUDY

### 4.1    The Church : Agent of Inner City Transformation through Housing the Poor

This study wants to show how the local church in the inner city can participate in the transformation of the inner city through its engagement with low-cost housing. To put it in better theological terminology, the challenge and the goal of this study is *to explore ways in which the church could bring about the shalom of God in dying inner city communities, or : how the (diaconal) ministry of the church in the inner city could proclaim and act out the liberation and transformation which is implicit in the gospel of Christ, making housing the primary means.*

This study will argue that the church has the latent institutional capacity, the values and the mandate (calling) to contribute greatly towards the transformation of inner city communities. It will be an attempt to develop a theological account for why the church should enter this arena in general, and housing of the inner city poor in particular.

However, in discovering a vision for inner city housing, the church will have to develop its institutional capacity and theological foundation more intentionally. This will also be developed in this study.

Furthermore, the church will have to develop a public theology, understanding its role and calling in the secular city, in the African city, and in the public arena in general.

Three basic questions underlie the goal as well as the basic assumptions and hypotheses (that will follow soon) :

- What is the role of the church with regard to inner city decay, and housing the inner city poor?

- How should the church be transformed to play this role ?

- In what way can the church's involvement with inner city housing facilitate the transformation of the inner city (shalom in the inner city), i.e. the reversal of inner city decay and the liberation of inner city people and communities ?

## 4.2    A Contextual Approach

Implicit in working towards this goal (3.1), is the need to suggest and apply a *method* for doing theology in the city with inner city people. This in itself has become a supplementary goal of this study. I will work within the framework of a contextual approach responding to the inner city challenge by developing a pastoral plan of action (praxis) for inner city housing, working closely with the people affected. The specific theological method will move from the present situation through insertion, analysis and theological reflection, to a new strategy for ministry and action in the inner city.

This corresponds with the goal set out by Andrew Kirk (1989 : 22) as he, together with other urban theologians, reflected on the document *Faith in the City*, which dealt with British urban challenges.

> We come now to the hardest part of the exercise : the attempt to suggest ways (inspired by the assumptions and methods of liberation theology) in which a genuinely indigenous, contextual theology might take shape within Christian communities rooted in Urban Priority Areas.

The goal of *Theology in the City* (Harvey : 1989 : 1-14), the book in which Kirk's article appeared, was in a sense to advocate or even seek for an alternative theology which wil make sense to the Christian communities struggling along in the inner cities and urban housing estates of Britain.

This study wants to develop a contextual theological perspective on the transformation of inner city communities in post-apartheid South Africa.

## 5.    RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

*This study will explore the assumptions and objectives stated below, and will provide a theological framework as well as a proposed pastoral praxis, integrating these assumptions and objectives.*

## 5.1    The Inner City Church and Transformation

5.1.1    The local church as an intentional community in the inner city is (could be) an important agent in the transformation of inner city communities.

5.1.2    The local church has an important role to play with regard to inner city housing as a diaconal ministry. I would like to motivate this based on the church's latent institutional capacity and its inherent values, qualifying it to be an important role player.

5.1.3    Through its involvement with inner city housing, the church could facilitate a process of inner city transformation.

5.1.4    The gospel of Christ is about liberation in spiritual, human and socio-political terms.

Inner city housing is a great opportunity for the church to address the false dichotomies between social ministry and evangelism, secular and sacred, private and public. Inner city housing - as a ministry of the church - could go beyond these dichotomies to develop truly holistic ministry which will address people and communities in the inner city with the gospel of Christ.

A basic assumption of this study is that the inner city church needs to be transformed ecclesiologically to be able to fulfill its role in the inner city adequately.

## 5.2    Transformation of Inner City Communities

5.2.1    I believe there are many myths and / or generalisations about the inner city. One such a myth is that inner city communities always become slums.

I would like to suggest that multi-cultural inner-city communities with a large percentage of lower-income people can still be healthy, viable communities.

5.2.2    The transformation of inner city communities is possible and should be at the heart of the church's vision and ministry.

This study will suggest an encompassing process of transformation which will involve changed mind-sets and actions in different sectors of society and at various levels - church, business, local government, property managers, developers, the poor, inner city residents, and so forth. Important, however, is that inner city transformation starts with personal transformation happening in the hearts and minds of people.

This study would like to suggest a process of urban transformation which involves liberated inner city people, churches and policy-makers. This kind of radical transformation will be suggested as opposed to what is known as urban renewal or urban development. Urban transformation is more than superficial renewal, but requires a fundamental re-thinking of power, how and where it has been vested and how it can be used for the common good of **all** inner city people.

5.2.3    I would like to suggest that transformation is not only something that should

happen to the inner city, but that the inner city could facilitate the transformation of people in all sectors of society. It offers the opportunity for people to enter an arena where the playing fields are level, to engage in a new manner, to share resources, to be transformed and to transform.

### 5.3 Inner City Housing and Transformation

5.3.1 Another myth is that housing for low-income people must be slum housing. I would like to suggest that decent, affordable housing for the inner city poor is viable and it is imperative for the renewal of inner cities.

5.3.2 I would like to suggest that housing is of strategic importance in determining the quality of inner city communities. The process of inner city decay often starts with deterioration in the housing stock.

Housing, on the other hand, could also be instrumental in reversing the process of decay and in ensuring a transformed inner city community.

5.3.3 Within a development paradigm I would like to argue for a process of inner city housing development with inner city people rather than housing projects for people.

## 6. FOCUS OF THE STUDY

The complexities of the inner city and the church's ministry in the inner city are enormous. It is extremely difficult to set boundaries for a study such as this, since there is such an interrelatedness of many different processes and factors.

I had to make a few important choices, however, and I will briefly indicate these as the boundaries within which I will develop the study. This demarcation would also help to focus the study more.

- This is a *practical theological study*, focussing on the inner city with an emphasis on developing a praxis of ministry that will engage the inner city responsibly. It will draw from practical theological research and models.

- Although it is a practical theological study, it will integrate other disciplines, both theological and secular, throughout. This is an *intradisciplinary study* (cf. 7.4), rather than a multi-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary study.

- Within the sphere of practical theology this study tends to lean over more towards being a *diaconal study*. Its focus will be on the church as servant in the inner city, being stewards or deacons of God's resources. It is not possible, or even Biblical, to divorce the church's diaconate from its kerugmatic functions and from nurturing koinonia or community. In fact, it is only the church as

community that could really serve in solidarity with the poor, to bring about signs of hope and to build a new community in the city. As the church serves in the spirit of Christ it also proclaims his alternative reign in the world.

- Practical theologians in South Africa are doing theology following one of three approaches (Burger 1991 : 59), namely the confessional, correlational or contextual approaches. I will use a **contextual approach** of doing theology in the city.

- Within the contextual approach I will suggest and apply a **specific theological method (an adjusted pastoral circle)** throughout the study.

- The **inner city of Pretoria** (as it was known traditionally) will be the main geographical focus of this study, although it will be interpreted against the background of broader global and South African urban realities.

- **Housing** will be the focus of diaconal or development ministry in the inner city for the purpose of this study.

- Housing can be further defined as **housing with low-income or at-risk people** in the inner city of Pretoria. The **inner city communities of Marabastad, Berea-Burgerspark and Salvokop** will be analysed from the perspective of the local church and its role in these communities.

- The focus will be directed by the vision of **transformed** inner city communities, in the image of the **kingdom of God**, or the **household of freedom** (cf. Russell 1987). The household of freedom is an alternative translation of the phrase kingdom / reign of God, offered by feminist theologians (cf. Van Schalkwyk 1996 : 56-7).

# 7. CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY

***NOTE:*** *The explanations will not necessarily correspond to the exact descriptions given in dictionaries. The first paragraph of each explanation refers to dictionary definitions. In the second paragraph I will explain the terminology as they will be used in this study.*

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- **Transformation**

 * Change of shape or form; metamorphosis : a continuous series of changes in the process of maturation; structural change : fundamental change (addressing the root or cause); recreation : complete change, recreation in the image of God

 * Transformation as I will use it suggests a more radical, fundamental process of change than mere development or renewal. It is about structural re-arrangements, metamorphosis, complete re-creation, i.e. *transformation.* I will use transformation as an alternative for "development" or "renewal" and I will motivate this from the perspective of the realities of urban development and renewal , but also from a theological perspective on change and social justice.

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- **Development**

 * Towards maturity or full growth; the process of growth; spiritual formation; progress.

 * Development in itself is not negative. The negative connotations are as a result of historical trends, the exploitation of indigenous people by developers, and the fact that developers almost always got richer and the poor poorer. This requires a new approach to development. Friedmann (1992) writes a book entitled *Empowerment : the politics of alternative development.* In this study I will use the term transformation as an alternative term, without negating development as a legitimate term and process. In fact, what I would suggest could perhaps be considered a process of *transformational development.*

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- **Renewal**

* Restoration; repairs; renovations so that it has a new look; to make new.

* Renewal in itself is a very positive term. However, much of what is coined renewal is nothing more than superficial changes on the surface. A rejuvenating cure has some effects in terms of outward appearance, but it does not give our years back or change us fundamentally in terms of who we are.

One of the dictionary definitions makes it clear that renewal is to renovate something so that it has a new look. But it is still old. The changes were merely on the surface. Transformation goes deeper than that, addressing the roots or causes of a matter. In terms of inner city ministry I want to suggest a process of transformation, which is more fundamental than renewal, requiring a radical change of values, commitments, and actions, restructuring society for the sake of all of its people.

In Romans 12 : 2 the term renewal is used in a more fundamental way, suggesting a transformation of the mind. It is this radical, deep change that I will search for in this study.

- **Inner City**

* A geographical area in or around the city centre, with a quantitative concentration in terms of size, density and heterogeneity, and a qualitative concentration of power, culture and existential human processes.

Traditionally the inner city in South Africa was seen as the traditional white communities in the core of the city. Today there is amongst church leaders in urban townships a growing feeling that inner city should be used in a broader way, not so much indicating a specific geographical area, but rather a condition of urban life. I would tend to agree with that, on the basis of similarities churches face in these communities, as well as the interconnectedness of and mobility in urban communities. Often the inner city pastor and the township pastor deal with the same people.

The framework provided by this study could be applied in the broader urban context as well. The focus of the study, however, in terms of analysis and application, is on those communities traditionally known as inner city - i.e. the central geographical areas of cities - the Central Business District and its immediate surroundings (residential or mixed-use areas).

- **Community**

  * i. A geographical area with certain boundaries in which people live, work and play, and which is influenced by macro-, meso- and micro-factors.

  ii. A place of intimacy, belonging and sharing on the basis of voluntary covenantal relationships. This could refer narrowly to the "Christian community" which is the body of believers, or it could·refer to the broader community of citizens or community of humanity.

- **Contextual**

  * Referring to a particular context.

  * In this study "contextual" refers to a specific theological appraoch which takes the context serious with its unique challenges, capacities and efficiencies. Social analysis, involvement by the people of the context in the theological process, and transformation, are important elements of the contextual approach.

- **Inner City Poor**

  * In this study "inner city poor" will not only refer to the poorest of the poor in South African society, but to a broader group of vulnerable, marginal and economically poor people located in the inner city (which might also include the poorest of the poor). The inner city poor include homeless and unemployed people, at-risk people groups such as single mother families, pensioners (disability and old-age), recovering substance abusers, ex-prisoners, and low-income working people.

  * In chapter 5 the "poor" as category would be used in an even broader sense to include the "spiritual poor" and the "moral poor".

## 8. OUTLINE OF SECTIONS AND CHAPTERS

This section provides you with an outline for how the study will be developed.

*Part 1 : Orientation* is developed in two chapters.

*Chapter 1* defines *the scope of the study* and provides a motivation and background for why the study should be done. It clarifies the problem and the goal / s, i.e. a transformed ministry praxis in the inner city of Pretoria, which will result in transformed inner city communities, through housing the inner city poor. On the basis of this goal certain research objectives are then suggested.

*Chapter 2* introduces certain *theological foundations*. The historical relationships between the church and development, and the church and the city will be explored. On the basis of historical trends, a contextual theological method will be suggested for doing theology in the city today. My personal assumptions, the nature of a contextual approach in practical theology, my theological method, and alternative methods which informed the method I am using, will be addressed in this chapter.

*Part 2 : Theological Process* is developed in five chapters.

*Chapter 3* is the first phase of the theological method, i.e. *insertion*, and in this chapter I will describe the current inner city situation, housing in the inner city, and the church's response to inner city decay, rather subjectively. This description will raise concrete questions with regard to the issues at hand, which will be explored more in chapter 4.

*Chapter 4* will build on the description, providing an *analysis* of the context of the inner city, inner city housing, and the church's response. This will be done against the global urban background at first, and later in the chapter specific attention is given to local inner city communities in Pretoria. Case studies of certain communities, residential facilities and concrete community processes, as well as documentary analyses will be integrated into this chapter.

*Chapter 5* is focussing on *theological reflection*, bringing various sources to bear on the issues at hand. In this chapter I suggest an alternative imagination of the city in God's vision. It is this alternative imagination that is informing the proposed transformed inner city theology and praxis. Based upon an alternative imagination, I then suggest a spirituality of transformation that will sustain the church's transformational presence in inner city communities.

The rest of this chapter is devoted to the development of three base theories, i.e. the church as servant community, a theology of community, and a public theology. These reflections consider ecclesiological, anthropological and sociological dimensions of the inner city church, and serve as a framework for a transformed inner city ministry praxis.

In this chapter the information gathered in previous chapters is reflected upon theologically. Biblical material, historical and contemporary models of ministry and development, personal experiences and other sources which could inform the theme, are employed in this chapter, while introducing various goals and tasks for the inner city church.

*Chapter 6* is a bridging chapter, continuing in the mode of reflection but focussing the reflection specifically on the role of the church with regard to housing the inner city poor. Whereas chapter 5 provides a broad theological framework for inner city transformation, chapter 6 is contextualising the reflections to the inner city housing arena. It also suggests a framework for a transformational housing praxis.

Various themes are reflected upon, including Biblical perspectives on land, housing and property, housing as a theological and ecclesial question, housing as a value-driven process, housing by the people, and the relationship between housing, humanisation and social justice. This chapter also emphasises the latent institutional capacity of the church to be a significant role player in the public arena in general, and in the housing arena in particular.

*Chapter 7* focusses on the development of a *pastoral praxis* (pastoral plan for action). In this chapter a framework for a transformed praxis will be suggested. This framework includes a theology, ecclesiology and spirituality of transformation. The church's kerygma, koinonia and diaconia, are suggested as resources to inform and sustain an inner city housing praxis. Finally, this chapter suggests a transformational model for inner city housing, focussing on the praxis of Yeast City Housing, a church-based housing institution in the inner city of Pretoria. This proposal is based on the current participatory processes that Yeast City Housing is engaged with in the inner city of Pretoria.

In *Part 3 : Summary* the study will be brought to its natural conclusion, indicating how the church could indeed facilitate inner city transformation. The pastoral circle and its use in this study will be evaluated. Part 3 will also include an epilogue, a series of addenda and the bibliography to the study.

*The table on the next page provides a chapter outline for this study.*

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|---|---|
| **PART 1 :** | **ORIENTATION** |
| **CHAPTER 1** | **The Scope of the Study** |
| **CHAPTER 2** | **Theological Foundations**<br><br>Exploring Historical Perspectives on the Church, Development and the City, and Suggesting a Theological Method for Doing Theology in the Inner City |
| **PART 2 :** | **THEOLOGICAL PROCESS** |
| **CHAPTER 3** | **Insertion**<br><br>Describing the Inner City of Pretoria, with Specific Reference to Housing, and Assessing the Present Action of the Church |
| **CHAPTER 4** | **Analysis**<br><br>Exploring Trends in Urban Development, Urban Renewal & Housing the Urban Poor - Globally and Locally |
| **CHAPTER 5** | **Theological Reflection**<br><br>Towards a Framework for a Theology of Inner City Transformation |
| *[ >>>  A Bridging Chapter}*<br><br>*Chapter 6* | *The Church, Housing and the Poor* |
| **CHAPTER 7** | **A Pastoral Praxis : A Plan for Action**<br><br>A Transformational Housing Model, as Part of a Holistic Pastoral Model for the Inner City |
| **PART 3 :** | **SUMMARY** |

1. Transforming Inner City Communities : The Church, Housing & Community in the Inner City
2. The Pastoral Circle : Summary
3. Epilogue
4. Addendum
5. Bibliography

## THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS :

## EXPLORING HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE CHURCH, DEVELOPMENT AND THE CITY, AND SUGGESTING A THEOLOGICAL METHOD FOR DOING THEOLOGY IN THE INNER CITY

## 1.    The Church and Development : Theological Reflections

This section will briefly evaluate the church in its relation to development. As inner city housing falls within the sphere of diaconal ministry (or development ministry), it is important to evaluate the church's current position in this regard. This section will not deal with development as it is experienced in the inner city of Pretoria, but I will offer a critical global look at the church and development.

### 1.1    The Church and Development : Uncritical Acceptance

The first paradigm is of a church uncritically accepting development in all its forms, providing its sanction and protection, and often even implementing development projects via its missionaries.

> When discussing the 'improvement' of the lives of people who are poor, the most common word or concept in use by circles of "advanced" people is *development*. They seem to say : 'If people could only be developed, we would certainly reach the end of all the misery in the world.'

> (Bruwer 1994 : 19)

The western church finds it difficult to be critical of development, because it was so part of modernisation and development programmes in the Third World. Missionary work in many places was synonymous with Western-style development, even where the development projects were exploiting local people and only benefiting the rich developers.

Development initially was based on the progress-thinking of the Enlightenment era, which manifested itself in bold and grandiose development projects throughout the "undeveloped" world. Material possession, consumerism, economic advance and modernisation were some of the results of this process (cf. Bosch 1991 : 265).

In South Africa, especially within white evangelical and reformed traditions, churches still have an uncritical acceptance of development, being children of the Enlightenment. Ironically it sometimes seems as if certain church growth exponents and development advocates have a lot in common, basing their actions on a theology of progress and success, which is not necessarily rooted in the Bible, but rather in popular culture.

A basic premise of development was that the non-western cultures and peoples, on the

basis of an exclusively negative assessment, were underdeveloped and therefore inferior to Western culture (cf. Bruwer 1994 : 20-21). Through development these people would be lifted up. The term "social upliftment" is used often amongst church people in a rather condescending manner.

The assumption was that development would eventually benefit the poor as wealth trickles down. In South Africa today, the reigning economic policies embrace economic growth assuming that it will create jobs and economic equality, negating the global reality which has proven that economic growth does not necessarily contribute to a more equal and just society - on the contrary.

> A further premise was that the benefits of development, thus defined, would trickle down to the poorest of the poor, in the course of time giving each one a fair share in the wealth that had been generated [cf. Nurnberger 1982 : 240 - 254; Bragg 1987 : 23f].
>
> (Bosch 1991 : 265 - 266)

The reality is different, however :

> Development has a bad track record when it comes to benefiting the poor. There are those who gain, but development usually takes place to the disadvantage of the poorest of the poor.
>
> (Bruwer 1994 : 23)

There was a great identification between development, colonisation and power. The church seemed to support colonial expansion through its missionaries, believing that colonial rule would be better than indigenous governments.

The harshest illustrations of this is to be found in the words of John Philip, superintendent of the London Missionary Society in the Cape of Good Hope from 1819 onward.

Philip (1828a : ixf) wrote

> While our missionaries... are everywhere scattering the seeds of civilization, social order, happiness, they are, by the most unexceptionable means, extending British interest, British influence, and the British empire.

And later,

> Missionary stations are the most efficient agents which can be employed to promote the internal strength of our colonies, and the cheapest and best military posts that a wise government can employ to defend its frontier against the predatory intrusions of savage tribes.
>
> (Philip 1828b : 227)

Even in later times under the National Party government the idea of Europeans civilising and Christianising the indigenous peoples of Africa, was still very alive.

> The responsibility and task laid upon the European to Christianise and civilise the indigenous peoples demand that the former should retain the direction of affairs in the foreseeable future.
>
> <div align="right">(Magubane 1979 : 138)</div>

It was seen as a calling to Christianise and civilise, and in order to do that the European had to have political power.

In South Africa politicians adopted the policy of "separate development", assuming the development of all South Africa's people, but doing that along lines of racial separation. Magubane (1979 : 254-255) gives a penetrating account of the way in which Afrikaner nationalism has influenced the political economy and the socio-economic development of South Africa's people. He refers to a document written by the director of state information of the then prime minister, D.F.Malan :

> We Nationalists believe we must maintain white supremacy for all time. A policy of partnership must lead to black domination... We want the Bantu peoples back in the reserves where they come into their own and when they will be given self-government - under white trusteeship. We cannot have independent Bantu States to threaten white South Africa. We must keep some natives in the White areas, for a long time to do the work. I am being quite candid with you, but we are sincere when we say that we want natives to develop in their own areas.

Two goals for development are put forward in this paragraph. In the first place, there is the goal of developing white capitalism which needed black labour for a long time . In the second place, there is the development of black people, but it should be restricted to their own areas (separate development), excluding the possibility of partnership, economic self-determination and eventually political domination.

This was supported theologically by the Afrikaans church. In reality development never occurred equally in the separate racial groups. White Christians were involved in development projects in black communities all along. They have seldom questioned development which just maintained the status quo. Questions with regard to economic and political power were seldom asked, as were questions with regard to the great contrasts between white and black people in this country.

In *Crucible of Fire* Jim Wallis (1989 : 5) recalls the striking conversation between black and white pastors around a meeting table in 1988 :

> A (white) Dutch Reformed Minister added, 'It was never the intention of separate development to hurt anybody.' The church had the right intention in choosing its path, he contended. 'We are a privileged people because of having the gospel and our lifestyle. We wanted to help all peoples.' That help wasn't 'paternalism', he argued, but 'guardianship.' He claimed that his 'privileged people' had 'made provisions for the needs of people so they will be happy where they are and not put them all in one bunch.'

This pastor tried to justify development that was nothing but a paternalistic display of power, maintaining the status quo, but doing that in the name of the gospel.

There was another side to the story of development in the South African situation. That

was the impressive solidarity of the church with the poor white Afrikaners in this century, which was triggered first in the 1930's after the report of the first Carnegie Commission, but in the late 1940's it gained momentum. The church became involved holistically, not only with the religious needs but also with the economic and political empowerment of poor Afrikaners. The whole community became involved, the church leadership identified with the poor, and so forth (cf. Kritzinger 1994 : 52). In terms of the Afrikaner it was a programme of overwhelming success. But Kritzinger (1994 : 53) adds that this was not unqualified success.

> To the contrary ! Inherent in this programme that worked so well for the Afrikaner was already hidden the seed of ultimate failure. The reasons lay in its exclusivity. It was not an option for the poor in principle, but a siding with *your own poor*. When the process started to benefit them, they became so enthralled with their own progress that they were captured by the materialistc aspects thereof. The principle of preference for your own people, the acceptance of the practice of self-preservation before all else, in the end blinded the successful upwardly mobile Afrikaners for the inherent unrighteousness implied in much of this self-centredness.

This identification between development, mission and political power, in colonies all over the world, but also in South Africa, has triggered a reaction against development, based on the fact that development did not contribute to freedom and transformation, but rather to underdevelopment, exploitation and oppression. In its ultimate form this reaction against development turned into revolutionary movements in a political sense and liberation theology in a theological sense. This by no means imply that liberation theologians in general supported revolutionary means to achieve their goals.

In South Africa the current government has introduced the Reconstruction and Development program, thereby legislating for development and focussing their developmental activities on the plight of millions of poor people. In theory this development differs from the exploitative development plans executed by other governments, developers and even missionaries in the past.

The church should not fall in the trap of uncritically accepting everything that goes under the umbrella of the RDP-program, however. The church needs to position itself in such a way that it can participate in the reconstruction and development of South Africa's communities, whilst at the same time assuming a critical distance, not to lose its prophetic voice. It is a question whether private developers on the band-wagon of the RDP always serve the interests of the poor in just ways, or whether RDP-funds, housing subsidies, and so forth, have not just become the quickest avenue for developers to become rich.

Furthermore, the remuneration of ministers, commissioners such as those on the National Youth Commission, and so forth, cannot be justified within our context of severe backlogs in housing and unemployment, the lack of basic services in many communities, and an ever increasing number of informal houses in urban and peri-urban areas. The church needs to challenge the inconsistencies which deprive the poor of equal access to opportunities, and which take funds away from vital developmental activities to enrich our leaders.

Prominent and eloquent exponents of liberation theologies or black theologies in South Africa's recent past,  have proven also to be inconsistent, now being part of an elitist class while the masses of poor people are still struggling as they have struggled four years ago. The church and its leaders will have to reflect on itself self-critically, for it not to become either irrelevant or yet another establishment church condoning everything done by the present government. The principles established in the prophetic theology of the Kairos-Document, are still as relevant. Those who believed in those principles and who subscribed to it, need to make sure that they still live by the same principles.

An interesting call in this regard comes from Cheryl Carolus, prominent figure in the African National Congress, when she

> urged the churches to re-assert their role as the conscience of society and the champion of the poor and disadvantaged, as was the case in the years of struggle against apartheid. As the RDP is about political and economic justice, the churches are challenged by it to contribute to the rebuilding of societal, community and family structures.

<div align="right">(Van Schalkwyk 1996 : 41)</div>

## 1.2    The Church and Development : Critical Notes

My basic assumption is that we need to be more critical of development on the basis of the effects it had on communities of poverty and need. We need to reflect theologically on development and, for the purpose of this study, I will offer a lengthy discussion at a later stage. Here it will suffice to summarise a few of the main problems people have with development.

Bruwer (1994 : 26) asks whether development is only bad. He goes on to say that development is never neutral.

> We are either building Babel or Jerusalem. Development can be for good or evil.

It is important, however, for the church to develop a more critical reflective attitude with regard to development, recognizing its achievements but also its failures and even destruction of culture and humanity in many instances. Eventually we will have to make sure that our ministry of development is about the building of Jerusalem and not the establishment of evil. It is problematic for the church to be uncritical with regard to development models and practices, since it effects people and communities significantly.

In community development forums currently emerging in South African communities, a favourite saying goes "any development is better than no development". But is this true or is it a myth ? For me this would be a problematic statement in the light of the criticism that will follow.

Bruwer (1994 : 19) refers to a South American reaction to development as a possible Christian response to human need :

> Can development bring new life to the poor ? I will never forget how aggressively a delegate from South America, attending an international conference on the response of the church to human need, reacted when the word development was suggested as a way of describing the church's response. It reminded him of the irreversible process in his country that was responsible not only for the displacement of millions of people, but also for an international deficit of billions of dollars.

Based upon the experiences of the poor who were supposed to benefit form development projects, we need to consider some of the critical aspects with regard to development.

## 1.2.1 Maintaining the Status Quo

Development has become to poor people in many countries a greatly confusing and frustrating concept, since it never attacked the roots of evil (cf. Gutierrez 1988 : 17), but rather supported existing institutions without challenging them when there were structural injustices or exploitation. Development has seldom addressed root problems, but maintained the status quo. Gutierrez uses the term developmentalism which was synonymous to modernisation and reformism and never achieved real long term transformation. In fact, it helped colonial powers to establish themselves better in the colonies.

## 1.2.2 Disillusionment with Progress-Thinking

The euphoria surrounding progress and technological advancements was shocked by some of the terrors which were the results.

> The destruction of the Second World War, the terror of the atom bomb and the detrimental effects of pollution in the Western world finally made some people begin to question uncontrolled development. It is said that no prophet of the Christian faith in time spoke of the coming disaster. The euphoria surrounding development and progress, the many new and exciting advances in technology, made it ridiculous to even question it. It couldn't be bad.
>
> (Bruwer 1994 : 20)

Yet, the alarming realities of war and pollution have brought some people to reconsider development.

## 1.2.3 Development leads to Greater Poverty and Powerlessness

David Bosch (1991 : 357) reflects on the results of development and suggests that the rich only got richer and the poor poorer. The poor was mere objects in the development projects and the power of the developers was used to manipulate them towards the developer's own goals. There was never real transfer or sharing of power, so that real and lasting transformation was made impossible.

The result of many development efforts in poor countries was underdevelopment instead of development. This resulted in the poor starting to respond critically and realising that they need to take charge of their own situation :

> ...they (the poor countries) are realizing that their own development will come about only with a struggle to break the domination of the rich countries.
>
> (Gutierrez 1988 : 17)

### 1.2.4 Development is Another Word for Exploitation

Development was not a new word for peace, as was hoped by Paul VI, but it became another word for exploitation. More and more Third World countries started to reject the entire concept of development (Bosch 1991 : 357-8).

Bob Lupton (1993 : 93) writes about Summerhill, his community in Atlanta, describing how urban development programmes have destroyed Summerhill. The 22 000 residents of this community dwindled to 2 800.

> Her houses were destroyed by Urban Renewal, interstate highways and stadium parking lots. At the writing of this book, only 300 houses remain standing , half of them beyond repair. More than 70 percent of the remaining residents are unemployed, dependent and living in substandard housing.

Donal Dorr (1984 : 62), a Catholic priest, writes

> In the name of 'development' peasant farmers in Kenya today are forbidden to cut down their coffee bushes to plant maize - even though the price they get for the coffee (if they eventually get it) would not buy the amount of maize they could have grown. In the name of 'development' inner city residents in the cities of Europe and America are being forced out of their homes and communities.

Eddie Bruwer (1994 : 2) in his book, *Beggars can be Choosers*, reflects very personally on development projects he has seen and the effect they had on powerless people :

> While I was learning my new way, I also witnessed development progRammes being executed according to blueprints - scientifically planned according to an ideological master plan. Was this Development ? It was large-scale, powerful, frightening and far away from the people.
>
> Those programmes made me aggressive and angry. I witnessed the almost mechanical behaviour of these developers at work. They seemed not to care for man or nature; they were always manipulating, bringing their own "new world" into existence with confidence and a sense of destiny.
>
> I respect science and its children, but I cannot help but look at macro-development from the perspective of someone who witnessed its intrusion into, and its destruction of, the small world of powerless people. I question professionalism in development. Often it is a means of dominating people in a way that degrades them to mere pawns. Development should widen the opportunities for choice, but macro-decisions of developers often make choices at the grassroots level impossible. In the battle between people and machines, people are often the losers. I have experienced how uncontrolled science and professionalism leads to another kind of slavery.

### 1.2.5 Development is More than Economic Growth

Development is sometimes understood in purely economic terms, and in that sense synonymous to economic growth. This is a very limiting perspective on development, which does not take the total process of human and social development into account. Although this narrow understanding of development is not advocated by many people explicitly today, this is still implicit in many development projects (cf. Gutierrez 1988 : 15). I would not focus on our local inner city context right now, but in Pretoria this assumption of economic growth automatically being equated to development is very implicit.

### 1.3 Church and Development : Radical Criticism & A New Paradigm

This section gives an outline of a new paradigm that emerged as a reaction against Western-style theology and development. The theological shifts are expressed in contextual theology in general, and more specifically and radically in the liberation theologies.

This new paradigm moves away from developmentalism (as coined by Gutierrez) and affirms certain basic notions. I would not get into these in depth, since it would be discussed throughout the study. I would give a concise introduction to some of the key aspects which emerged in reaction against the Western-style development paradigm.

- In the past "theology was conducted *from above* as an elitist enterprise" (Bosch 1991 : 423), while the new approach advocates theology from below, with the poor and marginalised playing an important role in the whole enterprise. In terms of development this is requiring a grass-roots approach and development ministry needs to be driven by grass-roots people.

- Commitment as the first step in theology and particularly a commitment to the poor, is another major shift in thinking. The phrase "preferential option for the poor" was coined for the first time in these circles at a conference of Latin American bishops in Puebla, Mexico (cf. Bosch 1991 : 435).

- Theology becomes an activity *with* people who are struggling, instead of it being a lonely activity done in a suburban study or in a classroom situation with like-minded people. Church-based development activities will have to be participatory.

- A major epistemological shift was the emphasis on praxis and the shift to theology being an act of doing. Knowledge is not set in static dogma but discovered on the way as we engage with the context and as we develop our ministry praxis.

- Contextual theology has embraced transformation as their goal. In referring to James Martin, David Bosch (1991 : 189) has echoed this, speaking of

a 'transformational hermeneutics' (Martin 1987 : 37-8), a theological response which transforms us first before we involve ourselves in mission to the world.

Bruwer hints to something I'd like to call "transformational development" in his book (1994 : 26-7). This refers to a specific approach to and goal of the development project.

- Contextual theology has paved the way for an even more dramatic shift as represented by liberation theology. Especially in reaction against global structural relationships which caused and maintained poverty and injustice, liberation theology was the theological and ecclesiastical alternative to development theories (cf. Bosch 1991 : 434).

New categories were used by liberation theology to describe socio-political relationships. These categories were no longer development and underdevelopment, but rather "domination and dependence, rich and poor, Capitalism and Socialism, oppressors and oppressed (cf. Waldenfels 1987 : 226f; Frostin 1988 : 7f)" (Bosch 1991 : 434).

Bosch's quotation (1991 : 435) describes it clearly :

> Poverty would not be uprooted by pouring technological know-how into the poor countries but by removing the root causes of injustice; and since the West was reluctant to endorse such a project, Third World peoples has to take their destiny into their own hands and liberate themselves through a revolution. Development implied evolutionary continuity with the past; liberation implied a clean break, a new beginning.

- A term that transpired from Latin American liberation theology is that of integral liberation or integral development as used by pope Paul VI first in his Populorum Progressio [no.21] (Gutierrez 1988 : xxxviii). This term has become very important in the theology of Gutierrez referring to liberation as a complete process, implying socio-political, personal and spiritual liberation. I will return to this notion in the study frequently, also comparing it to transformation as it was introduced above.

- The term "development" is problematic (Dorr 1984; Van Schalkwyk 1996). On page 18 this was briefly discussed, opting rather for the term **transformation** or **transformational development**. This is the term I will use, comparing it and enriching it in content with Gutierrez' concept of integral liberation or integral development.

Donal Dorr (1984 : 36) writes about the problems with the term, saying

> There is a serious language problem in regard to the word 'development'. The word has a value-judgment built into it; few people would claim to be against development. But at present the word is associated almost exclusively with a particular approach; and there are good reasons for being critical of the approach that is generally called 'development'. I am reluctant to allow such a good word as 'development' to be 'high-jacked'; yet I have to take account of current usage. So I shall generally put the word in inverted commas when I am referring to the present dominant model of development.

He summarises the problem with the term correctly, distinguishing between development as it is generally applied today, and an alternative approach to development.

These few aspects merely give a hint of an emerging new paradigm within the church with regard to development. Contextual theology is an umbrella term, however, covering a great variety of theological perspectives, including conservative-evangelical and mainline-liberal and everybody in between and outside of these descriptions. Therefore it is difficult to evaluate. Liberation theology is also a specific development within contextual theology which needs to be evaluated almost on its own.

This is not the place to do that, but since I have opted for a contextual theological method (with a liberational focus), the commitments and epistemological shifts that were spelled out above, will become clear as the study develops. I will adopt this approach critically, however.

## 2.      The Church and the City : Theological Reflections

This section will briefly examine the relationship between the church and the city throughout the centuries. In doing so I will borrow greatly from Harvie Conn who has traced the history of the church in relation to the city in a profound way in the book, *Discipling the City* (1979). The reason for this brief exploration is just to position my own theological method as well as the church's approach to inner city communities as I will suggest it, against the broader background of the church and the city.

The first part of this section will draw on the insights of Conn, referring to the well-known exposition of Niebuhr on Christ and culture. The second part will use an analysis made by Robert Linthicum (1991b : 21-26), an experienced urban development worker and inner city pastor, to reflect on the ways churches relate to inner city communities.

### 2.1      Christ in the City : The Church's Understanding through the Ages

Harvie Conn made use of Niebuhr's well-known typology to trace the church's relationship to the city throughout history. It is important to start by asking how useful Niebuhr's categories are, since it relates directly to Christ and culture and not specifically to the church and the city. Conn himself is critical of using this typology,

noting that culture as used by Niebuhr is not synonymous to urban life, and that Niebuhr himself shows no sensitivity for global urban issues as such.

Although this typology has its limitations, it still proves to be helpful in understanding the church's relationship with the world and the culture of its day, especially since the culture of the day is usually expressed most visibly in the cities.

In reflecting on the church in the city, I will use the categories suggested by Conn.

### 2.1.1 From Cosmopolis to Theopolis

The first three centuries were characterised by the so-called era of the *cosmopolis*. This era has accentuated conflict between the church and the world or the church and the city.

With the rise of Constantine the *theopolis* came into being in which there was a close identification between church and state. People such as the church historian Eusebius and Christian philosopher Lactantius celebrated the city as the ultimate in the process of human development and also in its fusion between state and church to produce what was known as the Corpus Christianum, or the Christian body politics.

In reaction to the Constantinian unity of church and state **Augustine** emerged as the first real urban theologian. He offered a criticism on the theology of the theopolis, suggesting a new model with *Christ as the transformer of the city, or Christ for the city*.

> Conversion of the city means 'in contrast to its rejection by radicals, to its idealization by culturalists, to the synthesis that proceeds largely by means of adding Christ to good civilization, and to the dualism that seeks to live by the gospel in an inconquerably immoral society.'
>
> (Conn 1979 : 14)

Sin is very central in Augustine's theology, viewing the city as corrupted by the root of sin. Jesus Christ has come

> to restore and redirect what has been perverted. The culture of the city is not discarded by this work of regeneration, but redirected by the power of the kingdom of God.
>
> (Conn 1979 : 15)

It was the **monastic movement** that kept the urban ideal of the theopolis alive.

> The image of the heavenly city and the Roman cosmopolis were fused and kept alive by the monasteries.
>
> (Conn 1979 : 16)

In this time the northern and central populations of Europe were christianised and the role of city churches expanded considerably. With the fall of the Roman empire

> the church became the one powerful and universal association in Western Europe
>
> (Conn 1979 : 16)

**Thomas Aquinas** was the systematic theologian of his day who developed a model of nature-grace dualism, which provided a seedbed for classical Lutheran theology. In his model Christ and the city, or grace and nature, are not exclusive, but rather complementary to each other. Yet, *Christ* is to be seen *above the city* in his paradigm and the church is the perfection of the city-state. In Aquinas' paradigm urban laws were to be found in culture and not necessarily in the gospels. Culture was God-given and provided enough as basis to order urban life upon. With Aquinas the city is relatively autonomous to the kingdom of God and man is able to work for his utopian vision of the city minimising the effects of sin. This was contrary to Augustine's emphasis on sin as the root of perverted individuals and urban society.

## 2.1.2   From Theopolis to Megalopolis : The Reformation

The theopolis moved between the thirteenth and the eigteenth centuries in the direction of the *megalopolis*. Now grace and nature were not complementary as with Aquinas but isolated from each other, as it were suggested by **Duns Scotus, William of Ockham**, and others. Religion was still seen as an integrating factor in society up to this time. Now urban society was disintegrating due to nominalistic secularism.

In the 16th century the **Reformation** has rediscovered the sovereignity of God and the open Bible which had something to offer in the life of the city. This was contrary to the emerging secular model of Scotus and William of Ockham. Yet, it was able to penetrate the cities of the imperial world and 50 of the 65 imperial cities formally recognised the reformation. It was recognised, however, that the church was not ready to live by its newly discovered truths.

> Protestant preachers have pointed out what many laymen had evidently also come to suspect - that the church and her clergy would first have to undergo a major redefinition before they could be integrated as good citizens into society.
>
> (Conn 1979 : 21)

Some of the important contributions made by the Reformation was a new social ethic for the city, the emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, and the fact that "lord over all' and "servant to all" became compatible. Furthermore the clergy were almost "secularized" (cf. Conn 1979 : 22), allowing them to move from empty ritual to meaningful service to their neighbours.

Another outflow of the Reformation was **Lutheran** thinking and the so-called **two-kingdom theory**. The *church and the city* were now *in paradox*. They belonged to two worlds both responsible under God, but reigned by two different laws.

The **Anabaptists** or the "radical reformation" responded to this failure of Luther and Calvin to repudiate the heritage of Constantinianism completely. For them there was

still too much of a bond between church and state, which resulted in what they called the "fallen church". The *church is against the city* in their mode. The kingdom of God is incarnated in the community of disciples and this community is positioned over against the culture of the day. With the Anabaptists the idea of a counter-culture Christanity is institutionalised.

Luther maintains the Christ and city paradox, the Anabaptists developed the Christ against the city model, but **Calvin** introduced *Christ as the Transformer of the city*.

> Calvin looked for the present permeation of all life in the city-state by the gospel.
>
> (Conn 1979 : 24)

Calvin understood the depravity of humanity so that his idea of transformation was never an utopian ideal negating the effects of sin. He did believe in transformation permeating all of life, however, manifested in signs of the reign of God breaking through, signs of the kingdom of God being established (cf. Conn 1979 : 24).

One of the great problems in Calvin is his inheritance of Constantine, which was rightly criticised by the Anabaptists. Calvin struggled to make a clean break with the medieval concept of the church, in which the church embraced all in a given locality.

After the theopolis and the interlude of the Reformation the cities moved to the so-called *megalopolis*. This was the era of the emerging secularisation and modernisation of the world, focussing much on the individual. The secular city was born in this era. Also dominant was the emerging Marxist theory which defined society in terms of a class struggle and envisaged a new community born out of a proletarian revolution.

At the heart of this era was **a new consciousness** which was molded by a search for happiness which sought solutions not in God but in the city. The city itself became the Messiah (cf. Conn 1979 : 30). Grace disappeared in the modern city and was replaced by freedom. In the works of **Schleiermacher**, **Ritschl**, and others, the *Christ-of-the-city* typology emerged, illustrated in this quotation :

> Ritshcl's vision of the megalopolis under God becomes a synthesis 'of the great values esteemed by democratic culture; the freedom and intrinsic worth of individuals, social co-operation and universal peace.' Ritschl becomes the midwife of classic theological liberalism, and Jesus is delivered as the Christ of culture.
>
> (Conn 1979 : 31)

This identification of cultural values and Christ has become rooted in Western society and it has been very visible in the American dream and in the Afrikaner-theology (cf. the writings of Stringfellow 1973; Wallis 1976; et al).

The Christ-of-the-city typology gave birth to the **Christian Socialist movement** in Britain and to the **Social Gospel movement** in the United States. For these movements the most important task of the church was to reconstruct society.

> Sin became injustice; redemption, social morality; heaven, a just society; and hell, a slum.
>
> (Conn 1979 : 33)

Walter Rauschenbusch was a pastor in one of New York City's slum neighbourhoods and his experiences

> created a liberal revision of the gospel into a socialist solution for the overcoming of the evils of industrial society.
>
> (Conn 1979 : 33)

There was also **an evangelical response** in this time under the leadership of prominent figures such as **William Wilberforce**, **Lord Shaftesbury**, and others, working against slavery, for housing and educational reform, labor legislation, improvement of mining conditions, and so forth.

Wilberforce and others were not equating the kingdom of God with a reconstructed society, as was suggested by Ritschl and Rauschenbusch. On the other hand, they have not been able to discern the religious roots of urban individualism and they left the unregulated economic activity of this era unquestioned. Unfortunately, as the 19th century progressed, this led to the great dichotomisation of life into public and private spheres and religion became a private affair.

> As the nineteenth century progressed, that element of captivity to the urban model of secularization became stronger, and the evangelical moved from social amelioration to social reinforcement, from a posture of change to status quo.
>
> (Conn 1979 : 35)

The evangelical church did not have the theoretical capabilities to deal properly with the structural problems of urbanisation and industrialisation. Its accommodation of secular-cultural values and its identification with Christ made them sterile in their search for Christian justice in the city.

> Urban problems, like substandard housing, poverty, unemployment, disease and crime were too much for the churches with their limited resources to cope with effectively. Many of the faithful shook their heads in despair and concluded there was little they could do about the wretched social conditions except pray and try to evangelize their neighbors. Added to this was the retreat from the inner cities by established protestant congregations, leaving many slum areas virtually devoid of churches.
>
> (Conn 1979 : 35)

Today, 100 years later in South Africa, it seems like a description of churches in our cities.

Evangelicals in this era challenged the theological liberalism of the social gospel movement, as well as their open conflict with social structures for the sake of social reform. This movement was rejected by evangelical churches and with it the whole notion of social reform. Individual piety and personal ethics became the greater emphasis of evangelical Christians and an increasing identification of evangelicalism

with status quo capitalism was in the order of the day. Harvie Conn (1979 : 37) refers to the president of Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia, Alba Johnson, who said:

> You know the widespread social unrest is largely due to the workingman's envy of those who make a little more money than he does. Now Billy Sunday makes people look to the salvation of their own souls, and when a man is looking after his own soul's good he forgets his selfish desire to become rich. Instead of agitating for a raise in wages he turns and helps some poorer brother who's down and out.

Johnson conveniently forgets about his own "selfish desire to get rich" implicit in being president of this large railway company, and in his words the sound of Marx's statement of religion being opium to the people rings very true. Social problems were neglected without offering any alternative to it, or by spiritualising and offering salvation and revival preachers to "solve" the problems.

In this paradigm suffering in the city was not a call for the gospel, but rather a sign of the end of times. In 1914 somebody like the well-known devotional writer R.A. Torrey offers the coming of Christ as the only solution for the political and commercial problems that they have experienced in the cities of his day (cf. Conn 1979 : 37).

### 2.1.3   From Megalopolis to the Global Village

At the turn of the nineteenth century **Abraham Kuyper** has revived the model of *Christ as transformer of the city*, introduced first by Augustine and later by Calvin. He opposed the "Anabaptist isolationism" and suggested that the church actively involves itself in the public and social arenas of his day. This was also in opposition to current evangelical thinking which was in reaction against Christian social movements.

In the twentieth century **Barth** offered a revision of the *Christ-and-city-in-paradox* typology, warning about the dangers of a two-kingdom theory. Barth suggested a Christological unity between the two spheres of church and city, united in the single will of God. He saw a community of Christians and a community of citizens, illustrated by two concentric circles. The light of the kingdom falls on the earthly church and through the church onto the earthly city.

Barth affirms a paradox, but the paradox he suggests is not between two kingdoms, but between the city as elect and the church as elect. For him the city is already redeemed and the powers already destroyed. *The goal of the church is to reveal the sanctification of all humanity and human life as it has already taken place in Christ* (cf. Conn 1982 : 39).

In the twentieth century the urban explosion that started in the previous century gained even more momentum and the city became a global reality. We now live in *a global village of interconnected cities*. In this era western imperialism and colonialism were greater than ever before. Western categories of secularisation shaped third world religion and anthropology and the church were caught in the "great century" of missions and unable to discern its own identification with the syncretisms of secularisation. It is

in this era that somebody like David Livingstone could use Christianisation and "civilisation" almost as synonyms.

Conn (1979 : 45) captures it well in saying

> The components for this identification of missions with the religious roots of modernization had been supplied by the pietistic identification of the gospel with middle class values.

Max Warren (1967 : 54) referred to missions as "essentially a movement of the *petit bourgeoisie*". This identification of missions with colonial expansion should be understood against the background of a ***Christ of culture*** typology. Missionaries virtually gave religious and moral sanction to socio-political domination.

Another shift took place in this century and particularly since the 1960's there was a shift away from an exclusively negative view of the city as Babylon. This was due to contributions from people like **Bonhoeffer** calling for the church to exist for others, **Hoekendijk** with his shalom theology and the **World Council of Churches** adopting a new agenda in which they celebrate the city (cf. Conn 1982 : 231). The city now became a secular event and there is a move away from the traditional parish concept to development, urban-industrial mission, and so forth. (It is a question whether the parish approach and broader urban development issues cannot and / or should not be integrated creatively.)

At meetings of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi (1961) and Uppsala (1968) there were further developments. At New Delhi the "cosmic Christ" was celebrated and the big divide between church and world disappeared. God was at work everywhere and God was virtually identified with the process of historical development (cf. Conn 1982 : 232). At Uppsala the World Council of Churches emphasised mission as humanization, mission as acknowledging God's activities in the world and the world providing the agenda for the Missio Dei, and a positive interpretation of the world and history.

Questions that arose in reaction to these developments at the WCC, include the underplay of God's sovereignty, a too positive view of the world and the city, and a negation of the New Testament view of humanity's perdition and fallenness. Furthermore missions and secular history were merged in the thinking of the WCC.

Conn is of the opinion that the major documents of Vatican II correspond to a great extent with the model that emerged from the WCC. He warns against oversimplification, though, but indicates that there were clear parallels.

On the other hand **evangelical thinking** still carried a strong dichotomy between private and public affairs within it, the gospel was privatised, they had a weak view of corporate and structural sin and their whole methodology was church-centred without including the world and its issues on its agenda more intentionally.

In the 1970's the large evangelical groupings and the WCC have both made some sounds of embracing areas of ministry which were neglected by them before. The WCC re-introduced evangelism whilst the Lausanne Movement had a serious look at the church's involvement in social issues. People like Mortimer Arias (WCC) and John Stott (Lausanne) helped this process along. Although there has been shifts in the thinking of these large meetings, it seems as if much of the traditional positions have been maintained, if only subtly, at grassroots level where churches meet together.

In this era the traditional Catholic model of Christ above the city (cf. Niebuhr), has been revised in the work of liberation theologians such as Gustavo Gutierrez. Their work, according to Conn, could be better understood as a *Christ of the city* typology.

> The history of salvation must become the salvation of history, the church a sacrament-sign community of solidarity with the world and specifically with its oppressed.

(Conn 1979 : 266)

I would question Conn's positioning of Gutierrez, suggesting that his work also resembles traits of *Christ transforming the city*. True liberation implies a radical break with the past, that paves the way for a transformed society. Implicit in liberation theology is the notion of transformation as goal. Although it is not always worked out as Calvin would suggest through involvement within government and other arenas, transforming from within, there is a process of transformation from below.

If liberation theologians would only be viewed as belonging to the Christ of the city typology they would ironically belong to the same category of theologians they oppose. Theologians affirming Western expansion also belong to the Christ of the city typology, believing that Christ affirms the culture of the day as it stands.

Although there have been shifts in **evangelical** thinking in this century, earlier on most evangelicals would have seemed to be at home in a *Christ against the city* typology. Although Lausanne happened, the inheritance of false dichotomies and privatized religion are still strongly rooted in grassroots evangelical activities. This is clear in modern mission movements, the AD 2000 movement (abroad and at home), and so forth.

The *Christ and the city in paradox* typology was re-introduced with the **Frankfurt Declaration of 1970** under the leadership of **Peter Beyerhaus**. This declaration moved the complete Lordship of Christ to the future, salvation being something of the now, but justice and peace not yet to be found. This leads to an affirmation of the dichotomy, placing salvation in present categories, but shifting social change to an "other-worldy" category, not to be bothered with in the present.

Reflecting on the past century what we have is a "naive utopianism" as seen in the thinking of Uppsala and the WCC, evangelical conservatism retreating into private religious enclaves, and a two-tiered model as adopted by the Frankfurt Declaration.

Another model that emerged is that of the so-called *"radical evangelicals"*, represented in the writings of Jim Wallis, Orlando Costas, Ron Sider, and others. This movement has its roots in the Anabaptist movement, although they do not present themselves as coming from a particular theological tradition. The radical evangelicals are consistent in challenging false dichotomies, evangelical captivity to the status quo, and a spiritualised version of the social realities.

Somebody like Stephen Knapp sees in this movement the best of two worlds (Reformed and Anabaptist) coming together (cf. Conn 1979 : 274). I tend to agree with him, reflecting on the work of Wallis and others. Yet, Harvie Conn has some reservations, although he is enthusiastic about the movement.

One of his points of critique is that the "radical evangelicals" does not apply their constructions to the traditional arena of missions, which they should. But even more penetrating, and obviously a Reformed criticism on the "radical evangelical" movement, is his questioning of whether they have escaped the two-kingdom model and the pessimism about the city so prevalent in older evangelical and Anabaptist thinking.

They did well to analyse systems, cultures and societies from the point of view of the victims (cf. Wallis 1976 : 102, 137). Rottenberg (1977 : 18) is of the opinion that the gospel views history in the final analysis "not from the point of view of victims but of Christ's victory". Conn does not seem to find a theology of renewal and transformation in the work of the "radical evangelicals". Wallis' call for a new community as an alternative to the prevalent structures of society, is questioned by Conn (1979 : 276), wondering whether this "new community" is the showplace and true sign of God's kingdom. Conn (1979 : 278), true to a Reformed perspective, is looking for a more holistic vision of the kingdom, expressed in signs of transformation in every sphere of the urban environment.

Whereas the "radical evangelicals" still maintain something of a Christ against the city typology, Conn would like to move them to a more transformational model.

> I am of the opinion that this is already happening and reflected in a place such as Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and Eastern College in Philadelphia, which have become home to many so-called "radical evangelicals" (such as Tony Campolo, Ron Sider, Orlando Costas, Samuel Escobar, Roberta Hestenes, and others). At Eastern joint economic development programs are offered which equip people to engage in transformational ministry in the cities of the world. They go far beyond mere analysis and prophetic discernment of the victims, but build their programs on the assumption that Christ is enough to bring renewal and transformation to communities. People go out from Eastern as community developers, project managers, community bankers, and so forth, incarnating gospel values in the public arena.

## 2.2    The Church in the City : Where Do We Position Ourselves ?

A second typology to be used is the much simpler one offered by Robert Linthicum (1991b: 21-26). It correlates with the Niebuhr-typology and I will briefly explain, with practical examples, how I understand Linthicum's typology. I have added one category to his for the purposes of analysing modern churches in relationship to the city.

Linthicum speaks about the church in the city, the church to the city and the church with the city, mainly referring to the inner city. I want to add a category, i.e. the church escaping from the city.

## 2.2.1 The Church Escaping from the City

I start by using my own category, referring to the church escaping the city. This refers to the physical relocation or closure of churches that once were in inner city communities.

In the discussion above it was clearly shown how evangelical churches in the era of industrialisation and urbanisation was overwhelmed by the new realities and have escaped at many occasions. In the United States and Great Britain traditional mainline churches have also physically closed and moved out of desperate inner city communities when these turned into urban slums.

In the South African situation there are many examples of churches who left changing inner cities in the last years, and in Johannesburg more than one traditional church were sold to become a mosque. The communities around the church changed culturally and socio-economically, the traditional membership decreased, the church did not adjust to its changing environment, and eventually it was not able to survive.

Other churches can still survive if they are prepared to make the necessary adjustments, but they consciously decide to leave the inner city before it has changed too much.

Escape from the city takes different forms. Some churches close their doors and die, not to be revived again. Other churches close their doors and are absorbed by congregations who are still alive and well. Still others close their doors in the city and transplant themselves to the suburbs where they usually have a more flourishing ministry. So they make a conscious (or not so conscious) decision to become a suburban church.

## 2.2.2 The Church in the City

Linthicum's first category speaks of the church in the city. This is a church located in the city, but its mindset is not urban. It could be an inner city church with a suburban mentality (most of its members might come from surrounding suburbs). In the South African context this often refers to old mother churches with a long and rich tradition in the city. The inner city community around the church is not determining its agenda or ministry style, but the suburban members are. Such a church is not an inner city church, although it is located in the inner city. It is a suburban church foreign to inner city problems and aspirations.

- **Anti-Urban Bias**

In both scenarios discussed above, i.e. the church escaping the city (2.2.1), and the church in the city (2.2.2), an anti-urban bias tends to form the basis for the church's response to or neglect of the city. Gibson Winter writes about the suburban captivity of the church already in 1961.

Aylward Shorter (1991 : 58-71) writes in *The Church in the African City* about Christian anti-urbanism in Africa. The missionary history in Africa is underlied by an anti-urban rural theology, which is not an African problem as such, but goes back to the Christian writers, historians and theologians who have given a pessimistic account of the city in their work. The missionaries who came to Africa brought this anti-urban mindset with them.

Other factors also contributed specifically to this problem in Africa. In the nineteenth-century Africa there was not a large urban tradition. Indigenous towns were few, except for West Africa. Urbanisation in its current dynamic form is a relatively new phenomenon to Africa and in many ways the African church still has to come to terms with this. When colonial towns appeared in Africa, missionaries and Christians have seen these places as hostile and alien.

On the other hand,

> From a socio-economic point of view, Islam has always had an essentially urban character, and the administrative and commercial communities of the early African towns were often in the hands of Muslims or other non-Christians. Ismaelis, Hindus and Sikhs, the indentured labour or immigrant business class from India, predominated in East, Central and Southern Africa, while the Lebanese held sway in the West.
>
> (Shorter 1991 : 63)

In South Africa I would like to refer to three different responses to the city. As people urbanised in this country the church also followed (not always as an immediate reponse). The church almost always was in the city, however, but we need to ask in what way the city was on the agenda of the church ?

### i.    The Afrikaner-church and the city
After the transition of the white Afrikaner from rural towns to the city, the church took a long time to come to terms with the permanent nature of this transition. For many years the church maintained a rural mentality, even though churches were established in cities. Kritzinger (1995 : 51) is of the opinion that it was

> not before the late fifties and sixties that the church consciously adopted an urban pattern of ministry.

He continues to say

> However, in time the church accepted the inevitability of the Afrikaners' move to the cities and industries. The church became the mainstay of the Afrikaner in the city.

In the late 1940's a very significant work, *Kerk en Stad* (Albertyn, et al 1947), was published by the Dutch Reformed Church. This was a report published in preparation for the Volkskongres to be held in July of 1947 and had to report on the situation of the emerging generation of urban Afrikaners. Archbishop Tutu (1983 : 171-175) used extracts from this book in his reply to the Eloff Commission who investigated the activities of the South African Council of Churches. He used it to show the parallels between the pleas of the SACC and the historic solidarity of the white Afrikaner church with its people.

This book shows the church's solidarity with the working class Afrikaner (cf. also Kritzinger - chapter 2; 1.1). In referring to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Berlin that lost its working class members because it had no eye or ear for justice or for the oppressed, this book is a challenge to the Afrikaner church to show solidarity with the Afrikaner labourer and to plead their cause with the affluent (cf. Albertyn, et al 1947 : 307-314).

Very similar to language used by black theologians at a later stage, this book described the alienation of Afrikaners in "their own cities" (cf. Maluleke : 2.2.2 iii). Afrikaners were perceived as intruders and competitors. Ironically, this book complains that the natural process of urbanisation has been hindered, stating that it was impossible in the long run - it was important to allow for nature to take its course and for people to come to the cities (cf. the hindrance of black urbanisation through legislation in the apartheid-era). The church had an important role in this regard to reposition itself and to become relevant in the city; even more, the church had to contribute, if possible, by shaping the cities to become Afrikaans cities (cf. Albertyn, et al 1947 : 18).

In the sixties it was, ironically, Carel Boshoff who has drawn much attention and resources to Soweto and other urban black townships on the Witwatersrand. Kritzinger (1995 : 210) refers to him as "a kind of 'apostle to the city'". He indicates the opportunities that the new secular city offer the church, recognising the mission field at the doorstep of white churches. The black townships were regarded as "mission fields", reflecting something of the paternalistic nature of mission, but also of the lack of theological integrity amongst many Afrikaner missiologists.

In the seventies a challenging work, *Swartman, Stad en Toekoms* (Black people, city and future), was written by Jaap du Rand, a theologian teaching at the University of the Western Cape (cf. Kritzinger 1995 : 210-1). At that stage he was pastoring a church in Kwazakhele, Port Elizabeth. He suggested in this book (1970) that black people had come to the city to stay and that this was a fact which could not be altered. Implicit in such a finding is that the policies of the then government would not hold against the tide of reality. Within Afrikaans circles Du Rand's acknowledgement was well ahead of his time. Afrikaans people rather clung to their self-preserving policies hoping that the inevitable would not be proven right.

Kritzinger (1995 : 211-212) suggests that Afrikaans missiologists have joined the calls

to abolish of influx control act in the eighties. He bases it on the church's realisation that certain  elements of separate development were not successful, such as the concept of migrant labour, which was "'a cancer in our midst'" (Kritzinger 1995 : 211). Kritzinger himself recognises that criticisms from missiologists (such as himself) at this stage might have been late, and he also recognises his own reluctance to offer a solution or an alternative to the then-present situation.

Kritzinger (1994 : 51) suggests that the real development of an urban mentality in Afrikaans churches has in some ways only emerged by the 1990's, and then also only partly so. The majority of Afrikaners now live in cities and big towns and churches have established themselves properly here. Yet, these churches have only incarnated into a very small part of the urban reality, namely where Afrikaans or white people found themselves. Large sectors of industry, urban townships, informal settlements, urban sub-cultures, the inner city poor, and so forth, are not necessarily accounted for in the white church's response to the city.

### ii.　　The black response to the city
The black response to the city in the South African context, was traditionally to the urban black township where they slept (the fringe cities), and to the traditional white city where they  worked.

Cities in South Africa have been white people's domain and black people were only temporary sojourners. The personal and intensely spiritual struggle which this caused for a young man coming from a homeland, is profoundly and disturbingly expressed in this poem by an anonymous writer, taken from De Gruchy's book *Cry Justice !* (1986 : 72-74) :


**Lord Jesus, where are you ?**

What I see in Egoli
are tall buildings
smart cars
well dressed people
a whole scene
that has no place for me
　　　no place for my wife
no place for my children.

Lord Jesus, where are you ?
Are you in those smart white offices
　　　those smart white houses
　　　those smart white churches ?

They think you are.
They talk about you the whole time.
Just as if you were right there with them.
They are so sure
that you are guiding them,
that they are doing your will.

I like to think
that you are actually here with us
that you are one of the left-out ones.

If that is how it is
if you are really here
with us, for us,
I think I could bear ot
because I'd know
this wasn't the end,
that you still come
to get prisoners out of goal
and blind people out of darkness,
to get hungry people into the place
where they can feed their little ones
instead of helplessly hopelessly
listening to them cry.

But my son does not call you Lord,
Jesus,
let alone call on you,
Lord Jesus,
he uses your name as a swearword.
Jesus ! He says,
bloody white man's Jesus !

I fear for him,
for us,
for those whites.

O Jesus, Jesus,
come soon,
clear up the barriers
open it all up, because if you don't
something awful is going to happen.

Do you hear me,
one of those 'homeland' blacks
on the outside looking in ?
RSVP
soon.

Maluleke (1995 : 168-170) speaks about black people's alienation in the city which occurred at different levels. There was an alienation from the products of their labour in a Marxian sense, but they were also alienated from the very city in which they moved, because it was not theirs (also reflected in the poem above). They lost touch with the "land" which is a basic and important concept in African rural culture. They were also alienated from their fellow human beings, and often survived by exploiting each other.

Another unique feature of the South African township is protest. Political and labour protests were initiated in the urban black townships and Sharpeville (1960) and Soweto (1976) will always be symbolic of certain periods in our history.

Maluleke also describes township life in terms of crime, the strong rural character which still remains (African traditional religion), high mobility, the central place of the funeral, and so forth. In his description community and creativity have not been lost, though, although townships were places of struggle. They were also the birth places for indigenous forms of music and later became community and home to many people.

Townships, Maluleke (1995 : 167) summarises, are a colonialist hangover, a result of "people control" and land dispossession, places of hiding and refuge where "illegal" black people congregated, and finally, they "became 'home' to many people with a distinguishable culture and sense of history."

As townships became home to many black people, a certain ambivalence developed within the black soul. Du Rand (1970 : 2) described black experiences of the city way back in 1970 and he sensed a certain ambivalence in these experiences. On the one hand people were being drawn to the city, but at the same time they have resented the fact (Kritzinger 1995 : 211).

Maluleke (1995 : 163) refers in one of his articles to the striking poem which Serote (1972 : 3) has written on Alexandra, the township where he was born :

<div align="center">

I have gone from you, many times,
I come back.
Alexandra, I love you;
I know
When all these worlds became funny to me
I silently waded back to you
And amid the rubble I lay
Simple and black.

</div>

This poem expresses the contrasts of township life in urban black townships, the parts of the cities where black people were confined to. The poet is longing to lie in simplicity amid the rubble and chaos of township realities. Maluleke (1995 : 163) reflects on Serote's love and loyalty to Alexandra, asking whether he has learnt "to appreciate the odd mixture of death, squalor, poverty and community ?"

Maluleke continues to speak about black experience of the city, and he also refers to the sense of ambivalence as was observed by Du Rand.

> Even when black people appear to be praising the city there is often ironical contempt for it...

> (Maluleke 1995 : 170)

This contempt has to do with the fact that black people felt like strangers in somebody else's land.

> Johannesburg is simply cruel bacause *'ke Makgogweng, ndi makhuwani, hi le valungwini'* - its
> is and has always been the place of and for white people. Johannesburg has not only eroded
> black customs; its laws and ethos have ensured that these customs 'became instruments of
> oppression' (Magubane 1979 : 70).

> <div align="right">(Maluleke 1995 : 170)</div>

And yet, the city has become home to millions of black South Africans today. If the previous paragraphs dealt with a black response to the city in general, the next few paragraphs will reflect on the way in which the black church has responded to the city.

Aylward Shorter (1992) suggests that the church is rural in orientation and anti-urban. Maluleke (1995 : 173) responds to this by saying that the church in Africa is indeed ill adapted to the city, but he submits that it is not better adapted to the rural context. The church has for a long time viewed the traditional customs and culture of Africa as the enemy of the gospel, which distanced the church largely from rural Africa. In the same way the church has viewed "the 'impure' culture of the townships"   (Maluleke 1995 : 173).

Maluleke recognises that the township church is fairly young and a byproduct of the past political system. It is almost as if the township church has thereby also been condemned to the ambivalence and contempt with which black people in general viewed the city. An additional factor was its negative view of township as well as traditional African culture, which distanced the church in a way from its surrounding communities.

We cannot speak about a black response to the city without reference to the macro-context of South Africa and the response of black theologians such as Allan Boesak and Desmond Tutu. Both were rooted in urban black (and so-called Coloured) communities where they experienced the struggle of black people daily. Out of these deeply rooted experiences they have addressed the socio-political systems of the country. Although this is not urban theology in the narrow sense of the word, focussing on ministry in geographically confined urban communities, what they have written has grown out of the struggle in the whole of South Africa, but this struggle was very specifically concretised in the urban black communities.

Boesak (1987 : 13) introduces his work *Comfort and Protest*, by putting it in its proper context.

> *Comfort and Protest* was conceived in 1980 as a series of Bible studies for my local church. It
> was the year of the student uprising in Cape Town, following on Soweto 1976. The school
> boycotts left hundreds dead, many wounds that would never heal, and questions about faith and
> God to which I had no answer.

Both its audience, being a local church in the urban context of the Western Cape, and the soil from which it grew, i.e. the student uprises which had an uniquely urban face, and which made urban townships places of protest, give this series of Bible studies an urban character. It was a response to the macro-situation in South Africa, but as it expressed itself very concretely in black cities, and it was addressing a congregation

in an urban township.

I wonder whether it would be wrong to say that the response of black theologians in apartheid South Africa was the only authentic response to the realities of South African cities. While the suburban church model was built on the ashes of forced removals and the misery of people condemned to homelands, the black response grew out of the real struggle of millions of South Africans, of which many were already urbanised. In fact, Boesak's words in the next paragraph, although not exclusively, refer largely to urban communities such as Sophiatown, Marabastad and District Six. These words refer to hostels and urban townships; they refer to the legislated hindrance of black urbanisation.

> The South African government has laws that prohibit black families from living together in "white South Africa". These same laws make criminals out of men and women who want to be together as husband and wife. This is not called breaking up families. It is called 'influx control' or, even better, 'orderly urbanization'. They take the poorest parts of South Africa (13 percent !) and create 'homelands' for black people. Then, at the point of a gun, they forcibly remove black people from places where they have lived for centuries and send them to these 'homelands', where there is hunger and starvation, neverending unemployment, and brutal repression by the little tin gods set up by Pretoria. These places are not called concentration camps, which is what they are. They are called 'resettlement areas'. In these places our children die of hunger while white South Africa dies of overeating.
>
> (Boesak 1987 : 48)

In his whole book it is the cities of our nation that became symbols of oppression, violence and protest.

> From the earliest days of colonial rule, whole communities have been slaughtered to secure the continuation of white power; and in our times there have been Sharpeville in 1960, Soweto 1976, Cape Town 1980, Langa 1984.
>
> (Boesak 1987 : 69)

Cities are citadels of power :

> But the pharaohs of Egypt, and the pharaohs of Rome, and the pharaohs of Pretoria as well, never listen. They still survey their horses and armies, anti-riot equipment and bombs, and say, 'Who is the Lord, that I should listen to his voice ?'
>
> (Boesak 1987 : 72)

The city has been a place of alienation, crime, protest, innovation and community. It has been the place where the powerful have devised evil schemes to keep the powerless out. It has been, to black South Africans, a place of pain and suffering, but it has also become home to millions. The black church has condemned the city at times, and yet, the black church has developed solidarity with the masses of people, who also lived in urban black communities, in their struggle under an apartheid-regime.

People such as Father Trevor Huddleston, who faced the forced removals from Sophiatown with his parishioners, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who served St.Augustine's in Soweto and St.Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg's inner city, are still remembered by the masses of black urban dwellers. Their ministry and theology should

inform any attempt at urban theology in the South Africa of today.

At present black South Africans are in the process of taking ownership of the cities. Inner city residential areas are becoming multi-racial or predominantly black. We are in a new day, and in this new day, the church has to respond in a new way. What is the response of the black church to the post-apartheid city ?

### iii.    The temptation of the suburban dream

I would like to suggest that the Afrikaans (and English) churches in South Africa have responded to the urban realities by perfecting the suburban dream. Suburban churches resemble the ideals of the American dream - Western individualism, upward mobility, success, and so forth. Even its mission endeavours, i.e. improved annual faith promises, increased missionaries on the field, Internet in missions, and so forth, breathe the air of suburbanism and middle-class values.

Afrikaans people had an affinity for the suburbs since they first moved to the city :

> Die intrekkende Afrikaner toon 'n voorliefde om hom nie in die middelstad nie, maar in die voorstede te vestig, waar die lewe goedkoper is en waar hy 'n deel van die boerelewe kan behou.

(Albertyn, et al 1947 : 41)

Rather than being rooted in the city, the white Christian has developed a suburban theology. This mentality has replaced the rural mentality and reflects suburban culture, but it is still not an option for struggling inner city churches and communities. Yet, *many inner city churches have suburban mentalities* as their agendas are determined by their commuting suburban leadership and their membership is dominated by suburban members. This stands in the way of transformation, both of the church itself, and of its surrounding communities.

Klippies Kritzinger (1991) suggests that the white church should be re-evangelised, referring to the white suburban church, which is but a reflection of the white suburban lifestyle.

Another aspect which we need to consider is that the reality of suburban churches in the inner city is no longer confined only to the "white" church. There are already examples of inner city churches that have become predominantly black, which are also characterised by suburban mentalities and values, searching for upward mobility, individualism, success, and so forth, while excluding the marginal groups of the inner city itself.

The suburban dream is a temptation in any church and for any culture. This dream is a challenge to the very essence of the Christian faith which is communal, inclusive, in solidarity with others (especially the poor), and so forth. It contradicts the life-style and calling of Jesus, which was not for upward mobility, individualism and success, but for becoming cross-bearers at a cost.

The white Afrikaans constituency should be reminded of its early days in the city and its original solidarity with the Afrikaner poor; they should re-discover this original vision, yet, allow for it to be inclusive of all people in our day. The black constituency should re-apply the principles which were steering them in the struggle, to the reconstruction of our cities in partnership with others; the black church should discover where its people are in the inner cities and should partner with the inner city church to address their needs (both the upcoming black professionals, and the poor and marginal).

### 2.2.3 The Church to the City

The church to the city can be an inner city church, a suburban church or a missions organisation, developing ministry that relate to inner city realities. Linthicum (1991b : 21-26) describes a church to the city as a church identifying needs and problems in its community and it develops programs and projects to minister to these needs. Usually these programs have all the answers, but the church has hardly asked the recipients of programs what their questions or needs were. A church to the city tends to be a paternalistic church, still captive to middle class values and protective of the status quo. Ministries are need- and service-oriented, but it does not really address the root issues of the inner city.

There are many suburban churches and volunteers with a calling or a need to work in the inner city. Often they enter the city with a kind of "saviour-mentality", having cures for every disease. The assumption in this category is often that God has left the city and that we have to bring Him back.

One could tone down the criticism a little by putting this approach in its broader global context, putting it alongside the model which Bonhoeffer (1971 : 382f) suggested, namely being a church-for-others. Bonhoeffer suggested that the purpose for the church's existence is to exist for others, and his was a correction on the introvert nature of the church of his time, protecting the status quo and accepting uncritically the developments and goals of the state. Other theologians of his time warned that the "church-for-others"-model was born in the liberal-humanist climate of Western Christians wanting to do good for others, always knowing the best and having the answers (cf. 2.2.4). Whether that was the way in which Bonhoeffer suggested it, I doubt, but that the church-for-others model could lead to paternalism and self-righteousness in mission and development, ring true to this day. Linthicum's "church to the city" has it against this kind of ministry that do things for people, disempowering them even more.

### 2.2.4 The Church with the City

The fourth category is the one advocated by Lintichum (1991b : 21-26) and I embrace this category in my own study. To be a church with the city means to take the inner city and its issues seriously. It asks for a slower process of entering into a community, listening to its dreams and pains, discerning where God is at work and connecting with that. This category implies solidarity with the inner city, allowing its people to contribute

towards determining the agendas and priorities of the church. A church with the city comes in alongside the people it wants to serve instead of forcing agendas from above. It listens carefully to discern voices calling from the community.

- **Church-with-others**

Bosch (1991 : 368) has quite a lengthy discussion on the church 's mission being **church-with-others**. As part of this discussion he refers to contemporary ecclesiology's increasing reference to the church as sacrament, instrument and sign (cf. Dulles 1987 : 58-70). New Testament images expressing this idea include salt, light, yeast, servant, and prophet. Vatican II was the catalyst for the surfacing of the images of sacrament, instrument and sign once again. It gives expression to William Temple's well-known formulation that the church is the only society in the world existing for the sake of its non-members (cf. Neill 1968 : 76). It also corresponds to the call of Bonhoeffer (1971 : 382f) for the church to be church for others.

> The church is the church only when it exists for others... The church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving.

Sundermeier and West have warned against this popular expression of Bonhoeffer's, born in the liberal-humanist climate in which Western Christians thought to have all the answers, doing things for others. Sundermeier challenges the concept of **pro-existence**, talking about it as the helper-syndrome, and instead encourages us to think about true **co-existence**.

> Instead of talking about 'the church for others', we should rather speak of 'the church with others'.
>
> (Sundermeier 1986 : 62-65)

Käsemann (1974) sounds other legitimate objections. For him the only legitimate sign of the church is the cross of Christ. He would have a problem making too much of the church as sacrament or sign. The church is indeed a sign, but nothing more than a sign. Bosch (1991 : 376) concludes by saying that when the church refers to itself as sign, sacrament or instrument, it is a risk. It is not an arrogant kind of statement, however, calling people to the church, but rather it is an acceptance of how God sees his church, and a sign pointing to the Christ we should follow.

The concept of the church-with-others represents a new approach in theology, where the church is no longer supposed to conquer the world, but the church is in solidarity with the world (i.e. critical solidarity). In this approach church is no longer the ground and goal of mission, because we are called to be kingdom people, not church people (cf. Snyder 1983 : 11). The kingdom is broader than the church. In other words, the church is in solidarity with the world seeking for signs of God's kingdom in economic, political and social spheres of society, as well as in the church. The church in solidarity with the world is not equating the kingdom or Christ with present culture. It is inserting herself, however, in present culture, as reflected in the public arena of the city, seeking for signs of the kingdom and bringing transformation to usher in the kingdom in its final form.

Bosch (1991 : 381f) compares the new approach to the older dominant approach and suggests the possibility and necessity of *a creative tension between the two approaches*.

> At one end of the spectrum, the church perceives itself to be the sole bearer of a message of salvation on which it has a monopoly; at the other end, the church views itself, at most, as an illustration - in word and deed - of God's involvement with the world. Where one chooses the first model, the church is seen as a partial realization of God's reign on earth, and mission as that activity through which individual converts are transferred from eternal death to life. Where one opts for the alternative perception, the church is, at best, only a pointer to the way God acts in respect of the world, and mission is viewed as a contribution toward the humanization of society - a process in which the church may perhaps be involved in the role of consciousness-raiser. (cf Dunn 1980 : 83-103; Hoedemaker 1988 : 170f).

He goes on to suggest that it is possible for these two approaches to be integrated in a creative way. Such an integration is seldom achieved, however, and people tend to view these approaches as mutually exclusive. Orlando Costas (1982 : 80) remarked in this regard that the first approach leaves the gospel without an ethical thrust, while the second approach lacks soteriological depth.

Two of the serious problems with the second approach is that the church sometimes tend to be identified completely with the world and its agenda. Another problem is that the church is sometimes written off completely (cf. Costas 1982 : 80). The theologies of Metz, Hoekendijk, and others, paved the way for these tendencies. Rutti (1972 : 280) saw the church as "a reality of secondary importance". The locus of God's activity has moved from the church to the world and God is revealing himself to people outside of the church who are not necessarily church members. The emphasis on the world and God's activity in the world, as well as the inclusion of people outside the church in God's activities of grace are corrections on older narrower approaches. However, too see God's work exclusively in the world and outside of the church, and to minimise the role of the church to such an extent, would be to take it too far.

At WCC meetings in Uppsala and Bangkok

> the embarrassment with the church, and particularly with the local congregation, reached crisis proportions.
>
> (Bosch 1991 : 384)

Hoekendijk called the parish system immobile, self-centred, and introverted. Although Hoekendijk's analysis rings true in many ways, especially with regard to the mission of the church in the inner city, one cannot deal with the problem in theologically responsible ways by shelving the church altogether. Implicit in Bosch's missions theology is that transformation of the world starts with the missionary and the church. The church needs to be transformed continuously.

By the middle of the 1970's the importance of ecclesial categories have been re-discovered, affirming that mission in the world is impossible if it is not also ecclesial. The importance of the local church was emphasised once again and this had to be integrated with a new approach of being church-with-others.

Bosch (1991 : 386) makes an important contribution in this regard, providing boundaries for the church-with-others typology. He refers to Van't Hof (1972 : 206f), maintaining the uniqueness of the church, being in the world, and even with the world, but not of the world. Perhaps this is how we should understand the incarnation of Jesus. He was in the world and with us, but He was not of the world. The church's uniqueness may never lead to separation and detachment from the total human community. The purpose of the church's existence is to be with others.

Although the church should be church-with-others, it should also maintain its own identity. Therefore, Bosch (1991 : 387) maintains, the church

> may not commit itself without reservation to any social, political, or economic project.

## 3. Foundations for "Doing Theology in the Inner City" : Clarifying my Own Assumptions & Theological Method

### 3.1 Basic Assumptions Informing my Theological Activity

Before introducing my theological method, I need to explain my own assumptions which inform what I am doing theologically and in ministry. Obviously historical trends and movements are influencing my own perspective and I would like to introduce you to the assumptions, reflecting on the material covered in the previous discussions on the church and development, and the church and the city.

### 3.1.1 Transformation

Reflecting on the historical relationship between the church and development, it is clear that the church often adopted an uncritical approach to development, affirming the status quo and contributing to the misery of large groups of poor people. This brought about a loss of credibility for Christianity in many circles and amongst many poor countries and communities.

This study would like to suggest transformational development, which assumes the restructuring of inner city society in such a way that all people, including the inner city poor, will be able to live dignified life-styles. In order for the church to be an instrument of transformation, this study assumes personal transformation and the transformation of the church itself, if it is to contribute to broader societal transformation.

In opting for a transformational model, I intentionally choose a critical position with regard to the status quo of the reigning culture, if and where the culture of the day is structured in such a way that only certain groups benefit, and if the vulnerable are dislocated without viable alternatives as a result of development. Such a reality reflects an exploitative culture which needs to be challenged. The transformational model wants to recognise the effect of sin on people and institutions. This critical position would sometimes be translated into critical *solidarity* (cf. Heyns 1978 : 369-374) with the

culture of the day, but sometimes it would imply a critical and prophetic *distance*, challenging the powerful and the decision-makers, especially in as far as decisions and developments relate negatively to the vulnerable and marginalised.

I embrace transformation as goal of this study, aligning myself with contextual theologies as well as the Reformed typology of Christ transforming culture (cf. Augustine, Calvin, et al). Transformation can be our vision, in that Christ already made it possible on the cross.

The problem with inner city development as it is often done by churches and with urban renewal programmes as executed by local governments and developers, is that they seldom address the root causes of inner city poverty and decay. It creates facades of renewal, which usually enrich the developers themselves and score political points for local governments, without changing the misery of the surrounding poor communities. A transformational model would seek for development that will address the causes of inner city poverty and facilitate the restructuring of society in such a way that the "weak" groups would be strengthened as well. I will draw from theology as well as social sciences in analysing and interpreting the inner city, and in suggesting alternatives.

Biblically speaking the root of all evil is sin. Gutierrez (1988 : xxxviii) writes in a profound way about liberation from sin when he says

> Finally, there is liberation of sin, which attacks the deepest root of all servitude; for sin is the breaking of friendship with God and with other human beings, and therefore cannot be eradicated except by the unmerited redemptive love of the Lord whom we receive by faith and in communion with one another. Theological analysis (and not social or philosophical analysis) leads to the position that only liberation from sin gets to the very source of social injustice and other forms of human oppression and reconciles us with God and our fellow human beings.

Although sin has not always been a valid category in more recent contributions from the World Council of Churches, we need to appreciate Gutierrez' emphasis on sin, and the need for liberation from it through God's redemption.

### 3.1.2 Integral, Holistic Transformation

This study suggests holistic ministry in the inner city, going beyond the dichotomies of private and public affairs, the sacred and the secular, prayer and politics. It will suggest the development of ministry which will manifest itself in integrated development processes, aimed at personal, social, economic, and spiritual transformation, as well as the development of a sense of community.

I would like to use the term integral or holistic transformation, borrowing from Gutierrez and his concept of integral liberation (cf. ch.5; 7.8.2 for a more detailed discussion). Integral liberation is about the liberation of people personally, spiritually, and socio-economically.

The goal of this study is based on the assumption of integrated or integral

transformation (development). Through housing, the inner city church will be able to contribute to the transformation of the inner city, affecting lives of individuals and families on a personal, emotional and spiritual level, affecting the social environment of the inner city, and influencing the political processes.

The assumption is that Christ's redemption was sufficient to bring about change in every sphere of society. For the gospel to be lived with integrity in the inner city, we need to develop ministry that is truly holistic, addressing the totality of human life in Christ's name.   Although the vantage point of this study will be diaconal, it will demonstrate a holistic understanding of ministry and mission in the city, the diaconal not detached from pastoral, kerugmatic and koinonial elements, but the different elements or dimensions of ministry being integrated.

In *Farewell to Innocence* Allan Boesak (1977 : 22) refers to Luke 4 : 18-19, criticising the typical Western commentary on this passage, which usually spiritualises its content.

> The tendency to spiritualize the gospel message is still dominant. We are in full agreement with Gutierrez when he warns that this excessive spiritualization is something we should profoundly distrust. It stems from a western, dualist pattern  of thought foreign to biblical mentality. 'This is,' he says, ' a discarnate spirituality, scornful of all earthly realities.'

My understanding of the gospel is that it breaks through into the personal (spiritual & emotional), as well as socio-political realms of life. Therefore the ministry of the church should also embrace the totality of life.


### 3.1.3  Ecumenical

This study will draw from various theological perspectives and I would like to understand it as an ecumenical study. I cannot escape my Reformed roots, though, and I believe my emphasis on the transformation of the inner city, in personal, spiritual and public spheres, reflect my own roots in Calvin's theology.  The liberational possibilities inherent in Reformed theology have been highlighted by De Gruchy (1991), and therefore I've been able to fruitfully integrate reflections from Gutierrez and others.

Catholic theologians and religious educators such as Gutierrez (1988), Thomas Groome (1980), Donal Dorr (1984), Jean Vanier (1989) and Henri Nouwen (1989), have deeply influenced me over the last few years, and I integrated some of their insights into my own study, especially with regard to the concept of *community*, as developed by Vanier and Nouwen.

The radical evangelical school (cf. Wallis 1994; Sider 1990; Yoder 1981; and others) have been consistent in naming the demons of the day, implicit in culture and in our middle class values. Their evangelical rootedness and emphasis on personal conversion, as well as their deep commitment to social justice and  peace, have also challenged me in terms of my own journey. The praxis of people who come from this school demonstrates that it is indeed possible to have a truly holistic ministry,

integrating evangelism, discipleship and social justice.

Harvie Conn (1979 : 276-278) is of the opinion, though, that the radical evangelicals and their creation of alternative communities should go further in transforming larger society. To him they are too much of a counter-culture movement. Perhaps one should say that this movement is more complex than what meets the eye, and some exponents of the radical evangelical school are indeed involved in transformational development projects, greatly impacting larger society and the public arena.

Referring back to Niebuhr's typology, I find it difficult to align myself with exponents of anything but the "Christ transforming culture" -typology. Here and there, in developing intentional community, I might show an affinity for some of the elements offered by the radical evangelicals which sometimes hold more to a "Christ against culture"-typology. In working closely with some of the current inner city development processes initiated by those who have easier access to power, the danger is to give these processes theological and moral sanction through the church being present and to fall in the trap of a "Christ of culture"-typology. However, our participation is always of such a nature that the goals and aspirations of the poor would be considered. Even if our participation needs from time to time to be more critical and less affirming, we want to look at the city through the struggles at the bottom of society.

By and large this study would affirm transformational thinking, however, believing in Christ as transformer of society and people.

My own method and praxis are influenced by my Reformed background, contextual and liberational thinking, and the insights and praxis of radical evangelicals.

### 3.1.4  Shared Learning in Solidarity with the Inner City Poor

Many of the processes which I will describe in analysing my context, in reflecting theologically and in suggesting a pastoral plan, are shared processes. In many ways this study is the fruit of various community-based processes and an ecumenical journey of people in the inner city.  I am largely indebted to co-workers in the inner city, community residents, volunteers who share their expertise, and all those who are part of all the processes we are engaged with in our community.

I suggest theology as a shared activity of people journeying together in solidarity with one another, finding God within their contexts and daily lives. This study will to a large extent describe some of these shared, participatory processes. Our involvement in all these processes was always from a specific church-based perspective, reflecting critically and theologically on the city and its processes, engaging the powers, and listening to the powerless.

The Catholic religious educator, Thomas Groome (1980), has developed what he calls a "shared praxis approach". My own approach wants to draw upon some of his important insights. My approach maintains that theological knowledge is not only for

professional theologians, and seeks for a new way of doing theology, namely a shared praxis approach. In speaking to religious educators, Groome (1980 : 137) asserts that the most appropriate attitude underlying all religious education, "is to see ourselves as brother and sister pilgrims in time." The educator and the students are brother and sister pilgrims, on the same journey.

This approach affirms the unique experiences and insights of each participant in the journey, whether it is the professional theologian, community worker, homeless person, single mother, or church deacon. As people journey together in the city, they discover God's intentions for the city.

This approach corresponds to the notion of "church-with-others", finding the other categories (cf. 2.2 : church escaping the city, church in the city, church to the city) problematic, as they either express an escapist flight from the city, a suburban, middle-class captivity (cf. Gibson Winter 1961), which is not helpful in diverse inner city communities, or paternalistic ministry which is not taking people seriously, but dealing with them as mere objects of self-righteous Christian deeds.

A shared approach in solidarity with the inner city poor is to me an expression of Christ's incarnation today. Although solidarity might be a problematic term for some, borrowed from socialist terminology (cf. Moltmann 1981 : 107), the incarnation of Christ is an expression of God's solidarity with a suffering world. But what does "solidarity" mean ?

> It means standing shoulder to shoulder, struggling together, suffering for another and living with one another in a single community.
>
> (Moltmann 1981 : 107)

Not only in the praxis of grass-roots ministry, but also in the actual theological reflection on our ministry praxis should this solidarity be expressed. This means that our actual theological reflection should be a description of this journey of struggling together, and the fruit of our solidarity with one another. Doing theology in solidarity with the inner city poor practically means a shared journey of faith and shared insight into the character of God and God's intention for our communities. In this process the poor and those who are not professional theologians should have equal opportunities to contribute to the theological process.

The processes I will describe would not only include participation with the inner city poor, but in many of the processes the local government, business leaders, and others, are also involved. In these processes our bias remains the poor, and we evaluate each process through the eyes of the poor, seeing whether their issues would also be included in future inner city development strategies. This is not a narrow emphasis on the poor only, at the expense of other development goals, but it maintains that development which does not include and benefit the poor can hardly be called development at all.

As I already stated in 3.1.3, our relationship with the power brokers in the city fluctuates between critical *solidarity* and prophetic *criticism*. We are not called to justify the status quo, but to work for the penetration of kingdom values into every area of society. Where it happens in the inner city we must recognise and support it, but where not, we have to oppose it, at the same time suggesting prophetic alternatives. I have to add that some of the people in powerful positions are very sincere and intentional about seeking God's kingdom in the inner city themselves.

At the same time, I need to emphasise the dangers in trying to be a prophetic voice in the praxis of inner city ministry. It can easily border on self-righteousness, be translated as arrogance, or dismissed as idealism or utopianism. Shared processes where the poor speaks out, where they share their brokenness and where they inform and transform the church, would help the church to remain prophetic without sacrificing its integrity.

### 3.1.5  Opting for the Poor

One of my assumptions (and biases) is the inner city poor. This, after all, is the focus of my study, as I will explore the transformation of the inner city from the vantage point of the poor. I will go further and suggest that the inner city can only be transformed if the inner city poor is taken seriously. Moltmann (1981 : 152), in writing about handicapped people, says :

> Society is always only as strong as its weakest links. So to respect and strengthen these weak links means to strengthen the whole society.

We need to opt for the poor in the inner city, since they cannot always opt for themselves. In strategic planning meetings they are absent, and in prioritising projects for the city they are not listed. Just from a pure common sense point of view, the inner city cannot be a viable community if the poor of the inner city do not own       their community and its future.

Theologically speaking, we cannot get away from God's tremendous concern for the poor and vulnerable people. God has always been concerned about the poor, calling prophets to stand on their side, to call out against political and religious leadership who were not just, and who were not working for justice. Leonardo and Clodovis Boff in their book, *Wat is Theologie van de Bevrijding ?,* speak about meeting the poor Christ in the poor (1986 : 9-10), referring to Christ's own sermon in Matthew 25 : 31-46.

The phrase to opt for the poor, or to have a preferential option for the poor, has not been accepted widely in the church. Perhaps it is too threatening for many of us. Furthermore many misconceptions arose as to the actual meaning of this phrase.

Gutierrez (1988 : xxvi) tries to clarify :

> The commitment to the poor is not 'optional in the sense that a Christian is free to make or not make this option, or commitment, to the poor, just as the love we owe to all human beings without exception is not optional. Neither, on the other hand, does the term option suppose that those making it does not themselves belong to the world of the poor. In very many instances, of course, they do not, but it must be said at the same time that the poor too have an obligation to make this option.

I want to go further to say that when I assume an option for the inner city poor, I do not opt against the rich, because they are just as precious in God's eyes. Opting for the poor, however, is to be intentional about giving the poor a central and an important place, which they don't get automatically.

In the ministry of Jesus there are countless incidents where "little people" - children, handicapped, outcasts, were given prominent places by Jesus. This was done not only to affirm them, but also to speak through them to others, giving both the "rich" and the "poor" an opportunity to become free people. It is Desmond Tutu (1983 : 4) who always remained consistent, calling for the liberation of both white and black people in South Africa.

> We are committed to Black liberation because thereby we are committed to white liberation. You will never be free until we blacks are free.

Opting for the inner city poor wants to affirm them as an integral part of urban society, but at the same time it wants to give an opportunity to resourceful people (also Christians) to be liberated from materialism and captivity to middle-class values, and liberated for authentic sharing and stewardship of God's urban resources.

Ultimately my option for the poor is grounded, not only in the contextual realities of our inner city, but in my understanding of God. Gutierrez (1988 : xxvii) motivates this profoundly :

> In the final analysis, an option for the poor is an option for the God of the kingdom whom Jesus proclaims to us... The entire Bible, beginning with the story of Cain and Abel, mirrors God's predilection for the weak and abused of human history. This preference brings out the gratuitous or unmerited character of God's love. The same revelation is given in the evangelical Beatitudes, for they tell us with the utmost simplicity that God's predilection for the poor, the hungry and the suffering is based on God's unmerited goodness to us.

> The ultimate reason for commitment to the poor and oppressed is not to be found in the social analysis we use, or in human compassion, or in any direct experience we ourselves may have of poverty. These are all doubtless valid motives that play an important part in our commitment. As Christians, however, our commitment is grounded, in the final analysis, in the God of our faith. It is a theocentric, prophetic option that has its roots in the unmerited love of God and is demanded by this love.

This is echoed, not by another Catholic liberation theologian from Latin America, but by Jim Wallis (1994 : 163), a radical evangelical living and working in the inner city of Washington DC.

> In America and throughout the Western world, we have responded to all that the Scriptures have to say about the poor by pretending it just isn't there. We have cut the poor out of the Bible.

And,

> Therefore, from a biblical point of view, questions concerning the poor and oppressed cannot simply be regarded as matters of politics, safely delegated to the social concerns commmitee of a religious congregation. Instead, what is at stake is nothing less than restoring our biblical integrity. It is a matter of conversion.
>
> To place the reality of the poor at the centre of our attention will require a fundamental change in priorities and direction. Our task is much deeper than social charity; it is to put our decimated Bibles together again, to recover the meaning of the sacred text in our personal lives, our congregations and communities, and in our world.
>
> Fidelity to Scripture is finally tested not by dogma and doctrine but by how one's life demonstrates that he or she believes the Bible. Belief results in obedience. In wealthy nations that fidelity will best be tested by our relationship to the poor.
>
> (Wallis 1994 : 164)

Donal Dorr (1984 : 79-80) offers an important insight when he says that the poor also have to opt for themselves.

> At first that seems a selfish act. But what in fact is involved is an act of faith and trust by poor people both in themselves and in others who are in a similar situation. That is very difficult. These are people who are likely to be disillusioned and apathetic, frequently broken in spirit or at least deeply hurt. Their first and greatest challenge is to believe in themselves and in each other. Once they recognize their own talents and the gifts of others they can begin to take responsibility for their lives and the world. The story of the liberation of the Jews from slavery in Egypt is very instructive in this respect. One of the most difficult tasks of Moses was to convince his people that they could be liberated : 'they did not listen to Moses because of their broken spirit and their cruel bondage' (Ex. 6:9; cf. 4:1-9; 5:21).

### 3.1.6  Focussed on Praxis

This study is not an attempt at systematic theology, but rather an intentional effort to contribute to the praxis of ministry in the inner city of Pretoria. The focus of the study is the community of faith as it relates to the world of the inner city in general, and to the inner city poor in particular. My working definition of theology is also focussed on praxis as the mirror which reflects Christian faith in the world today.

Louis Heyns, in *Primer in Theology*, defines praxis as a concrete action or actions of individuals and groups in the church and society, standing in the sign of serving God's Kingdom (cf. 1990 : 29).

Hennie Pieterse (1993 : 4) gives another definition, putting the term "praxis" in its contextual framework where it was born originally. My understanding of praxis relates more to this definition. Praxis, to Pieterse, is a ministry practice which is accompanied by critical reflection and focussed on transformation.

Gutierrez (1988 : xxxiv) speaks of praxis as our "lived faith", which includes prayer, commitment and actions.

This study is focussed on a transformed ministry praxis, which entails a transformed prayer life (spirituality), new and deeper commitments, and new actions.

### 3.1.7 Towards a new community

An assumption which is implicit in all my research and suggestions, is the possibility of community in the city. I refer to community in different ways.

Community in the first sense is a *qualitative term*, referring to quality of life, as it is lived in the geographical communities (quantitative) of the inner city. When I speak about the possibility of community, I refer to people living together in harmony, to a place where everybody will have access to services and opportunities, where old people and children will be safe, where people will stand together against crime, where people experience a sense of belonging and togetherness and nurture. The *human and social development* of community is implicated here (community of citizens).

I also refer to community in a *quantitative* sense, referring to physical aspects such as infra-structure, facilities, services, and so forth. The condition of roads, housing, safety, education, and so forth, would also have to be considered. We need to build a healthy community or environment (quantitatively) in which community (quality of life) can flourish.

A sense of community, of people belonging together with a commitment to a specific place, can contribute to a physically healthy city, since the local people will participate to address the problems themselves. But at the same time the improvement of housing conditions, schooling for everybody, accessible health and child care services, improved safety, and other physical facilities, would affirm people's dignity and give people pride in the place where they stay.

These are two sides of the same coin. Human-social development and physical development must go hand in hand. And this study suggests that the church should play a vital role in both.

My assumption is that inner city residential communities can be home to people, and to some it has indeed become home. People should be able to discover a sense of community in the inner city. How could the church, however, contribute towards building community in old inner city areas ?

That brings me to community as I refer to it in the third sense, namely the *Christian community* in the city. A further assumption of mine is that the church could indeed contribute significantly to healthy inner city communities, but then it needs to come to a new self-understanding of its own identity and role in a changing inner city environment.

The church in the inner city should be more intentional about being a community, reflecting the values of the kingdom, embracing strangers, crossing barriers, being salt and light where it is. As intentional communities in the city, the church can play a major role in revitalising inner city areas. It can provide the institutional mechanisms, the grass-roots impetus, the long-term presence, and the foundational values, which are all essential building blocks in the long-term transformation of the inner city.

The church's focus would perhaps be on the human-social development aspects, but it has at least a prophetic role to play with regard to the physical development of the inner city, especially as it impacts on the people living there. This study would suggest, however, that it also has a practical role to play with regard to the physical development of the inner city, and not only a prophetic role.

Drawn by the vision of the new Jerusalem, which symbolises new and perfect community (cf. Isaiah 65; Revelations 21), we should be developing and nurturing intentional Christian community in the inner city, while we are building healthy communities of citizens.

### 3.1.8  Contextual

This study is contextual in nature, which would be described under 3.2. It wants to work from the inside out, taking the context of the inner city seriously and then exploring how to be church in the South *African* inner city. The very specific challenges of Pretoria's inner city would be used as the context from which I draw most.

There is one problem with contextual theology, however, in that it can fulfil most of the requirements of being contextual, but still be an elitist exercise done by professional theologians (cf. Bruwer). This tension is also real in this study. The processes of community development and urban ministry described here, will indeed signify a shared process and a participatory journey. Most of the reflection and planning for praxis are descriptions of shared processes at the grass-roots level of the inner city.

Not all the groups that we journey with are necessarily Christians, however, and therefore not all the processes that we are engaged in can be seen as processes whereby a local community do theology. Schreiter (1985 : 24) speaks about this when he says

> One cannot speak of a community developing a local theology without its being filled with the Spirit and working under the power of the gospel. Unless the community accepts the free gift of God's grace, unless that community gathers for its own nourishment in word and sacrament, unless this experience of grace moves the community both into a praxis consonant with the gospel and into deeper communion with the other churches, we are not talking about an adequate locale for the expression and development of theology. It cannot be forgotten that theology is the work of God through human, graced community.

In such cases Christian workers might engage in critical reflection on the church's

praxis in solidarity with struggling inner city communities. It is reflection upon certain "secular" processes from a Christian development / liberational perspective. If local people contribute to this process - even if they do not view themselves as Christians - I suggest that it could still be viewed as a legitimate process of theology. As God works through human community to bring about his shalom, theology happens - even those who are part of the community and who experienced signs of grace were part of this process of theology. At some stage in such a process it could become the role of the Christian worker or theologian to translate the process in Christian terms to individuals or the community. Preferably this needs to be done on request of the community or individuals only, for the integrity of the process not to be affected.

This study is an attempt to draw upon local processes in Pretoria's inner city, in order to develop a transformed praxis for the church in the inner city. My role as a theologian would be to provide theological resources to the communities and community workers in these processes, and to link these processes and / or indigenous Christian groups back to the larger Christian traditions (cf. Schreiter 1985 : 18; 20).

## 3.2 A Contextual Theological Approach

The theological method which I will use in this study will be discussed in greater detail in "B. Theological Method". Here I will briefly introduce a contextual approach as the theological framework within which a specific theological method will be used. I will also introduce the theological method itself very briefly.

### 3.2.1 A Contextual Approach

I will use my theological method and do research within the broader framework of a contextual approach to theology and ministry.

I will use a contextual approach to theology and ministry for the purposes of this study (cf. De Beer & Venter 1998 : 32-33). Practical theologians have identified three broad approaches within the South African context.

| |
|---|
| **Confessional Approach** |
| **Correlational Approach** |
| **Contextual Approach** |

The contextual approach to theology represents a different way of doing theology and understanding the world as compared to the other two approaches. In one sense it is a new approach although many people around the world, especially in Third World circles, have developed contextual theologies.

The confessional approach maintains that the Bible is the only source for doing practical theology. In the South African context Willie Jonker from Stellenbosch has been the mentor to many who follow this approach. His definition of practical theology reads as follows :

A study of the Word of God from the perspective of the church's service.
(Pieterse 1993 : 103)

The focus of practical theology from this perspective is on the church and its ministry, as we discover it from the Bible. This is a legitimate focus, but too narrow in my opinion.

The correlational approach follows the lead of European theologians like Zerfass, Heitink and others, who view practical theology as a theological science of action. The focus of this study is on acts or activities, rather than on a book. The acts or activities which are the sources of study are the efforts of believers and the church as they communicate the gospel in the world. The activities of the church and its people are the centre of this approach.

The Word of God is maintained as one of the primary sources of doing theology, but it is not the only source. Subjective faith experiences, social sciences, and the insights from the context could also inform one's theology in this approach.

I opt for a contextual approach without rejecting the confessional or correlational approaches and their emphases. I maintain the importance of Scripture in doing theology and I also reflect on the activities of the church as they relate to the context of the inner city.

However, the approach to be used in this study represents some important shifts away from the confessional or correlational approach. Some of these shifts that have taken place in a contextual understanding of doing theology, include the following :

- Theology is not only done by professional elite at universities. In the past "theology was conducted from above..." (Bosch 1991 : 423). Today there is a great shift toward theology being practised by laity and common people. The poor and marginalised in communities become the theologians, interpreting the context and discovering God's word in and for their own context.

- The second fundamental shift is from theory being of primary importance to the priority of Christian praxis.

- This approach introduces a new epistemology. In the past Western theologians have often exported a kind of knowledge that was rigid and static. In this approach knowledge is a dynamic process of discovery, as people from different groups journey together, asking themselves what God has intended for them in their specific context.

- Commitment to and the priority of the poor are keys in understanding the contextual approach. In this approach we do theology with those who suffer. Theologies which affirm things the way they are without speaking from the perspective of the poor, have often lost its credibility in the Third World and in our cities. Furthermore, these theologies do not necessarily represent a Biblical vision on the poor, social and economic justice and the transformation of society.

- In contextual theology there is a great emphasis on *doing* theology. Theology is not merely a philosophical exercise but the integration of reflection with committed and practical action. Theology in this sense is story-telling. Contextual experiences are related in narrative form and these narratives become the basis of doing theology (cf. Müller 1996 : 3).

- In contextual theology the world is the focus and no longer only the church. The contextual approach also reflects self-critically on the church in its relation to the world. Social analysis has an important place in this approach, and on the basis of sound analysis we reflect theologically and plan our ministry actions.

- This approach is serious about the incarnation of Christ and wants to develop incarnational ministry, i.e. to be grounded in a specific context with specific challenges, needs and opportunities, investing ourselves and working alongside its people in solidarity with them.

  Muller (1996 : 20) speaks about an eco-hermeneutic approach to pastoral care, emphasising that we will only understand the context if we *experience* the context. For true understanding observation or analysis will not be enough - true understanding requires our full participation, our involvement, "an encounter" (Muller 1996 :24).

- Transformation is the goal of contextual theologies. The minister, missionary or Christian worker must be transformed as well as the church or organisation, and only as and in as far as these individuals and groups experience transformation, will they also be able to facilitate transformational processes within their communities.

  A contextual approach can facilitate such transformation. Muller (1996 : 28-30) argues that real change happens within our narrative encounters with the context. Where we bring our stories in contact with the Story of God's vision, the potential for transformation is real.

Throughout this study I will try to indicate how these emphases have been integrated in the theological method I'm using and how the focus of this study will bear the marks of a contextual approach.

### 3.2.2 Understanding the Nature of Theology

In this study I will move away from a classical definition of theology towards a more contextual definition.

> The classical definition of theology would relate to its literal meaning, namely as a study (logos) of God (theos). However, it is not really possible to 'study God' or to formulate 'who God is' in rigid, systematic terms.
>
> (De Beer & Venter 1998 : 35)

Gerben Heitink refers to Farley who distinguishes between theology as personal knowledge of God and everything relating to God, and theology as discipline - an intentional, scientific enterprise to gain understanding. In the first sense the emphasis is on the practical nature of theology, and in the second it is on its speculative nature. This study wants to suggest that we go a step further, maintaining that theology should be rooted in the context and focussed on the praxis of ministry.

People like Gutierrez, De Gruchy and Groome add this dimension to their definitions of theology.

> Gustavo Gutierrez in A Theology of Liberation makes a similar distinction to that by Farley. He refers to "theology as wisdom", an understanding rooted both in Scriptures and patristic theology, and one which remains fundamental to eastern orthodoxy, and theology as 'rational knowledge". The latter developed particularly from the twelfth century, reaching its apex in Thomas Aquinas and Catholic Scholasticism. Both of them, Gutierrez rightly maintains, consitute permanent dimensions of theology, and must be included within the theological enterprise, although it is not always apparent that Gutierrez does this himself.
>
> However, there is a third understanding of theology, theology as critical reflection on the social praxis of the church, which Gutierrez makes the focal point for doing theology today. This approach is fundamental to all contemporary theologies of liberation and it adds a critical, socio-political dimension, which is missing in Farley's approach.
>
> (De Gruchy 1986 : 1)

Gutierrez (1988 : 11), in his own words, defines theology as "a critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the Word."

De Gruchy's own definition (1986 : 52) is not much different, describing theology as

> critical reflection on the church's confession of faith and social praxis in the light of the Word of God in order that we might better know and serve God revealed in Jesus Christ today.

Thomas Groome (1980 : 184) speaks in the same terms when he speaks about theology and Christian religious education as

> critical reflection on present action in light of the Christian Story and its vision toward the end of lived Christian faith.

De Gruchy (1986 : 48) also refers to the rich definition of Bonhoeffer describing theology as

> a human, critical task through which the Christian church is reminded of the meaning of Biblical faith, the history of that faith in Christian tradition and its confessions, and its contemporary meaning.

In all these definitions it is clear that the more recent approach in doing theology has shifted from theology being a merely rational exercise, to a broader understanding, including the faith experiences of people in a specific social context.

De Gruchy (1986 : 52-53), in referring to the task of theology, says the following :

> The theological basis for such an understanding of the task of theology is the doctrine of the incarnation and the conviction that in Jesus Christ the kingdom of God has broken into our history thereby opening it up for God's transforming action in a new and decisive way. The word of God which enables us to 'know God' becomes part of our human and historical context in Jesus of Nazareth.

Eddie Bruwer (1994 : 4), in *Beggars can be choosers*, accuses contextual theologians of a lack of serious listening and observation, using the poor for their own selfish purposes and only making different moves in the same game upper class theologians play. Then he continues to say :

> What perhaps makes most sense to me in theological terms is the concept of incarnation : Jesus became human. To live out the incarnation is the real challenge to the Church if it wants the poor to understand it.

Comparing Bruwer to De Gruchy, it is clear that De Gruchy bases his understanding of contextual theology on the concept of incarnation too. True contextual theology will have to start with an incarnational praxis for it to be truly contextual. Contextual theology and being incarnational are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, contextual theology should be based on the doctrine of the incarnational Christ and rooted in incarnational presence within the community where theology is practised. Perhaps Bruwer is right in that certain contextual theologians might use the poor for their own purposes, and we always have to guard against that.

The concept of incarnation in itself, just as contextual theology or liberation theology, presents us with new problems, however, which I will address later.

De Gruchy (1986 : 54-55) continues to reflect on the task of theology in the following manner:

> Just as the ministry is essentially part of the doctrine of the church, so the church is part of Christology. Everything finds its focus in Jesus Christ, the Word of God. The point of departure for Christian theology, including practical theology, is the question, as Bonhoeffer rightly perceived, 'Who is Jesus Christ, for us, today ?' In other words, the real theological task is not to prove the existence of God, for that must ultimately be a matter of faith, but to enable the community of faith critically to understand its faith and express answers to the questions : who is God, where is God to be found today, and what does this God require of us here and now ? The academic theologian may well provide resources for answering these questions. But it is the practical theologian within the community of faith who has to help the community day by day and week by week discover the answers in relation to the praxis and witness of the church in the world, and so help it find the direction which enables it to be faithful to its task.

The nature of theology in its new paradigm is described as follows :

> The new understanding of the nature of theology includes
>
> - how I know God (a personal relationship or the faith element)
> - how I think about God (rational knowledge)
> - my understanding of how to live out my faith in my specific context (praxis)
>
> (De Beer & Venter 1998 : 36)

The theological method suggested in this study is an attempt to integrate spirituality, theory and action within the context of the inner city.

### 3.2.3        Working Definition for Contextual Practical Theology

On the basis of the discussion above, I formulate my working definition for the purposes of this study (cf. De Beer & Venter 1998 : 39) :

> *Practical theology is the process of critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the Word of God, our social context, our church tradition, our spirituality, and our personal journey.*

It will suffice to give a few tentative, explanatory remarks on the various elements of the definition. It will be made clearer as the method is introduced and as it unfolds in the course of the study.

### 3.2.3.1        "Theology is the Process..."

Theology, in my definition, is not a static set of dogma about God, the church, ministry or the world. Rather, it is a process. It is a life-long journey as we discover together who God is, and how God wants to be present in a specific context and amongst specific people.

The idea of theology as a process or a journey is captured in the scene of Jesus walking on the road to Emmaus. Jesus refrained from providing quick theological answers. Rather, He journeyed with the two travellers and He allowed them to slowly discover who He actually was.

This is also foundational for the church entering any community. Instead of providing ready-made answers, we need to journey together to discover the gospel as good news in a given context.

Theology as process will be clarified more in the method I suggest in 3.3. It will be expressed in an on-going cycle, symbolising theological activity as being a process.

### 3.2.3.2        "...of Critical Reflection"

Reflection is central and essential in doing theology (cf.3.3- third phase in my theological method). Gutierrez (1988 : xxxii - xxxiii) writes about the role of reflection within a Christian community and he puts it within the broader context of spirituality and discipleship.

> In liberation theology the way to rational talk about God is located within a broader and more challenging course of action : the following of Jesus. Talk of God supposes that we are living in depth our condition of disciples of him who said in so many words that He is the way (cf. John 14:6). This fact has led me to the position that in the final analysis the method for talking of God is supplied by our spirituality. In other words, the distinction of two phases in theological work is not simply an academic question : it is, above all, a matter of life-style, a way of living the faith. Being part of the life of our people, sharing their sufferings and joys, their concerns and struggles as well as the faith and hope that they live as a Christian community - all this is not a formality required if one is to do theology; it is a requirement for being a Christian. For that reason, it also feeds the very roots of a reflection that seeks to explain the God of life when death is all around.

Reflection, as an essential part of doing theology, is not disconnected from our actions as disciples of Christ, from our spirituality, and from our solidarity with those who are struggling. In other words, we cannot really talk about God without experiencing Christ, without being in a relationship with God, without following Jesus as disciples, and without discovering God amongst the poor.

Reflection in this study is theological; reflection which is different from mere sociological or psychological reflection. It is rooted within a faith community and experience with God, although it would also draw from the insights of other disciplines. In the definition of Thomas Groome (1980 : 184-206) reflection refers to the dialogue between the Christian Story (past and present) and its future Vision. It is dialogue between participants and also between participants and God (Groome 1980 : 191). Rooted in love, the dialogue is constituted in telling stories and visions and in listening to fellow participants and to God.

The narrative character of Groome's approach is clear, although he views the Christian Story as much more than narrative. (Narratives are indeed part of his dialogical approach, however.) Story, in his definition, refers to

> the whole faith tradition of our people however that is expressed or embodied.

> (Groome 1980 : 192)

Reflection in this study is at the same time critical reflection. It analyses the position of the church with regard to the inner city and takes a critical look at the praxis of the church. It also offers a critical look at current economic, cultural and socio-political issues in society, especially as they manifest themselves within the Christian community (cf. Gutierrez 1988 : 9). Theological reflection needs to remain critical, ensuring that our praxis and the trends in society are continuously tested in the light of the Word of God.

Theological reflection should not be elevated to a science of its own, but should always

be at the service of the church's mission in the world.

### 3.2.3.3       "...on Christian praxis..."

In 3.1.6 I have introduced the term "praxis" and provided a tentative definition as well. Perhaps I should just briefly try to distinguish between practice and praxis. When Thomas Groome (1980 : 185) speaks about our "present action", his discussion highlights the difference between praxis and practice, without him using any of these two terms.

> *Present action here means much more than overt productive activity of the present moment (my italics).* It means our whole human engagement in the world, our every doing that has any intentionality or deliberateness to it. Present action is whatever way we give expression to ourselves. It includes what we are doing physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually, as we live on personal, interpersonal, and social levels. In a sense, it encompasses any kind of human activity beyond the inevitable metabolic activity of our bodies.

To make the distinction even clearer it would be helpful to refer to the distinction made by Aristoteles between "poiesis" and "praxis". "Poiesis" indicates those actions which produce results or products. It is based on certain techniques or skills. To build a house or to operate a patient would fall in the category of "poiesis". This is similar to "practice". "Praxis" on the other hand is more than overt productive activity (cf. Groome's quotation above). Praxis is a form of life on which you act on the basis of certain experiences you had before. Praxis includes not only activity, but also observation, reflection, and so on. It reminds me again of the term used by Gutierrez which is so descriptive : "lived faith". Practice, as practical skills or techniques, is less than praxis, which is "lived faith" put into action, reflected upon and translated into new and transformed actions again.

This brings me back to Pieterse's definition of praxis as practice accompanied by critical reflection and focussed on transformation.

### 3.2.3.4       "...in the light of the Word of God, (and other sources).

In 3.3 the sources informing our theology will be introduced and in chapter 5 I will reflect on the theme of this study extensively, drawing from these sources.

We need to be conscious of the various sources which inform our personal, theological and ministerial formation. We need to be more intentional about integrating these sources into our theological method and process.

### 3.3     Theological Method : A Pastoral Circle

This study will suggest a specific method for doing theology in the city (cf. De Beer & Venter 1998 : 47 - 119). It will borrow from the pastoral-hermeneutic circles invented by Segundo and developed by Holland and Henriot (1984). This circle is widely used

by people and communities who follow a contextual approach to theology and ministry. In this study it will be slightly adjusted and developed, and it will become clearer as it is developed in the course of the study. In our own context the same pastoral-hermeneutic circle has been suggested and adjusted by Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson (1991 : 13-25) in *In Word and Deed : Towards a Practical Theology of Social Transformation*.

Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson adds or differentiates the process as follows :

- Prior Commitment of Faith : They place the faith-commitment before the first phase of the pastoral circle, which is the phase of insertion.

  No one does theology from a position of theological neutrality.

  (Cochrane, et al 1991 : 15)

  We all enter into the theological process with certain ideas, commitments, perspectives and agendas. This corresponds with "lived faith" as the first phase in theological work, suggested by Guttierez (1988 : xxxiv).

- Social and Ecclesial Analysis : They divide the second phase, which is the phase of analysis, into two elements, i.e. social analysis and ecclesial analysis. Social analysis explores the given social context, its historical and structural relationships, causes which led to it being the way it is, and so on. Ecclesial analysis is

  a form of social analysis which locates the church and its ministry within their social context as part of the overall social dynamics of that context.

  (Cochrane, et al 1991 : 14)

- Spiritual Formation / Empowerment : They add to the phase of theological reflection the element of spiritual formation or empowerment. This is a kind of bridge, relating the theological reflection to pastoral planning and praxis. On the basis of theological reflection, the Christian community needs to discover a spirituality of the kingdom, which could direct them towards a transformed praxis. In such a spirituality of the kingdom the Christian community will have a clear vision, exercising the gift of discernment ("seeing clearly"), and it will be able to discover the resources of empowerment, i.e. becoming the people God intended us to be, people of dignity, sharing in the stewardship of this world and its resources (cf. Cochrane, et al 1991 : 14; 23).

The following diagram is a graphical summary of the method I will use in this study :
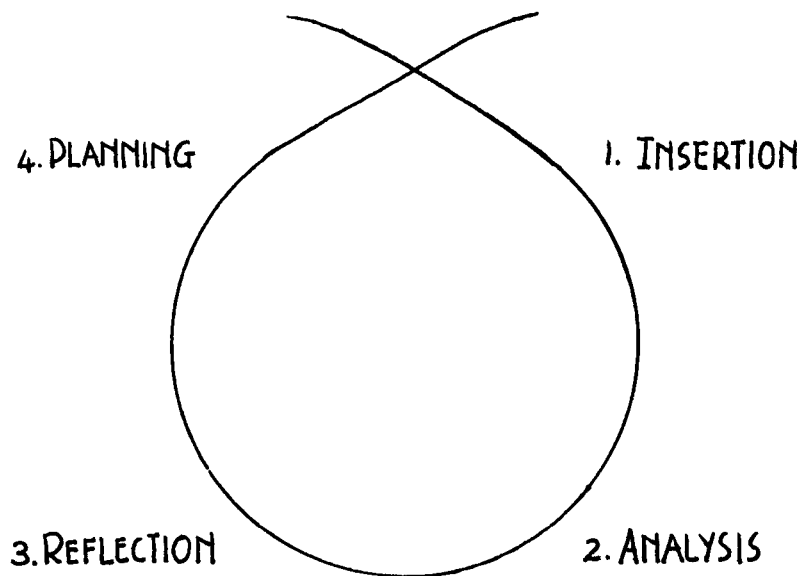
The following table describes this circular process with its four distinct phases :

| 1. | Insertion | Description of the present situation, my own experiences and the experiences of the church in the inner city of Pretoria |
|----|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2. | Analysis | On the basis of the initial description in phase 1, questions are formulated and in phase 2 a proper analysis is made which includes a socio-political, cultural and church analysis. |
| 3. | Theological Reflection | In this phase the various sources (Bible, context, church tradition, spirituality & personal journey) are brought to bear on the process of reflection. |
| 4. | Pastoral Planning (Planning for Action) | In this phase a pastoral plan for action is suggested. This plan will suggest a transformed praxis. |

Holland and Henriot have introduced the four phases and I will follow these phases closely. I will also draw from the insights of Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson. I have not used their additional elements in the same way they have as specific elements in the process of theologising. The same elements which they introduce are integrated in my theological method, however. I assume a faith-commitment as the basis of insertion. Analysis will include social and ecclesial analysis, and social analysis will explore macro-, meso-, and micro-issues, reflecting on global, national and local inner city realities. Spirituality is integrated as part of the phase of theological reflection, but it is also addressed in the pastoral plan where a spirituality of transformation is explored. In my method spiritual formation or empowerment is not just a bridge between reflection and planning, but it is supposed to be more foundational and therefore implicit in both phases (also in the phases of insertion and analysis).

At the beginning of each chapter I will describe the nature of the phase in greater detail. The main difference or addition to the method suggested by Holland & Henriot is my integration of Whitehead and Whitehead (1980) into the pastoral cycle. I have integrated their approach (the Whiteheads) into the third phase, i.e. theological reflection.

Whitehead and Whitehead (1980 : 1) define theological reflection as follows :

> Theological reflection in ministry is the process of bringing to bear in the practical decisions of ministry the resources of Christian faith.

In line with this definition I assume that our understanding of theology and ministry is informed by various sources and that we should be more intentional about bringing these sources to bear in the theological process.

The third phase in my method, which corresponds with the method offered by Whitehead and Whitehead, is intentional about interacting with these various sources.

I have grouped the sources which can inform our theology and ministry into 5 broad categories (cf. De Beer & Venter 1998 : 67) :

| | |
|---|---|
| i. | Word of God |
| ii. | Social Context |
| iii. | Church Tradition |
| iv. | Spirituality |
| v. | Personal Life     (Personality, Childhood Experiences, etc.) |

Whitehead and Whitehead (1980 : 21-25) identify three stages or steps in theological reflection :

---

**i.     ATTENDING**

Information relating to the specific issue to be reflected upon is collected from various sources. In my case I will collect information which will relate to the church, cities and housing the poor. That is the first step in the phase of reflection : to collect the relevant information. Much of it will already be available after the first two phases. The third phase is about bringing all these sources of information together.

**ii.     ASSERTION**

The second step is to engage the information "in a process of mutual clarification and challenge in order to expand and deepen religious insight" (Whitehead & Whitehead 1980 : 22).

In other words, after collecting the information from the various sources, I listen to the sources with others and allow the sources to speak to me. In a shared process of reflection I clarify the information and hopefully gain new insights into the issue at hand. These new insights will lead to challenges in terms of ministry praxis and theological assumptions.

**iii.     DECISION-MAKING**

On the basis of the newly gained insights the last step in this phase (of theological reflection) will lead to new decisions for ministry in the inner city. These decisions are then carried into the third phase of the whole cycle, i.e. pastoral planning for action.

---

A few additional personal assumptions will conclude this introduction to the theological method to be used in this study :

- The method suggested in this study will be overtly theological, contextual and practical.

- I don't apply the pastoral circle just as it is proposed by Holland and Henriot, but will also integrate the method of Whitehead and Whitehead which emphasises the importance of various sources in our reflection, theological formation and ministerial decisions.

- I will apply the chosen method within the framework of the so-called "shared praxis"-approach, which was introduced by Catholic religious educator Thomas Groome (1980 : 137).

  It will be a shared approach. My study would not be done in isolation from the realities of inner city Pretoria, but will reflect theologically on the processes of development currently underway. Various processes are running presently which facilitate a shared learning process. This study will reflect critically and from a theological perspective on these processes and their results.

  It will be a shared praxis approach, indicating the focus on a transformed praxis by the church in the inner city.

- This method assumes lived faith as the first step in doing theology (cf. Gutierrez 1988: xxxiv).

- This method integrates theory, praxis, and personal spirituality, allowing the Bible, tradition, the context, the praxis of ministry, and personal growth to inform our theology and ministry. Theory and praxis will be drawn into a circular process of continuous action and reflection. The theological method which I chose, will allow this on-going interaction.

- The fact that I use a circular model suggests an on-going process of insertion, analysis, reflection and action. Theology is dynamic and active and this method gives expression to this assumption. The circle is also flexible in that all four phases do not always have to follow in the sequence as they are explained, but can be used in varying sequences.


## 3.4 Other Methods which Informed my Own Theological Understanding and Method

In the last two decades various scholars have introduced specific methods for doing theology. These methods have been very helpful in the stimulation of praxis-focussed theological processes. This section will offer a brief introduction to some of the methods.

### 3.4.1    SEE-JUDGE-ACT

- The See-Judge-Act method has been developed in Europe a few years ago in the context of industrial mission.

- The United Congregational Church of South Africa (cf. their workbook "Transform", 1993 : 25) has adopted this method for mobilizing pastoral leadership.

- There are 3 simple steps or phases in this method :

**i.    Phase One : SEE**

This phase is similar to what is known as social analysis (cf. Phase 2 of my theological method) in other methods.

> As we live our lives, we may notice something is 'not right', a 'problem', something in God's world that needs to be changed. That is where we begin the process of transformation and the first phase we must undertake is to *See* the problem for what it is, in other words to do Social *Analysis*.

> Social Analysis helps us really analyze the problem - to explore it from all the different angles, to see the real causes and to follow up the symptoms.

> (in "Transform", 1993 : 28)

In the first phase *five steps* are identified :

- Experience a Problem
- Establish a Group
- Isolate the Problem (focus on something small enough to tackle and solve)
- Analyse the Problem
- Network with Other Groups

## ii.      Phase Two : Judge

This phase could also be referred to as the phase of Biblical reflection.

The term judge can be misleading. This term must be understood as we understand the judge in the court room. Her task is not to criticise, but to weigh up the evidence and to make a judgement on that basis.

This phase is about weighing the evidence in the light of the Bible - judging it.

The phase of Biblical reflection is not so simple since there are not always clear parallels between contemporary issues and biblical material.

It is important to develop the skills to discern principles conveyed by Biblical material and to consider the central themes of faith. These themes "should provide the depth to our reflection, rather than a few texts."    (in "Transform", 1993 : 30)

Although this method starts with the See-phase and move on to the phase of judging, it allows the flexibility to go back to make sure that you really see, this time after reflection in the light of the Word.

The five steps in phase two are :

- To gather around the Bible
- Exploring appropriate passages
- Hearing God's Word for today
- Return to social analysis
- Discern God's will

## iii.      Phase Three : Act

This is a method for mission and therefore the whole purpose of this method is to participate in God's transforming mission in the world (cf. Purpose of this course). Phase three is about action or engagement in and with the world; participation in God's mission.

We have to allow the first two phases to inform and transform us. On the basis of phase two, which ultimately leads to a discernment of God's will, we are now ready to act.

This phase has eight steps to consider :

- Identify the Action
- Network with Others
- Involve those Who are Affected
- Clarify the Action
- Plan the Action
- Act
- Continual Evaluation
- Final Evaluation

## 3.4.2  THOMAS GROOME : SHARED PRAXIS APPROACH

- Groome (1980 : 137) avoids calling his method either a method or a theory. He speaks of it rather as an approach.

- There are *five movements* in his approach (or method) :

### i.      Naming Present Action :

In the first movement paticipants are invited to name their present activity relating the topic of discussion.

*Example :*

The topic of discussion is "Church-Based Intervention Programmes for HIV-Positive Victims". In the first step participants name their activities or the activities of the local churches with regard to people who are HIV-positive.

### ii.      Critical Reflection :

Participants reflect critically on their named activity. They ask themselves why they do what they do, and what the likely or intended consequences of their actions are. Groome suggests 3 aspects in the process of critical reflection, namely :

> - a critical evaluation of the present
> - a critical memory to uncover the past in the present
> - a creative imagination to envision the future in the present.

In this process the participants also share their stories and visions, but relate to them self-critically.

### iii.      Story and its Vision :

In this movement the Christian Story regarding the specific topic is made available as well as the faith response (Vision) it requires. Story and Vision are used as metaphors "to represent the faith tradition of the Christian community and the lived response and promise toward which the tradition invites us" (1980 : 214). Story refers then to Scripture and Christian tradition , while Vision refers more to the response the Story invites in the light of God's kingdom (cf. our prior discussion on "The Purpose of the Theological Process").

*Example :*

The Christian Story regarding issues relating to AIDS is introduced. How does the Christian community, Scriptures and church tradition, deal with issues such as homosexuality, sexual promiscuity, AIDS, marginalisation, terminal illness, and so forth ? What is the Vision that emerges from the Scriptures and Church Tradition - in other words, what kind of faith response is required from the Christian community with regard to HIV-victims ?

### iv.    Story

> The fourth movement is a critique on the Story in the light of the stories and a
> critique of participants' stories in the light of the past Story. Though I would rarely
> pose the question in such metaphorical language, the fourth movement asks, in
> essence, What does the community's Story mean for (affirm, call in question,
> invite beyond) our stories, and how do our stories respond to (affirm, recognize
> limits of, push beyond) the
> community Story ?
>
> <div align="right">(Groome 1980 : 217)</div>

Our own stories and the Story of Scriptures and Christian tradition are in dialogue and
influence each other. In this movement "participants are invited to appropriate the Story
to their lives in a dialectic with their own stories" (Groome 1980 : 208).

*Example :*

In this movement participants will allow the Christian tradition to inform their own
experiences with HIV-victims. On the other hand, as participants seek to appropriate the
tradition, they will allow their own lived faith experiences (cf. Gutierrrez) and the
contextual realities in which HIV-victims find themselves, to inform the appropriation (and
even understanding) of tradition. This is a dialectical process of enrichment.

### v.    Vision Arising from the Story    (Faith Response Required)

> The intention of the fifth movement is to critique the visions embodied in our
> present action in the light of the vision of God's Kingdom and to decide on future
> action that will be an appropriate response to that Vision. Stated in its technical
> language, the fifth movement is asking, 'How is our present action creative or
> noncreative of the Vision,  and how will we (I) act in future ?' Stated more simply,
> the movement is an opportunity for the individual and the group to choose a faith
> response, a Christian praxis, in the light of all that has gone before (Groome 1980
> : 220).

In this movement our own visions and our present actions are critiqued in the light of
God's Kingdom Vision. It is about discerning God's Vision and to act upon that with an
appropriate faith response.

*Example :*

Participants have reflected critically on their own stories and present action in the light of
the Christian story. What is God's Kingdom Vision for people who are HIV-positive ?
What does God require of the faith community ? These questions have already been
asked in the third movement. In this movement participants need to make specific
decisions for new actions, attitudes or programmes with HIV-victims. This movement
moves participants beyond reflection to specific actions.

This method moves from action to reflection to action. Elements from Groome's method
are integrated with the method I will use. Groome's shared praxis approach is a very

## 3.4.3   WHITEHEAD & WHITEHEAD

- The book by Whitehead & Whitehead (1980), *Method in Ministry*, is very practical introducing a specific theological method and model. A part of that model has already been introduced as I have integrated that with my theological method.

- The importance of sources in the theological process is emphasised in their work

  Theological reflection in ministry is the process of bringing to bear in the practical decisions of ministry the resources of Christian faith.

  (Whitehead & Whitehead 1980 :1)

- In their model they indicate three sources of information that are relevant to the decision-making process in ministry :

  - Christian Tradition
  - personal experience
  - cultural information

In their method they indicate a three-step process through which information (Christian tradition, personal experience & cultural information) "is clarified, coordinated, and allowed to shape pastoral action" (1980 : 1) :

  - attending
  - asserting
  - decision              (cf. the theological method - 3.3)

**A.     Model**

- The model relates to sources of information. Theological reflection in the definition of the Whiteheads (cf. our own definition & description of theological method) is the process by which a religious community draws upon these sources and the way in which they allow these sources to be in dialogue and to inform and shape their own pastoral action.

- The three sources of information :

**i.     Tradition**

Tradition refers to the information we draw from Scripture and church history regarding the specific pastoral issue. Tradition (Whiteheads) compares with Story as used by Groome.

**ii.     Personal Experience**

Personal experience refers to what the individual believer and the community bring to the reflection.

---

**B.     Method**

The method describes the dynamic or movement of the reflection. It outlines the stages through which the correlation (of sources - SdB) proceeds.

(Whitehead & Whitehead1980 : 20)

The model thus refers to the sources which inform our theological understanding or the way in which we do ministry. The method is the stages / phases by which we allow these sources to inform us.

The three stages of the method have already been discussed under 3.3 (attending, assertion, decision).

---

### 3.4.4   GERBEN HEITINK

- Heitink (1993) has developed a method which integrates hermeneutic, empirical and strategic elements.

- He has drawn upon the ground breaking work of philosopher, Paul Ricoeur, who has indicated the possibility of a close relationship between hermeneutic and empirical activity, the one (hermeneutic) to understand or interpret, and the other to analyse or explain (empirical).

- The interaction between interpreting or understanding reality, and analysing or explaining it, carries within it the power to transform (to bring about change).

- The three circles or movements in Heitinks' method are :

  - Hermeneutic Circle  (interpretation)
  - Empirical Circle  (analysis or explanation)
  - Strategic Circle   (change or purpose)

**i.     Hermeneutic Circle**

- The first circle in Heitink's model is the hermeneutic circle, which is an attempt to understand or interpret the given or experienced reality.

- The first circle moves from an initial understanding and observation to interpretation, dialogue on the interpretation with others, and a new understanding, which will eventually lead to new action.

*Example :*

You experience the decay of low-cost housing units in your community. Your initial understanding is that the people who have moved into these units are causing the poor conditions. You also observe the neglect by property owners and managers. The neglect of owners inform your interpretation of low-cost housing in the inner city.

In dialogue with others your interpretation is tested and even critiqued. This will lead to a new or a better understanding, often integrating your own interpretation and adjusting or correcting it to be in line with the new information you have gained. On the basis of the new understanding you will decide on specific actions.

### ii.      Empirical Circle

- The second circle is the empirical circle which is a more intentional process of analysis or research. The given reality is explained supported by sound analysis.

- If the first circle is an attempt to understand reality, the second is an attempt to explain it.

- The empirical and hermeneutic circles are not opposites, but supplementary. In Heitink's view (1995 : 2) practical-theological activity is "hermeneutical by nature, but empirical by design". He makes it even clearer by stating that an actual situation is "explained by empirical research but interpreted by theological theories". The empirical circle is exploring reality, and testing and verifying information on the basis of the interpreted reality. Or : the interpreted reality is informed by the empirical research or analysis.

- A major difference between the empirical and hermeneutic approaches, is that the empirical is more interested in quantitative data, it tends to explore reality from a distance as spectator, it is more objective and explanatory. The hermeneutic approach is more interested in qualitative data and participatory observation, it is more subjective, and it tries to understand more than explain.

- The empirical circle moves from observation and presuppositions or hypotheses to predictions, testing and evaluation.

*Example :*

You observe the decay of low-cost housing in your community. On the basis of your observations you establish certain hypotheses. One such a hypothesis is that the cultural transition of a community causes a decrease in property values and the withdrawal of property owners and business from your community.

- On the basis of these hypotheses predictions are made and consequences spelled out. E.g. : the withdrawal of landlords and their neglect of property will lead to slum formation in your community.

- The next element in the empirical circle is to test the hypotheses and predictions. Testing of hypotheses will result in an evaluation, either adjusting your hypotheses, proving their validity, or correcting them altogether. In your evaluation your theory of inner city housing is informed by the empirical analysis.

iii.    **Strategic Circle**

- Heitink's third circle is the strategic circle. This circle deals with the ultimate purpose of practical theology (in Heitink's definition), which is to bring about change within the given reality (transformation in our definition).

- If the first circle is about interpreting and understanding reality, and the second circle about analysing and explaining it, the third circle uses these insights to bring about a changed or transformed reality.

- These circles are not about techniques or methods detached form the previous ones, but rather rooted within the interpretation and analysis of the previous circles.

The third circle moves from problem identification and diagnosis to a plan, intervention and evaluation.

*Example :*

You identify the problem of low-cost housing in your community on the basis of certain experiences. You diagnose the problem (analyse and explain) and on the basis of this diagnosis you develop a plan. This plan is implemented (intervention) and the outcome of the implemented actions are evaluated (empirical testing is one way of doing it).

- Not one of these circles should be seen as closed circles, but they stimulate on-going processes of better understanding and new or adjusted actions.

- Elements from Heitink's method will be integrated in the theological method used in this study. My method will include all the elements of description, interpretation, analysis and change, as suggested by Heitink.

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### 3.4.5 PASTORAL-HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE
### (Segundo, Holland & Henriot, Cochrane, De Gruchy & Peterson, etc.)

- Joe Holland and Peter Henriot (De Gruchy 1986 : 87) has developed a method which they call the pastoral circle. This method is specifically developed for use by local congregations in their pastoral planning. Their method has four distinctive moments (phases).

- Juan Louis Segundo (De Gruchy 1986 : 144) has "restated Rudolf Butmann's 'hermeneutic circle'. Segundo lifts it out of the realm of philosophical enquiry and places it at the service of the transformative mission in the world". Segundo emphasises the interaction between the context and a continuing fresh interpretation of the Bible. As reality changes we have to interpret the Bible again, change reality accordingly, return to the Bible, and so forth. It is an on-going, circular process. We find a thorough discussion on Segundo's definition of the hermeneutic circle on pp. 144-145 in De Gruchy's book *Theology and Ministry in Context and Crisis*.

The hermeneutic circle as understood by Segundo seeks to interpret Scriptures, to interpret the contextual realities, to read and interpret these realities again in the light of the Scriptures, and so forth.

Hermeneutics is about interpretation and the circle is about the on-going interaction between text (Bible) and context (as well as the other sources which I have discussed in 3.3 and which will be discussed again as part of chapter 5 on theological reflection), in order to interpret and reinterpret.

- In line with Segundo, Holland and Henriot, we can speak about a pastoral-hermeneutic model (cf. De Gruchy, p.145). Locally Cochrane, De Gruchy and Petersen (1991; cf. 3.3.3) have developed a practical theological method using an adjusted pastoral circle.

- The four moments in the pastoral-hermeneutic circle :

  - Insertion
  - Analysis
  - Reflection
  - Pastoral Planning

- The pastoral circle has been used extensively by different groups, sometimes in an adjusted form. The Institute for Contextual Theology has developed good material using a similar circle for doing theology.

- The four moments of this method will be adopted into my own theological method.

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### 3.4.6    GUSTAVO GUTIERREZ

- Gutierrez has not developed a theological method of the same sophistication as was done by Heitink or others. His whole way of doing theology is summarised, however, by two stages.

- The first stage or phase of theological work is the lived faith that finds expression in prayer and commitment...      (Gutierrez 1988 : xxxiv)

  All theological work therefore starts with one's faith experience with God and in the community of faith. Talk about God supposes a rootedness in spirituality and discipleship (cf. 3.2.3.2). In my understanding of Gutierrez, he would be of the opinion that authentic theology cannot happen without being rooted spiritually and in a life-style of discipleship.

- Critical, theological reflection is the second act of doing theology, in the words of Gutierrez. It focusses on Christian praxis, as it is expressed in our prayers, commitment and present actions ("lived faith" of the first stage).

  ...when I call reflection in the strict sense a *second* stage of theological work, I am by no means saying that it is *secondary*. Discourse about God comes second because faith comes first and is the source of theology; in the formula of St.Anselm, we believe in order that we may understand (*credo ut intelligam*). For the same reason, the effort at reflection has an irreplaceable role, but one that is always subordinate to a faith that is lived and receives guidance within the communion of the church.

  (Gutierrez 1988 : xxxiii-xxxiv)

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### 3.4.7  Critical Summary

These various approaches have all informed my own theological method and the way in which I do theology.

The **See-Judge-Act** method has very clear similarities with the method I'm using, but perhaps it lacks adequate focus on analysis, which is assumed to be part of the first phase ("See"). In my method insetion and analysis are separated, insertion being the pre-scientific, tentative observations on which one bases certain assumptions, hypotheses and questions. The second phase in my method builds on the insertion experience. In the See-Judge-Act method these two phases are thrown together, which could perhaps lead to a lack of depth in the analytical enquiry. On the other hand, the depth of enquiry will depend very much on the person using the method.

**Groome's** method and the way in which he applies it in various contexts in his book, *Christian Religious Education*, informs my own focus on a shared learning process. The communal character of learning and theologizing is an enriching insight which should be re-discovered in our local theologies. His further focus on a transformed praxis strengthens the method I'm using, providing a framework and a vision for the

transformed praxis, namely the kingdom of God. He also moves from now through a process of interaction to a new vision or a faith response, which corresponds with my final phase which is planning for a transformed praxis. Stories and interaction are the central phases in his theological method, not focussing enough perhaps on social analysis, although the stories are assumed to tell the story of the context.

The method used by **Whitehead and Whitehead** has been discussed under 3.3.

**Heitink** is providing a very solid framework in which to do theology. My method includes hermeneutic elements, which corresponds to his first circle, the hermeneutic circle. Hermeneutic analysis wants to understand and interpret the given reality qualitatively. Through observation, participation, and so forth, I interpret my community.

Heitink suggests a second circle, the empirical circle, to be developed on the basis of the interpreted reality (hermeneutic circle). Empirical analysis is more interested in quantity than quality and through research, literature studies, statistical evidence, documentary analysis, and so forth, are used to analyse a community empirically.

The hermeneutic and empirical analyses will lead the theologian to the strategic circle which is the last phase of Heitink's theological method. The strategic circle is about bringing or suggesting change within the given reality. This circle corresponds with my last phase of planning for a transformed praxis, which will facilitate transformed inner city communities.

The element of theological reflection is not very central or clear in Heitink's method. It is perhaps assumed throughout his method, but I have opted for a method which will include the phase of theological reflection intentionally. This is not to say that theological reflection is the most important phase, or that this is the only time for theological reflection in the hermeneutic process. The method I am using in this study is an integrated method and theological reflection happens throughout all four phases. A specific phase of theological reflection does allow, however, for an intentional act in which to integrate all the gathered resources which inform our faith, understanding of the inner city, and ministry praxis in the inner city.

The **pastoral-hermeneutic circle** is the method used in this study, although it has been adjusted slightly (cf. 3.3).

Gutierrez has not developed a comprehensive method or model for doing theology. He has limited his understanding of doing theology to two acts, "lived faith" being the first act in doing theology, and theological reflection being the second act. These two acts, in his opinion, embrace the totality of Christian life, i.e. commitment, prayer, present actions, and so forth. Gutierrez' insights have informed this study throughout.

## 4.    Research Methodology : Integrating Hermeneutic and Empiric Dimensions              (Qualitative & Quantitative Research)

The proposed theological method will integrate hermeneutic and empirical dimensions (cf. Heitink). In terms of research methodology this method will integrate qualitative and quantitative forms of research.

The *first phase* of insertion is *hermeneutic*, using *qualitative methods* to describe the inner city. I will formulate my description from a participatory perspective, speaking from the inside out. The description will reflect my own subjective experiences and observations. This approach will correspond to the narrative approach of Muller (1996 : 1-34), in which participation is a prerequisite for understanding. The inner city context will be interpreted on the basis of initial or tentative research which will include participatory observation, unstructured interviews, and subjective ministry experiences.

This phase leads to the phase of *analysis* which *combines empirical and hermeneutic dimensions*. However, the *emphasis* of this phase is more on *empirical* or *quantitative research*. It is based on the issues and questions which are identified in phase 1, and it challenges the researcher to explore issues empirically, to discover objective facts and to establish quantitative information which could lead to a better understanding.  The phase of analysis will include participatory observation and other forms of qualitative research, but these would be substantiated by facts and figures to strengthen the hypothetic goals of the researcher and to inform the process in the broadest possible way.

If phase 1 describes a situation in order to convey understanding and insight into the problematics and challenges of that situation, phase 2 would like to go further and explore the factors or causes contributing to the present situation. Phase 1 is about understanding and phase 2 is about explanation in the definition of Heitink (1993), Swanborn (1987) and others.

In *phase 3* the information gained from the analytical process is fed back into a process of *theological reflection*. Phase 3 is once again the *hermeneutic process* in which different sources are brought to bear on the process of reflection for ministry, with the ultimate purpose of greater insight. The analytical results are interpreted for ministry purposes, and on the basis of these newly gained insights decisions for ministry will be taken. In my opinion this phase is lacking in Heitink's method.

The *fourth phase* will draw from both the *hermeneutic and empirical processes* of the first three phases and will concentrate on the development and implementation of a *strategic pastoral plan of action*. This phase corresponds to Heitinks' strategic perspective (or regulative cycle) which is the phase of strategic implementation in which practical suggestions for action ("handelingssuggesties" [1993 : 228]) and changes are made (1993 : 195-211).

The following table is a summary of the discussion :

| Insertion : | • Participant Observation<br>• Subjective Experiences<br>• Unstructured Interviews<br>• Narratives | Qualitative | Hermeneutic |
|---|---|---|---|
| Analysis : | • Questionnaires<br>• Samples<br>• Structured Interviews<br>• Statistical data collection & interpretation<br>• Participant observation | Quantitative<br><br>(and qualitative) | Empirical |
| Reflection : | • Collect all the quantitative & qualitative information from the previous two phases<br>• Dialogue between sources<br>• Identify and formulate newly gained insights<br>• Interpret information for praxis of ministry<br>• Decisions on the basis of new insights | Qualitative | Hermeneutic |
| Plan for Action : | • Strategic Decisions for ministry<br>• Planning<br>• Implementation<br>• Evaluation | Strategic (Regulative) | Strategic (Regulative) |

# 5. An Intra-Disciplinary Study: The Relationship with Other Sciences

This study will be an intra-disciplinary study in the definition of the Dutch theologian, Johannes van der Ven. (1985 : 30-40; 1990 : 103-118). He has made the distinction between four different phases in the development of practical theology in its relationship with the social sciences.

i.      This is not an **applied theological study**, applying rigid dogma to the praxis of ministry.

ii.      Nor is it a **multi-disciplinary study** which merely reflects theologically on the results of studies social scientists have done before. Obviously I will draw from the insights of urban sociologists, geographers, developers, town planners and others. But I will attempt to go beyond that.

iii.      This study is not an **interdisciplinary study** either. In a multi-disciplinary approach theology and social science are placed next to each other. In an

interdisciplinary study the different disciplines have interaction with one another and work together on specific projects.

iv.     In the **intra-disciplinary study**, which I will follow, theology has borrowed from the social scientists and integrated certain insights and skills to do empirical research in a practical theological way. This is not a sociologial study, but a theological study. Methods and instruments used by social scientists are integrated into the practical theological method, however, which adds an empirical dimension to the theological enterprise and contributes even further to establishing the scientific character of practical theology.

The epistemological shifts that have taken place in theology have also occurred in other social sciences. In developing an intra-disciplinary approach to the inner city, I would obviously borrow from those social scientists and theories that are aligned with principles which are of the same epistemological nature as those identified in contextual theology. One example would suffice for the moment.

David Smith (1994 : 5; 7) writes in his book, *Geography and Social Justice*, about the former state of affairs in social sciences and also in human geography. There seemed to be an universal faith in value-free science. The intellectual climate today has changed, however, to accommodate values, and moral and ethical issues, as part of the intellectual debate. Gregory (1978 : 69) reflects on the relationship between science and ideology, saying

> science is always committed in some way, whatever its form, and the specific 'means' which it makes available cannot be divorced from the specific 'ends' which provides its own legitimation.

The way in which we interpret society and its structures, are rooted in certain values and morals. Smith (1994 : 9) speaks about inner city poverty and is of the opinion that our interpretation of inner city poverty "involves a moral judgement".

> The problem of explaining inner-city poverty provides an illustration. One approach would be to observe the spatial association between poverty and population characteristics, finding perhaps that members of particular racial or ethnic groups or one-parent families were concentrated in the poverty areas, which could lead to the conclusion that there is something about their way of life predisposing them to poverty. Another would be to observe the spatial mismatch between inner-city residential areas and the concentration of employment opportunities elsewhere, concluding that the problem was one of physical accessibility. A third explanation could be found in the operation of the markets for labour and housing in a capitalist economy, which tends to consign some people to unemployment and poverty and to place many of them in the inner city... there is something in each explanation. But which one we prioritize involves a moral judgement; we are allocating responsibility for inner-city poverty. The first explanation blames the victim, the second the spatial structure of the city, and the third the prevailing mode of production. Each of these will also suggest different solutions : respectively, changing personal behaviour, improving urban planning, and abolishing capitalism.

Your interpretation of inner city poverty would tell on which side you find yourself. Even geography is not free from certain values or moral issues, and the new intellectual

climate or epistemology allows for Smith (1994 : 1) to place social justice at the heart of his geographical enquiry.

In analysing and interpreting inner city communities and developments happening in these communities, we will integrate insights from the other social sciences to come to a better understanding.

# BRIDGE : SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 1 AND 2

| | |
|---|---|
| *The Church and Development* | This study will move from a developmental approach that maintained the status quo, that conformed with modernism and progress, and that were equated with economic growth, to an approach of transformational development in the inner city. |
| | ➤ There will be a shift in power relationships as the poor and local inner city communities will be empowered to participate in the democratic processes of inner city community building |
| | ➤ This study will seek for integral liberation, which implies spiritual salvation, humanisation, and socio-political empowerment |
| *The Church and the City* | This study will suggest that the church should move beyond being church *in* the city, to a place of solidarity where the church journeys *with* inner city people and communities. |
| | ➤ It requires an ecclesiological transformation first, whereby the church will position itself beyond its traditional barriers to become a role player in the public arena |
| *The Church and the Inner City Poor* | This study is executed from the vantage point of the inner city poor. The church needs to recover the notion of community and should be intentional about community with the poor and the inner city. |
| | ➤ The church as community (of Christians) can contribute greatly to facilitate transformed communities (of citizens) in the city |
| *A Contextual Approach* | This study will be contextual, taking its vantage point in the inner city poor, and presenting a process of critical reflection on the church's current praxis in the inner city. The theological process will resemble narrative characteristics, as it will relate the stories and processes of different inner city communities in Pretoria |
| | ➤ This contextual process should lead to a transformed ministry praxis |
| *Inter-Disciplinary Enquiry* | This is an intra-disciplinary study, integrating insights and skills from other social sciences into its description, analysis and explanation of inner city realities. Hermeneutic and empirical elements are combined in the process of description, analysis, reflection and planning |
| *The Purpose* | The purpose of this study is to seek for a transformed praxis of ministry that will lead to transformed inner city communities and people |

>>>    In **Part 2** of this study the theological process will be developed. In the next chapter, **Chapter 3**, I will describe my **insertion** experience into the inner city, presenting case studies of Pretoria's inner city as it relates to the church, housing and development, but also offer brief glimpses into the current praxis of the inner city church locally and globally.

# PART 2
# THEOLOGICAL PROCESS
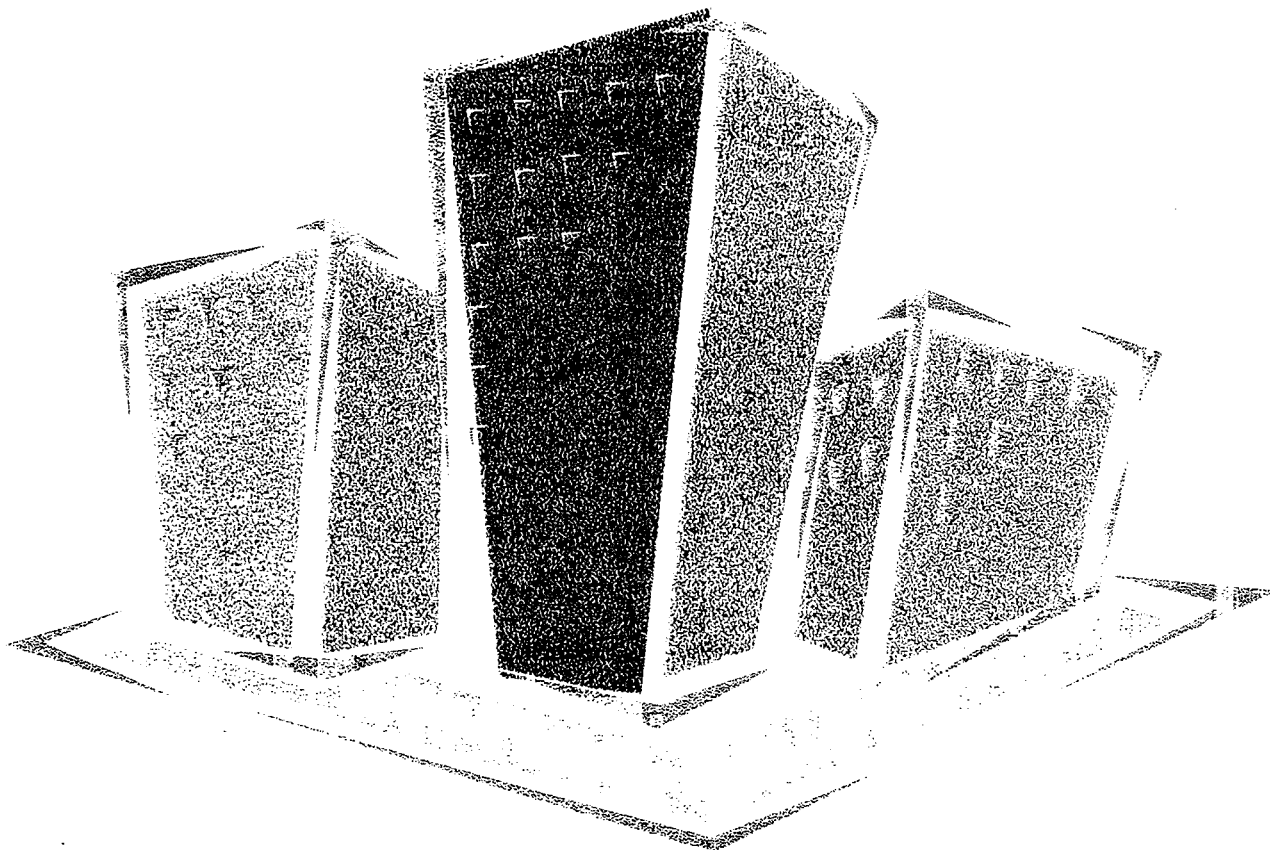
# INSERTION :

# Describing the Inner City of Pretoria, with Specific Reference to Housing, and Assessing the Present Action of the Church

Insertion is the first phase in the theological method which I have selected. The purpose of this phase is to provide a thick description, outlining my own experiences in the inner city context, with special focus on ministry experiences and housing issues.

> Insertion refers to our initial experiences within a specific context. It refers to our struggles, responses and actions as we seek to relate our faith to the inner city... *Gutierrez speaks of this first phase as "lived faith".* That is where we usually start. We respond to the inner city from a perspective of faith. I live my faith in response to the things I encounter in the inner city.

> (De Beer & Venter 1998 : 50)

I will offer a description of my observations and experiences globally and locally. These are subjective observations based on my experiences and not always tested. The purpose of describing my insertion is not to offer tested opinions, but rather to offer my subjective insertion. On the basis of the described insertion questions and hypotheses will be formulated and in the next phases of analysis and reflection these questions will be explored, also empirically.

The first phase, as it relates to the other phases of the theological method as a whole, is explained theologically as follows :

> The first phase of our method - insertion- calls for an even deeper movement into the city and its realities, incarnating ourselves as Jesus Christ did. We have indicated in the words of De Gruchy that the incarnation of Christ should be the basis of our theological reflection. The concept of incarnation will run through all the phases of this theological method : analysis, reflection and action, but it starts at the point of insertion already, by asking "Where is God ?" and "How does God want me to incarnate, to be human, in the inner city ?"
> (De Beer & Venter 1998 : 51-52)

I will describe my insertion experience with reference to inner city realities as experienced by myself and our ministry team, personal ministry experiences in Pretoria and elsewhere, my exposure to innovative church-based housing initiatives, initial remarks on the church's response to inner city situations in general, and my personal background having grown up and living in the inner city of Pretoria for the last 25 years.

The phase of insertion is hermeneutic in nature, trying to understand and interpret the inner city, after which the phase of analysis will explore questions and issues which arose from the insertion, to explain the interpreted reality. My description of insertion is based on practical and subjective experience (in Pretoria, Chicago, and elsewhere; in ministry and as an inner city resident), participant observation and group processes in inner city community life, community development forums and other city-related

forums, minutes of meetings and documents dealing with inner city issues, as well as unstructured interviews and group discussions with inner city developers, ministers, residents, town planners, and so on. In reality I provide case studies from the inner city of Pretoria.

The forums and processes which I refer to include the Marabastad Development Forum, the Salvokop Development Forum, the Marabastad Residents' Association, the Pretoria Inner City Partnership, the Pretoria Central Community Policing Forum, the City Centre Churches Forum, the Berea-Burgerspark Community Forum, and the people who live in the community of Pretoria Community Ministries, either temporarily or for longer periods.

# 1. INNER CITY REALITIES

In the last 10 years I have been exposed more systematically and intentionally than before to inner city realities in various cities. This section will summarise these experiences referring to inner city decay and renewal as it is is expressed in whole communities, apartment blocks, single room occupancy facilities, as well as emerging informal settlements and homeless communities, and urban renewal projects.

*NOTE :*
*The different chapters of this study have been developed at different times over the past two years. I will reflect the time period in which a specific section has been written - this will indicate the gradual development in the research process, my own development in understanding of the inner city context in which I work, and the way in which new insights have contributed to the development of a transformed ministry praxis. "Updates" will be given in subsequent chapters to indicate any developments in the different areas.*

| **1.1 Inner City Decay : Whole Communities** |
| --- |

- **Salvokop** **(written : July 1996 - May 1997)**

Salvokop is an inner city community situated behind the Pretoria Station just east of Potgieter Street and the Pretoria Central Prison.

This whole community is situated on land that belongs to Transnet who is responsible for the management and maintenance of this community. Salvokop used to be a railway community providing housing to white railway workers only. Lately this has changed and demographically, culturally, as well as socially, Salvokop has undergone major changes.

Salvokop has become a very multi-cultural community, the per capita income of residents tends to be low, and it is no longer exclusively railway employees living here. People with lower incomes have seen Salvokop as an unique opportunity to move closer to job opportunities in the city centre. Property managers have not discouraged this but used this move as an opportunity to secure income while waiting on approval

for the re-development of the area.

People have started to sublet their houses to be able to afford them, and as a result some housing units are overcrowded. The quality of the houses are deteriorating since the present management is not really maintaining the standards. Transnet is not willing to invest money in Salvokop right now, since they are awaiting approval for the redevelopment, and capital investments at this stage don't make sense to them. They do, however, expect of residents to pay their monthly rent. A number of houses are empty or abandoned.

The transitional process has almost caused the local church, a Christian Reformed Church, to sell their building to a private business and the church wanted to relocated to another community. The building is now being used again, and it can be a great resource in the community as a community centre / church. The school is also threatening to close its doors, due to parents with a higher income, taking their children out of the local primary school to alternative schools. The incidents of crime in the area and the open availability and use of dagga, have added to the parents' concern as well as an outcry from the community-at-large.

Other issues raised by community residents at the first gathering of the, then still informal, Salvokop Community Forum included :

- Crime, rape, and police bribery
- Overcrowding
- Water supply unhygienic due to theft of galvanised steel which should protect the reservoir
- Maintenance on houses are not done, although residents pay rent
- The general deterioration of the area due to Transnet abandoning their responsibilities
- The unwillingness of the school to make its facilities available for use by the local youth for a youth club (this has been contended by the school principal)

> (As discussed at community meeting on 24 July 1996, at Jopie Fourie Primary School in Salvokop)

Developers have entered into an agreement with Transnet for the development of Salvokop. Until very recently residents were in the dark as to the future of their community, and many rumours were spread. One such a rumour was that developers planned a townhouse development for Salvokop. This could have been a real possibility as a typical example of the so-called gentrification process (cf. chapter 4 : 4.1), dislocating the urban poor and creating opportunities to middle-class people to move closer to the city centre.

Although almost all the residents favour development of the area in principle, the main concern is that this could be such an upmarket development that none of the current residents would be in a position to afford housing units in Salvokop.

Through an active exercise of community organising residents as well as other stakeholders, including local government and Transnet officials, were drawn into a process together and the Salvokop Development Forum was formally launched on 7

August 1996. Through this Forum residents became actively involved in discussions on the future of the community.

At present PI Project Management is the appointed developer to steer the process. Negotiations between this developer, the residents and Transnet will be liaised via the Salvokop Development Forum.

One of the factors slowing down the development process presently, is a moratorium placed on any such development by the Minister of Public Works, Ms. Stella Sigcau. The Forum is arguing now that a concerted effort by the community to ask for the lift of the moratorium could in fact enhance the process of development.

One of the fears, however, is that the community could be used as a pawn to get the minister to lift the moratorium, but that the development would then carry on according to a blueprint that Transnet already had long ago. It boils down to a question of how legitimate the Forum is in the eyes of the owners of Salvokop, and whether the process of community consultation and participatory planning would indeed be respected (cf. Minutes of Salvokop Development Forum Meeting held at Jopie Fourie Primary School on 3 October 1996).

The issues that arise from Salvokop for the purposes of this study include issues such as managerial neglect, dislocation of poor residents, slum formation, breakdown of infrastructure (closure of church, threats of closure by the school, sewerage, garbage removal), gentrification, low-income housing closer to job opportunities, and the effects of urban renewal. It represents all the typical inner city housing issues. It boils down to a question whether a poor community such as Salvokop could become a healthy, viable community, integrated into the inner city of Pretoria, without the dislocation of present residents.

In *chapter 4 : Analysis* I will explore the situation of Salvokop in greater detail, based on this description of my (and our) insertion into this community. The next chapter will deal with Salvokop, analysing the situation and aspirations of residents, the causes of infra structural breakdown, the role of power in this community, the motives of the various stakeholders, the possible role of the church, and the process of the Salvokop Development Forum.

> *Theologically I'd like to raise the following questions on the basis of my insertion experience:*
>
> - *What can or should the role of the church be in a community such as Salvokop?*
> - *What is the role of power in this community, and how should the church position itself in this regard, also being an instrument in the empowerment of the poor ?*
>
> - *How can social justice be built into the redevelopment plans for Salvokop ?*
>
> - *How could the church serve the process of integral (holistic) transformation (shalom) in a community such as Salvokop ?*
>
> - *What can Salvokop teach the church in terms of developing an inner city ecclesiology ?*
>
> - *What can we learn from our insertion into Salvokop with regard to establishing an appropriate Christian presence or Christian community in the inner city ?*
>
> - *What can we learn about the development of a transformational model for inner city diaconate and development ?*

## 1.2  Inner City Decay : Apartment Buildings

### 1.2.1  Chicago : Robert Taylor Homes    (written : May 1997)

I have been living in an African-American community on Chicago's south side for 6 months in 1992. The house in which I lived was built in the first decade of this century (early 1900's). Many houses in this area, the Grand Boulevard area of Chicago, were built in the same period, but now they've been abandoned and they've become drug houses, night shelter occupied illegally by the homeless, and an economic drain to the community.

Two blocks away from where I lived were some of the buildings which formed part of the infamous Robert Taylor Homes, which represents the worst in high-rise social housing developments. These housing projects have become symbol to great social deprivation, poverty, gangsterism, drug abuse, and the illusion of the American dream.

In some of these housing projects 49% of the new-born babies were crack-cocaine addicts or HIV-positive at birth (according to local minister and social activist, Rev. B. Herbert Martin). Many nights a week I went to sleep with the sounds of gun shots in my

ears. Drug trafficking went on day and night in the housing projects without meaningful intervention from the police or local authorities.

People living in the housing projects of America's inner cities are generally caught in cycles of poverty, dependent on welfare money, and some of the factors which probably perpetrated these conditions include the welfare system itself, institutional racism, and the nature of the public housing arena. These communities and the people living here seem to be trapped, and for those who have tasted the American dream, these communities often became no-go areas, which they have abandoned.

Henry Louis Taylor (1994 : 5/5) writes about this situation in an article :

> Black economic dislocations combined with the physical decay of the black community to produce a social crisis operation within the environment of racism, the crime rate, drug trafficking, violence, poor health, alcohol and drug abuse, infant mortality, teenage pregnancy, gang warfare, educational under-achievement, female heads of households, marital dissolution, single-parent families and welfare dependency are products of the economic shift from industry to service and high technology.

Many of the mainline white denominations left the inner cities of the United States as large numbers of African Americans arrived in the cities, especially between 1950 and 1970. Taylor (1994 : 5/5) continues to say that the black religious and cultural institutions were also affected by the social and economic disempowerment of black people and were weakened.

> Most significant, the disappearance of jobs and opportunities weakened religious and cultural institutions and spawned a sense of hopelessness. By hopelessness I mean the triumph of cynicism and a belief that tomorrow will be worse than today. This outlook has engendered nihilism and an outlaw attitude that emphasizes hedonism, consumerism, violence and the devaluation of human life. In too many black neighbourhoods, a world exists where young boys do not expect to have a father, where young men do not expect to grow old, where young women do not expect to get married, where students to not expect to learn, where young adults do not expect to get a good job, and where instant gratification and the relentless pursuit of pleasure characterizes everyday life and culture. Economic dislocation has produced sociocultural barriers that hold black economic and community development.

But, Taylor (1994 : 6/6) says, the problem is not a problem of the black inner city communities. It is an American problem and American public policy contributes to the nature of inner city slums.

> This is not a black problem. This is an American problem. However unsettling this image might be, the world I have just described is a material reflection of the values, attitudes, beliefs and traditions of American society. The point is that public policy played a big role in causing the problem and in creating the conditions that exacerbated it.

I have been involved on a day-to-day basis with church-based after-school programmes which reached out to children from some of these inner city housing projects. The intellectual and emotional development of these children were seriously affected by the environment in which they grew up, the families which they came from, and so forth. The majority of children in our church came from single-parent households where the

mothers were crack-cocaine addicts, they were harassed by older teenagers from gangs and exposed to drugs and sex at a very early age, seldom prepared to make proper choices with regard to these issues.

My involvement with these children raised serious questions, not only with regard to the inner city environment but also the role of the church and the nature of the church's program in these communities. I was very aware of the fact that the inner city environment in itself was probably only symptomatic of a much larger and more complex problem rooted much deeper in the very being of (American) society.

Contemporary architects, town planners and public policy experts are moving away from the popular high-rise planning of a few decades ago, and have become very critical of high-rise social housing projects, as they have been developed in the United States and Britain especially. The phenomenon of high-rise residential developments have been accused to be the problem in itself, with the potential to destroy the social fabric of a community.

I think the assumption that high-rise developments are inherently forcing social decay and various social problems should be questioned. Condominium developments, which are often high-rise buildings, are very popular amongst the upwardly mobile American, without the accompanying processes of social decay so prevalent in inner city slums.

There are probably a combination of factors contributing to inner city slum formation and typical poverty communities. These factors at the same time represent some of the issues that arose out of my insertion experience in the American inner city. Public policy, social inequality, the economic structure of society, institutional racism, abandonment of and withdrawal from inner cities, the nature of social welfare intervention, misuse of power, and various other factors might contribute to inner city problems. The nature of high-rise buildings could perhaps add to an already decaying situation in the inner city, but high-rise housing in itself should not get all the blame.

Some of these issues would be analysed in greater detail in chapter 4, referring to specific examples. In terms of the healing and transformation of individuals, families and communities, some concrete questions emerged :

- Would after-school programmes be of any effect if the children are still caught in vicious cycles of addiction and abandonment, and if they are victims of cruel urban systems ? In other words, how could the cycles of poverty and institutional violence be broken ? How could we address the roots or the causes of inner city problems ?

- Will alternative housing and the creation of a healthy environment not facilitate healing and change in these children and their families ?

- Is it possible to transform destructive housing environments into healthy places where people can live decently ?

This touches at the root of this study's purpose. This study is exploring in what way affordable and decent housing could be developed with the inner city poor, facilitating their healing and empowerment, as well as the transformation of the community into a livable and healthy environment for all of its people.

> *Theologically, we can phrase the following questions in this regard, which correspond to the questions asked with regard to Salvokop (cf.1.1) :*
>
> * *What is the role of the church in inner city slums ?*
>
> * *What would be an appropriate Christian presence in a community such as the Grand Boulevard area of Chicago ?*
>
> * *What would a transformational model for inner city diaconate look like in communities such as these ?*
>
> * *Is there a way in which the church could address the causes of inner city decay, that would make theological sense ?*
>
> * *Could and / or should the church venture into initiatives attempting to transform slum housing conditions ?*
>
> * *What can these communities teach us in terms of the development of an inner city ecclesiology ?*
>
> * *What is the role of power in the situation as sketched above, and how should the church position itself in this regard ?*
>
> *These questions could almost be summarised in the following way :*
>
> *How can the church contribute to the shalom of the inner city, i.e. wholeness and transformation in every sphere, producing a healthy, livable environment, also for the inner city poor ?* *(cf. Goal of this study)*

## 1.2.2 Inner City Apartments in Pretoria - Colorado, Coliseum, Paul Kruger Court, Schubartpark

**(written : May 1997)**

In this section I will just make a few comments to describe some of the trends that I observed with regard to apartment buildings in Pretoria's inner city.

* Many apartment buildings were converted into sectional title facilities over the past few years, leaving the available rental facilities at a really limited number (Colorado, Drie Lelies, etc.). People who were not in a position to purchase

property struggled to find suitable rental accommodation.

Colorado provided very affordable options for property ownership, yet, before the current government subsidies, many poor inner city residents did not see themselves investing in property. Often it has to do with a whole mind-set that needs to change before people will actually realise that ownership of apartment units is within their reach and even realistic.

Besides, many of the long-time residents of some of these facilities were not able to purchase in a block, because of a lack of information or clarity as to the options they had. They did not know that they were actually in a position to buy. Especially isolated individuals, the aged, and so forth, have often been deprived of purchasing opportunities purely because of limited information, but often also as a result of limited means.

In terms of Drie Lelies the transfer to sectional title ownership has stabilised the character of the complex and the South African Police Service is of the opinion that crime has decreased considerably in this complex and its surroundings due to property ownership (unstructured interview with Captain Hennie Engelbrecht, Station Commander for the Jacaranda Police Station : 10 April 1997).

- Another real trend is the current neglect and withdrawal by management and owners in specific blocks. This is causing slum formation and a general break-down of community life and economic viability in the inner city. If one block deteriorates it affects the properties around it, business, and the residents themselves. A continuous process of decay may lead to buildings being sold to developers and lost for residential purposes (cf. Coliseum).

In Paul Kruger Street three apartment buildings have been identified recently by the South African Police Service's Statistical Service (unstructured interview with Captain Hennie Engelbrecht, Station Commander for the Jacaranda Police Station : 10 April 1997) where there are no management at all. These buildings include Paul Kruger Court in Paul Kruger Street and Newport Flats on the corner of Scheiding and Paul Kruger Streets. Absentee landlords receive their rentals monthly but they have abandoned their responsibility to maintain the properties. This will eventually lead to overcrowding, decay and slum conditions. One of the flats in such a block has been used to plan and execute an armed robbery at a bank downstairs. The climate which has been created in these buildings are conducive for crime and affect the quality of life in this area dramatically.

Rehabilitation of neglected residential facilities have not been a common trend in inner city Pretoria, since it is difficult to secure its financial viability. Developers would rather demolish old properties and develop grandiose schemes which do not necessarily contribute to the welfare of the inner city and its people.

- The cultural transition has presented property managers and owners with serious new challenges. A lack of cultural sensitivity, inter-cultural skills and even blatant prejudice, have caused negative trends in some apartment blocks, where healthy buildings turned into slums. Lease agreements are not enforced, management withdrew, and the cultural and racial transition are often blamed for poor housing conditions.

- There are also those few buildings where owners and management cling to past practices, reserving residency to white people (Paul Kruger Court, E&R Mansions). Especially in buildings with a significant percentage of elderly people, this has become a trend. Alternatively, there seems to be an unwritten consensus between management in some cases to allow black residents only up to a certain percentage. The caretaker is often a powerful person, determining the nature of the building's racial composition.

   Underneath these practices are racist myths about inner city decay being the result of black influx.

- Schubartpark is a high-rise residential facility consisting of four separate blocks, each block having 200 - 230 units. Traditionally the Schubartpark Complex provided sub-economic housing to the white population only, administered by the provincial Department of Housing. For a relatively long period after 1994 the local officials of this department maintained the status quo.

   In 1996 more black people moved into Schubartpark which triggered racial tension between some of the older residents and the black residents. There are numerous complaints of corruption in the allocation of housing to people, as well as the feeling that the Department of Housing has abandoned its responsibilities of managing Schubartpark properly. A delegation of residents have requested a meeting with the provincial MEC for Housing, Mr. Dan Mofokeng, recently, to file their complaints.

   Social workers and other so-called care-givers who are responsible for certain services in Schubartpark are making attempts to develop a Schubartpark Community Forum that will deal with the pressing issues of this community. At the first two meetings the absence of concerned residents raised serious questions in terms of the integrity of the process, since it seemed as if the residents were not involved in the process of setting up the Forum at all, and not even invited when the Forum was eventually launched. Furthermore, the Forum meets in the mornings which prevent working people who live in Schubartpark from attending it.

   Schubartpark, being the single highest concentration of people in the inner city of Pretoria, could become an inner city ghetto if not managed properly. These concerns have been raised often in the past, and it deserves urgent attention from all the different stakeholders.

## 1.3  Single Room Occupancy (SRO)

In the United States SRO's (single room occupancy) is the term which is used for residential facilities providing single rooms (rental) to people.

In Pretoria these facilities include youth centres, private and residential hotels, residences, and so forth. Some of the youth centres in central Pretoria still have a concentration of young working people and students. Increasingly the SRO's cater for a wider range of people, including students, low-income workers, young working people, disability pensioners and old-age pensioners, single mothers and small children, and people struggling in and out of jobs, shelters, rehabilitation programmes, and so forth.

A "typical" scenario in one such a facility with 50 rooms could be :

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 - low-income workers | 10 - pensioners |
| 10 - young (upwardly mobile) working people | 10 - students |
| 5  - single mothers (with babies or infants) | 5 - people in transition |

This type of a residential facility is much needed in inner city communities. It is high in demand amongst pensioners, single mothers with small children, low-income workers, and people in transition. The problem is that these are at-risk facilities, not always seen to be the most profitable, and therefore an opportunity for developers to convert these for more profitable ventures at the expense of the inner city poor.

### 1.3.1  Hofmeyr House (YMCA)                    (written : May 1997)

This facility, managed by the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), has 54 rooms. It is an example of common trends in some of the SRO's in Pretoria's inner city. Over a period of 3 years management of this property has built up significant debt with the city council. This was a result of poor (or no) management, as well as abuse by the residents.

The racial changes in the building have contributed to the almost hands-off approach by the management, not implementing the lease agreement or house rules, not ensuring a proper managerial infrastructure, no proper screening of caretakers, and so forth.

From the outside it seems as if a lack of cross-cultural skills and even cultural prejudice have contributed further to the problems in this building. There has been a very obvious lack of residential involvement in decision-making and management of the building (although the residents indicated that they wanted to be involved). I believe that this lack of "ownership" by residents is contributing to the managerial problems.

The result of poor management has not only been debt but also the slow process of decay that has set in. The building is often overcrowded and not conducive for students

or older people, because of the noise. The danger of this facility is that it is moving in the direction of a typical slum situation with the possible ripple effect in the surrounding buildings. After pressure on the present management from the city council to fulfill certain building regulations, and from the churches to negotiate for management of the facility, attempts have been made to clean the building and to face the exterior. It seems to have been symptomatic treatment, not addressing the core of the problem, which is the absence of strong management.

At the newly formed Berea Community Forum residents from Hofmeyr House addressed their concerns very passionately. The most pressing issues regarded escalating rents without the increased income being used to renovate the building, the risks for women in the building seeing that people come off the streets to sleep in the bathrooms at night, and the easy access to any part of the building due to no security. It has even been reported by residents that criminal elements sometimes used the building in the past to sort and divide their loot after mugging people in the area.

How does the church respond theologically to a process such as this where a decent living environment run by a Christian agency turns into a slum, where cultural ignorance present risks to low-income groups in need of affordable and decent residential facilities, and where the Christian witness is at stake ?

### 1.3.2  The Foundation & the AJO                    (written : June 1997)

The Foundation is one of the traditional youth centres run by the Dutch Reformed Church. Management has been transferred from the church's synod to a local inner city congregation in 1995. This in itself was very positive, although I am of the opinion that this has not been utilised to its full potential by the present management.

The dynamics of inner city transition have been very visible in this facility. When the building's doors were opened to people from all races the racial ratio changed from being 100% white to 80% black in a matter of 3-6 months.

The management of this facility is tighter (and therefore more effective) than that of the YMCA. The racial transition has caused some concerns in terms of management, however. What used to be non-negotiables in the house rules in the past have become acceptable under new management, which is causing a breakdown in the quality of housing. This has been attributed by the management to the racial changes which occurred in the building.

I am of the opinion, however, that the decreasing quality has to do with the management itself. What is presented is a more liberal style of management, being less prescriptive than in the past. In reality the management style is determined by a lack of resident involvement in decision-making, cultural prejudice, ignorance with regard to cultural issues, and therefore a lack of proper managerial intervention in certain problem areas. The issues of racial prejudice or cultural ignorance, is a dominant issue in the management of this facility.

Potential white tenants are encouraged to look for alternative accommodation since this is a predominantly black building. This is affirming racial division. White missionary students working with this congregation has been moved from this building to a building with predominantly white residents, due to the quality of the living environment in The Foundation (?!?). The organisation managing the building won't let its student staff reside here, due to the poor quality of housing.

A slow process of decay has set in, most visible in the social decay. This process, if nurtured for too long, could become an irreversible one, which would be a major setback for affordable inner city housing, but also for the Christian witness. Also obvious is the lack of residential involvement in decision-making and management processes. The people in decision-making are all white in a predominantly black building.

The AJO (Afrikaanse Jeug-Organisasie) is a similar youth centre that was owned and managed by the Dutch Reformed Church. This building is providing rooms and small flats, and has also been affected by the racial transition prevalent in all inner city communities.

This facility has recently been sold by the Dutch Reformed Church without consultation with the ecumenical bodies in the city whatsoever. On enquiry by the City Centre Churches Forum, a representative ecumenical forum of churches in the city centre, it was made clear by the director of diaconal ministry of the Dutch Reformed Synod, that this denomination has not seen itself prominent in the inner city any longer, but would rather focus on suburban communities.

This raises serious questions with regard to the Dutch Reformed Church's position in the new South Africa, seeing that inner cities are the first and foremost mirrors of our multi-cultural society. This in itself provides the real test for the church's integrity and extent of transformation and conversion. Its decision to sell properties and to move out, is a serious reflection on its commitment to the new situation in our country. Furthermore it contributes to an emerging social crisis in the inner city, where there is not appropriate affordable housing available, especially for lower-income groups.

The AJO has been bought by the Technikon Northern Transvaal as a student hostel. The people who lived here before had to find alternative accommodation and for many people there were no proper alternatives. The AJO is located directly opposite the synodal headquarters of the Dutch Reformed Church. Ironic is that the Synodal Centre has now filed a complaint against the conditions at the AJO and the way in which it affects the synodal centre, only 5 months after the church has abandoned this building (cf. meeting between local police station commissioner and community workers; Thursday 15 May 1997.) One is tempted to see this as the sour fruit of abandoning the inner city.

The AJO has also been mentioned as one of the Police's greatest concerns by Supt. Kobus Ebersohn, head of pro-active policing for Pretoria Central (presentation at the

City Centre Churches Forum; May 1997). In five months this building has completely collapsed in a sense. The church's disinvestment from the city has been a key factor. It seems unfair to single out one denomination, but the Dutch Reformed Church traditionally symbolised power through its possessions of huge buildings in the city, which, in a changing society could contribute greatly to the transformation of the inner city. Their withdrawal from the inner city, without consultation with the broader body of Christ, raises serious questions with regard to the credibility of their witness, their commitment to the ecumenical journey, and their conversion away from apartheid-thinking.

The following issues have been raised by these examples :

- the church's escapist mentality in the face of a changing environment
- the importance of an ecumenical vision for the inner city, and the lack thereof
- the church's self-understanding of its identity and role on the city
- the serious decrease in affordable residential options in the inner city
- the decrease in housing quality in general, and particularly where run by Christian agencies

### 1.3.3 Rezoning (written : June 1997)

Another real concern with regard to low-cost housing facilities in the inner city has been the rezoning of existing residential facilities to make way for developers and profit-making projects which do not necessarily contribute anything to the economic development of the inner city.

Irene Court has provided 72 single rooms to lower-income people before. This facility has been sold, re-zoned and changed into a hotel and restaurant (1995). The interesting trend is that this hotel, the Tokyo Inn, never reached an occupancy rate of above 10%. It has contributed, however, to the lack of affordable rental housing in the inner city. In the second half of 1996 it has been changed back to a residential facility, but the quality of the housing offered has deteriorated considerably.

The Embassy Gasthaus is also a building that was rezoned and developed to provide upmarket tourist accommodation. This building has been converted from an affordable facility for low-income groups to a guest house and former residents have been dislocated.

Recently a whole street block in Du Toit Street between Schoeman and Pretorius Streets were sold and a large number of residential units for lower-income people were lost in the process of redevelopment. Urban renewal projects (cf. 1.5) further contribute to this emerging housing crisis in the inner city.

Definite issues are raised when reflecting on this reality. Social justice and the poor, a Biblical vision on economics, market forces and power (i.e. the power of local government, profit and capital, and the powerlessness of those who don't own

anything), and the role of the church in this regard, are all issues which need to be analysed.

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| **1.4   Inner City Informal Settlements** |

- **Marabastad**                                         **(written : May 1997)**

Marabastad is a community on the northwestern edge of the Central Business District of Pretoria. Its formal name on maps of Pretoria is the Asiatic Bazaar, but it is generally known as Marabastad. Some suburban people, forever residents of Pretoria, frown when the problems of Marabastad are mentioned. "Where is this place ?", would they sometimes ask.

After the discovery of gold Pretoria has become more cosmopolitan and Marabastad was founded in the previous century in the time of President Paul Kruger. Some people are of the opinion that it is called after a tribal chief who lived here even before white people settled in Pretoria. Others think that Marabastad is called after Maraba, an interpreter who worked for the Transvaal Republic's Court of Law.

Before the forced removals in the 1940's the area known generally as Marabastad today, was divided into three distinct areas. Marabastad accommodated predominantly black residents and was situated north of Boom Street. The Cape Location accommodated predominantly Coloured people and was situated to the south. North and south of Boom Street was the Asiatic Bazaar where about 82 Indian families lived. Bantule was another area 2 miles to the west, also accommodating predominantly black people. However, all these areas were mixed. There were also Chinese people living here (cf. Andrews & Ploeger 1989 : 32; Mphahlele 1959 : 90).

Marabastad used to be a vibrant, multi-cultural community. It was not without its problems, being a growing urban ghetto, yet it was a hot spot for emerging African music, a beacon of African culture, comparing with Sophia town and District Six. In the 1940's forced removals have scattered people from Marabastad to Atteridgeville, Laudium and Eersterust. Churches and houses were demolished and a whole community was destroyed.

Marabastad became a symbol of an oppressive Pretoria. Ezekiel Mphahlele (Pretoria News; 15 October 1983) reflects on Marabastad and Pretoria in a newspaper article :

> I was born in Marabastad, which stood on the north-western fringe of Pretoria city near the Apies River, a mere 20-minute walk from the city centre.
>
> During World War 2 they started to bulldoze the location. Like a leprosy case, the body crumbled organ by organ, limb by limb. When I left the country the location was still crawling to its death. When I visited the site 20 years later nothing but an Indian shopping plaza stood in the place of our dwellings. A bus depot has also developed nearby.

> Never in all my years abroad Pretoria featured in my dreams. Always it was Marabastad. This city of my childhood and young adulthood has landmarks I have always associated with cruelty, with terror.

After the forced removals the focus of this area was on trading, accommodating the Indian business community. Today the bulk of formal business is run by Indian people, while the growing number of informal businesses are run by black people. Some of the previous residents have managed to stay on in Marabastad after the forced removals, living in the backyards of Indian-managed shops, or returning to this area later.

Over the last few years homelessness has become an increasing phenomenon in this community. Not all of the present informal residents are former residents of Marabastad, however. In a newspaper article in the Pretoria News (Josias Charle; 28 March 1984) it is written already 15 years ago :

> Men and women, driven from their homes by economic or other reasons, struggle for survival in Marabastad.
>
> These people, "the forgotten ones", are causing great concern. They hailed from Mamelodi, Mabopane, Atteridgeville / Saulsville and Ga-Rankuwa. Some of them were born in Marabastad 20 years ago, now they have come back to their birthplace.

Today there are between 400 and 500 informal houses in Marabastad. These houses as well as the many people living on the pavements and backyards bring the informal population of Marabastad to $\pm$ 1500 people. A minute from a Marabastad Development Forum meeting held in April 1996, estimated the number of families who lived there at 250 (cf. Minutes of CDF Meeting, 29 April 1996, p.1). After that meeting a moratorium on the influx and settlement of new squatters was introduced. However, at two subsequent forum meetings, it was minuted that the implementation of the moratorium has not been executed (cf. Minutes of Meetings held; 16 October 1996, p.3 & 13 November 1996, p.2). That also explains the growth in numbers of informal houses in the area. Daily new people move into this area from surrounding townships but also from as far as the Eastern Cape. There are residents of Marabastad who have the exclusive task of building new houses to newcomers.

There is no consensus as to the future of Marabastad and a widely accepted plan for re-development has not been agreed upon. Various proposals for the re-development of the area have already been tabled. Whether these development proposals would actually serve the inner city poor remain to be seen. A huge challenge is the land claim issue which is dragging and the land affected by land claims cannot be designated or approved for development purposes. The minutes of every meeting reflect the importance of this issue in the re-development of Marabastad (cf. Minutes of Meetings held on 29 April 1996, p.1; 16 October 1996, p.3 & 13 November 1996, p. 2-3).

A Marabastad Residents' Association (informal black residents) and a Marabastad Development Forum (representative of all the various stakeholders) have emerged in

1995, out of concern over the future of the area. The Residents' Association is advocating for decent housing close to town, and would like a residential development (including "squatters") to be integrated into the development plans. They also argue for the provision of infrastructure to accommodate the informal traders of Marabastad. The Marabastad Development Forum puts pressure on local government to get moving in Marabastad with developments, and this Forum is supposed to be the democratic, consultative body through which local government can act (cf. the Development Facilitation Act 67 of 1995). The importance of this Forum within the future developments and planning for the Central Business District, is underlined by the local councillor in response to enquiries from Forum members. Marabastad is considered to be a precinct on tis own within the inner city and the Marabastad Development Forum has a vital role to play with regard to planning for future developments in this area (cf. Minutes of meeting held on 13 October 1996, p.3).

Local government has already invested four million rand outside of central Pretoria to remove illegal occupants of land to sites far away from economic opportunities (cf. Minutes of meeting held on 13 November 1996, p.2). On-going debate between the council, the Marabastad Development Forum, residents and churches, are highlighting the issue of the homeless, and contending forced removal as the only way of dealing with the problem. The church is arguing that removals on its own is a short-term solution, not taking into account the current urbanisation patterns into Pretoria. Even more, it is reflecting a kind of neo-apartheid, this time not based on categories of race but of class.

The process of urbanisation has not been thought through properly by local government in Pretoria and no plan has been produced to manage urbanisation and its effects in the inner city.

Furthermore, the reality of homelessness in the inner city has been largely ignored by local government. Not much response has been given to the church's request for vacant facilities which could accommodate homeless people on a transitional basis, helping them to help themselves. After meetings with the local councillor accompanied by concrete project proposals, as well as meetings with the councillor, mayor and director of town planning together, nothing has transpired yet in this regard. The local councillor is forcing removals of the informal residents, however, although there was never a proper process of consultation and shared planning to discuss the future of Marabastad.

It seems as if these powerful people don't want to hear. In the meantime more homeless people are moving into Marabastad and the situation there becomes increasingly desperate.

## 1.5 Homelessness

**(written : March 1998)**

Homelessness represents the most severe expression of urban poverty and of the housing crisis in the inner city. Besides the $\pm$ 1 500 homeless people who live in Marabastad, there are homeless people throughout the Central Business District and surrounding inner city areas, at and around the Pretoria Station, and in the natural areas surrounding the Fountains.

*Homelessness is caused by various factors and have different faces, which will be explored more when we analyse the inner city more thoroughly in chapter 4.*

Domestic and political violence, sexual abuse, family breakdown, severe poverty, and illiteracy, are all contributing factors. Refugees from African countries and run-away youth are also contributing to homelessness. Rezoning and urban renewal programs remove some of the low-cost housing stock and place more pressure on an already overburdened housing market. The probable deinstitutionalisation of mental patients from state hospitals could further contribute to homelessness, as there are not sufficient and affordable facilities and services in the communities to accommodate these people. Deinstitutionalisation programs have been one of the single most contributing factors to homelessness in the United States.

The issue of homelessness, as I understand it, should be addressed not only reactively, but also by certain preventative strategies. On the other hand an integrated, holistic approach needs to be developed to address the problems of those who are homeless already. In speaking about healthy inner city communities and housing, the homeless are at the heart of this debate.

Until recently homelessness has not been given any attention by local authorities or local business. It has been reported that the Pretoria Inner City Partnership has prioritised the issue of transitional housing for the homeless only after intensive lobbying (minutes of the Pretoria Central Community Policing Forum : 7 May 1997). Hopefully this would bring more focussed attention of local authorities and business to the issue of homelessness.

An extensive research process was undertaken on behalf of the Pretoria Inner City Partnership by the Pretoria Homeless Consortium (1998). This will culminate in a research document with specific project proposals and policy guidelines.

In the light of the various vacant buildings in the city centre and massive portions of vacant land around the CBD, it is a serious charge against the compassion and humanity of Pretoria that anybody should still be homeless.

Homeless people in Pretoria's inner city were also disorganised in the past and not able to address their own issues. The Marabastad Residents' Forum has started to

change this as this Forum has become a platform for homeless people to address their issues. The 'Homeless Talk'-newspaper that originated in Johannesburg, has been launched in Pretoria recently and this process is driven by homeless people from the inner city. The 'Homeless Talk'-committee is representative of various homeless communities in the inner city, and would be able to address homeless issues very eloquently in future.

It is the assumption of this study that homeless people can and should not be ignored or wished away. We need to address the issue of homelessness where the homeless people are, in partnership with them, integrating them into the fibre of inner city society. An inner city housing strategy should definitely include the current homeless population, as well as people at-risk of becoming homeless.

## 1.6   Urban Renewal

**(written : June 1997)**

In subsequent chapters the whole issue of urban renewal will be discussed in greater detail. It suffices to say that urban renewal projects in Pretoria's inner city raise many serious questions with regard to the inner city poor and social justice. At this stage I refer you to a few examples of urban renewal initiatives.

### 1.6.1   Oeverzicht

This development forms part of the border between Sunnyside and Pretoria Central and runs alongside the Apies River. A series of old houses, inhabited by lower-income people, has been converted by developers and is becoming quite an exciting and favourite spot for entertainment and shopping in the inner city. However, it also caused the dislocation of poor residents and the benefits of this development don't necessarily flow back into this community.

### 1.6.2   Lake Project

The same concerns are raised about the well-publicised Lake Project. Would this project really benefit the poor of the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Area in general, but also of the local inner city poor, in particular ? I have serious doubts about the so-called trickle-down effect to the poor, based on the fact that this theory has proven to be a theory only all over the world. Although the Lake Project would spell urban renewal on the surface, it will dislocate numbers of people from cheap housing options in the area, and it has the potential to enrich developers at the detriment of the inner city poor. Besides, serious questions are raised with regard to the ecological viability of such a development.

### 1.6.3 Town Planning : A Suburban Agenda

Current town planning practices in Pretoria's inner city have embraced urban renewal without much critique. In the past the voiceless people of the inner city (including residents, as well as marginal groups) were never considered in decisions taken by the town planners and city council. The Skinner Street development, as well as the present road developments along the Apies River (from north to south) and the Walker - Scheiding Street development (from east to west), were not only dislocating hundreds of people - most often low income people who can't afford more expensive housing (the aged, low-income families, single mothers, etc.) - but it also contributed very negatively to the social fabric of the community.

The councillor for Ward 15 (Pretoria Central) was surprised that the demolition of houses for planned roads in and around the city centre have affected many people negatively. He thought that the Council's compensation of previous owners (where not owned by the Council itself) was sufficient, not considering the fact that most of the previous owners did not actually live in those houses or flat units. They had tenants who weren't always in a position to afford the more expensive alternatives that were available. These tenants were dislocated without viable, affordable alternatives in place for them. Owners benefited from the council's developments, however.

The road developments are unfriendly to children, the disabled and the aged who have to use these roads as pedestrians. These roads were built right through residential areas (although many suburbanites think the city is not a home to anybody). The benefits of the roads are mainly for suburbanites with vehicles, but at the expense of inner city residents, many without the luxury of an own vehicle.

Town planners (also in Pretoria) do not represent the inner city community, being suburbanites themselves and looking at the inner city through suburban glasses. In their excellent book, *Reviving the City*, British urban specialists, Elkin and McLaren (1991 : 210), say about town planners and architects :

> ...it may mean that decisions affecting the ethnic population of an inner-city area are made, without effective consultation, by white people with no experience of discrimination. Most planners and architects are white, middle-class and male.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Some of the issues raised by reflection on Marabastad (1.4) as well as urban renewal projects (1.5) include

- the dislocation of the poor and those who are not property owners
- development favouring the rich only
- the domination of suburban and Western agendas in town planning practices
- the disempowerment of local community people, "ignoring" their presence in the city and degrading inner city residents to second-class citizens, and homeless people to non-citizens altogether

> *Theologically the following issues emerged from observing the realities of urban renewal initiatives in our communities :*
>
> - *How can the church ensure transformational development processes that will go beyond mere renewal, addressing the root causes of inner city decay and empowering the poor and vulnerable of society as well ?*
>
> - *What is the role of power in urban renewal projects, how is the powerless affected, and what is the role of the church in this regard ?*
>
> - *Urban renewal projects that dislocate the poor are not transformative. How can the church play an appropriate role in the public arena, ensuring social justice and equity, and contributing to healthy inner city communities for all of its people ? In other words, how can the inner city church seek and work for the shalom of the city, i.e. kingdom values and signs in every sphere ?*

The same questions have repeated themselves, reflecting on Salvokop, inner city high-rise buildings, Marabastad, urban renewal projects, and so forth. Later on in this chapter, tentative reflections on my insertion experience will pave the way for enquiry in the next phases of the theological method, which are the phases of analysis and theological reflection.

## 2. PERSONAL MINISTRY EXPERIENCES IN THE INNER CITY (focussing on housing, community organising & the homeless)

I have been involved with inner city ministry for the last 8 years. For the last 5 years I have been involved in a full-time capacity. The following observations are only tentative descriptions of subjective experiences.

### 2.1 Hillbrow, Johannesburg

My first real ministry engagement in the inner city was when I had to do my practical internship as a student in Hillbrow, Johannesburg. I have also spent time there doing research on inner city ministry, visiting various churches and organisations and spending much time on the streets with the homeless (1989-1991). One of the most important observations that I've made early on in Hillbrow, Johannesburg, is that it is impossible to minister to people's spiritual needs in isolation from where people are at socially and existentially.

I am convinced that we cannot justify the separation of spiritual and social matters theologically either and that we need to seek for holistic models of ministry that embraces the gospel in its totality.

In order for the church to be a meaningful agent of transformation in the inner city, we

have to connect with the whole person within his or her living environment. We have to take people's social, physical and existential needs seriously.

In Hillbrow the slow decay of the inner city community with accompanying social ills was very obvious. Yet, the church seemed to be strangely irrelevant providing spiritual answers to social problems. Where the church got itself involved with social problems it was mainly in ministering to the symptoms without a real understanding of the causes, and without even trying to address these in a prophetic manner.

## 2.2    Sunnyside, Pretoria

In Sunnyside I was involved with street children and homeless youth for 3 years between 1991 and 1993. I was struck by the passivity of the church with regard to these groups. The church-at-large did not show any real concern for the issues of the marginal people of Sunnyside. Where they got themselves involved they were only prepared to involve themselves in certain aspects of ministry, but were not willing to immerse themselves completely into the realities of inner city injustices and the misery of the marginalised and the poor.

The Elim Church left the inner city to erect a new building in the suburbs of Pretoria. A few individuals were then able to secure the use of this old property in 1991 as a shelter for children on the streets. Individuals of one of the inner city churches were involved providing food on a weekly basis. A few suburban churches were also involved in various practical ways. On the night of 12 April 1992 this building was set on fire and eight young children died. After this incident which received extensive coverage in the press, some churches offered practical assistance which was highly appreciated.

However, in terms of the clear injustices and the police covering up for what really happened on that night, churches did not provide any support and did not seem to understand or want to believe that there were powerful forces behind the death of the children. Those of us who started this project had to face the powerful people of Sunnyside who were clearly satisfied with this shelter being burnt down, and we had to do this in our personal capacities without the support of any churches. At that stage there wasn't a strong ecumenical movement to work through and this ministry was really isolated, especially in the time of its greatest crisis.

I grew up in this community, witnessing the changes and challenges, and missing the church's connectedness with the real issues people in their communities are facing. Coming from a single parent family, I was very aware of the ignorance of the church with regard to single parent families and their unique issues, although the larger percentage of inner city families tends to be single parent families. Issues such as housing, unemployment, child care, financial management, and so forth, are real issues of concern for single parent families, but seldom addressed by the churches. Yet, these issues keep people from understanding and experiencing God's love and justice. They don't experience God's concern in their own lives, they don't see it in their communities or even in the church.

This irrelevance of the church has been very clear with regard to single parent families, marginal people on the streets, but also people in general (even church members). The church's lack of connectedness with regard to social problems and the changing urban

environment were raising questions in my mind as to the identity and purpose of the church.

What was good news about the gospel in the inner city ? To me the church in the inner city has to develop a theology that makes sense in the city, that speaks to inner city issues, and that celebrates God in the midst of urban realities. The theology and spirituality of urban churches still remained suburban or rural, which prevented people from celebrating their faith in the city.

As the inner cities are changing the church's suburban captivity becomes even more visible, preventing it from crossing the barriers into new cultures, sub-cultures, marginal groups, new areas of ministry, innovative ways of doing ministry, ecumenical co-operation, public witness, and so forth. I have experienced this to a large extent in Sunnyside. At more than one occasion while still a student of theology, I offered myself to one of the inner city churches to develop a community-based outreach ministry on the streets of Sunnyside on their behalf. I was willing to take responsibility for it and I was not asking for any financial support. I wanted, however, to do it as a church-based outreach ministry, supported by this specific congregation (where I grew up and where I was a member). These offers were never welcomed and seemed to be out of touch with where the church was at.

These general experiences as I grew up in Sunnyside and the more specific experience with regard to the children and the Elim Church fire, raised several theological questions with regard to the church in the inner city.

- *The role of inner city churches with regard to the inner city poor and vulnerable people : Is it possible to develop an inner city ecclesiology that will include subcultures, marginal youth, and so forth ?*

- *The relationship between diaconal ministries of service and justice : How can inner city churches be agents of real transformation, addressing root causes of societal decay and injustice, as well as serving the poor ?*

- *How does the church position itself with regard to power and the powerless in the inner city ?*

- *The importance of the local church in mission, the local church's support and initiative in community-based ministry projects, and the importance of strong ecumenical partnerships to match the challenge of the inner city.*

## 2.3   Chicago

In 1992 I worked for 6 months with the Progressive Community Church on the south side of Chicago. This predominantly African-American church was situated in one of the poorest communities of the United States.

In Chicago one of my main ministry responsibilities was with the children who came from the housing projects (cf. 1.2.1). I was involved with supervision in an after school programme managed by the church. I had a sense of the tremendous impact of a broken inner city community and an unhealthy living environment daily.

In comparing the children on the streets of Sunnyside with the children coming from the Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago, it struck me that it seemed to be easier to effect change in the lives of children on the streets of Pretoria so that they can gain dignity, develop their potential and plan for a better future.

Once you have established relationships of trust, once these children have committed themselves to a process of change and have moved into a transitional facility, preparing themselves for reintegration into society, the process was almost irreversible. With the children from the housing projects it felt so desperate. No matter what happened in the after-school situation, they went back to the housing projects where their parents were addicted to crack-cocaine, where they went to sleep with gun shots in their ears daily, and where gangsters victimised the children from an early age.

I was struck by the church's struggle to deal with these issues, being itself a captive of that community and a victim of hopelessness. Although the church from time to time played a significant role in Chicago to effect change and to speak on behalf of the poor coming from inner city communities, their ministry was not able to break the cycle of poverty, to effect long-term development of the community, to ensure jobs and decent housing, and to give people back their dignity.

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*This brings me back to the basic question explored in this study :*

- *How can the church contribute to the transformation of the inner city, transformation implying the liberation of people from personal sin, humanisation of people who lost hope and dignity, and social and economic liberation, addressing social injustices and oppression and developing transformational models of community revitalisation, economic development and housing renewal ?*

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## 2.4 Inner City Pretoria (written : August 1997)

In Pretoria's inner city I have been the co-ordinator of Pretoria Community Ministries (PCM) since 1993. This is a church-based development organisation initiated by 6 city centre churches. For the purposes of this first phase of insertion, I will briefly describe the nature of our involvement in the inner city, focussing on the emerging housing ministry.

### 2.4.1 Christian Presence

The first priority of this ministry is to establish a Christian presence in the inner city, being intentional about building community. The focus of PCM is on long-term presence in the city, incarnationally rooted, visible on the streets and in the public sector (social, economic and political), and available for the people of the inner city, especially for those who are at-risk or in crisis.

This presence have been expressed in our outreach ministry on the streets, with homeless people, in Marabastad, and in city hotels, flats and houses. The emphasis of all our contacts is to establish relationships of friendship and trust, not forcing a church agenda, but being in solidarity, listening to people, and journeying with them. Often our presence resulted in crisis intervention, practical assistance (baths, clothes, food, ID documents, Curriculum Vitaes, and so on), hospital visitations, counselling and appropriate referrals.

Our community has put down its roots in the inner city and its very being proclaims a Christian presence. This presence had also been expressed through our participation in Community Development Forums, the Community Policing Forum and the Pretoria Inner City Partnership.

- Although this is a partnership of city centre churches, some of the partners are still churches who are merely located in the inner city, but their solidarity with inner city issues is very limited. The leaders of most inner city churches are not residents of the inner city, which means that they experience the inner city and its issues as mere observers. Some of the newly planted churches in the inner city tend to dichotomise spiritual and social issues, and there sometimes seems to be a quiet questioning of Pretoria Community Ministries in terms of the depth of our spirituality and our commitment to evangelism and discipleship.

  Furthermore, most of the churches and individuals seem to be captives of a charity mentality, so that our shift towards becoming a Christian community development organisation with the emphasis on transformational development, seems to be foreign to where most of the churches are at. It would require a more intentional process of shared learning, contextual education and exposure to poverty and different approaches to poverty in the inner city.

  A few of the inner city congregations are intentional about a journey into the inner city, about adopting an inner city agenda, developing local leadership, and connecting the congregation with local issues. These churches want to be churches *with* the inner city (in solidarity).

### 2.4.2 The Potter's House & Lerato House

The Potter's House is a transitional housing program, assisting women in crisis ( with their children) to get back on their feet again. This facility helps women to help

themselves and it functions as a self-help community in the inner city of Pretoria. It is a first phase in people's reintegration into society, after they have experienced major crises. As a transitional housing facility is a small but significant project which we understand as the first phase towards proper housing.

Since 1994 the number of teenage girls who landed up on the streets have increased. The number of teenage girls we had to accommodate at The Potter's House has also increased. In the Greater Pretoria area there was no facility for girls on the streets or at-risk. The reality is that girls as young as 11 and 12 years old are drawn into prostitution as soon as they appear on the streets and many more teenage girls are at-risk in the inner city. We have secured a facility that belongs to the city council for developing an intervention program aimed at teenage girls-at-risk. This will be a comprehensive program, with a transitional residential component built into it. Lerato House would serve the same purpose as The Potter's House, but would accommodate teenage girls.

### 2.4.3 Litakoemi

Litakoemi is a residential facility for low-income people in the inner city of Pretoria. We manage this facility as an inner city ministry, providing a stepping stone to people in the process of complete recovery or empowerment.

Many women who move from The Potter's House decide to use Litakoemi as a second stage in their own healing process. People who get a monthly disability pension, people who just started to work again after months (and even years) of unemployment, and people with a very low income live in this facility.

When we took over management of the facility in 1993 it only had a 15% occupancy rate, partly due to the high rentals and partly due to the absence of the owners. Between 1993 and 1997 we maintained a 100% occupancy rate for 95 % of the time. In the same period (1993 - 1997) the owners have only invested ± R 6 000 for the maintenance and upgrading of this facility. In a very sophisticated way they have become a symbol of the absentee landlord, generating money out of their investment, but putting back as little as possible. The building has to undergo complete rewiring (electrical) and re-plumbing which the owners refuse to do.

We have secured this facility as a decent, affordable facility for the inner city poor. We have done this using our very limited means, involving the residents in management of the facility, creating a sense of ownership and community, initiating monthly celebrations and weekly Bible studies, and so forth.

Litakoemi is challenging myths of slum formation in inner cities and serves as a model of hope to be replicated in other parts of Pretoria's inner city. The potential of such a facility to facilitate people's healing and growth (as shown in the process of women moving from The Potter's House into Litakoemi and later on into their own flats) will be explored more later in this study.

### 2.4.4 Yeast City Housing

On the basis of our experiences in Litakoemi, the lack of affordable housing options in the inner city, and the decay in existing housing facilities, the churches of the inner city have decided to embark on a bigger project called Yeast City Housing. Yeast City Housing is developed currently as a non-profit housing company (1997-) to facilitate decent and affordable housing in close partnership with the inner city poor. This company will be a ministry of Pretoria Community Ministries with the fourfold role of advocacy, consultation, housing management and housing development.

It provides an opportunity for the church to develop ministry which will address some of the causes of inner city decay, it will provide opportunities for stewardship and lay ministry, not only to inner city but also to suburban church members, and it will facilitate the integration of discipleship and development (evangelism and social transformation). This company carries within it the potential to take the church beyond its sacred barriers and to play a significant role in the secular or public realm. The name of the company is reflecting the parable comparing the kingdom of God to yeast, and the vision of the company is that its presence in the city and its management of strategic buildings, or involvement in strategic inner city development processes, will have a yeast effect, transforming the inner city through small but significant projects.

This ministry could be a model of transformational development which could impact the inner city greatly. The development of Yeast City Housing - its vision, objectives, values, and strategy - will be explored in greater detail throughout the study and it will form the basis for the proposed transformed praxis (pastoral plan of action : chapter 7).

### 2.4.5 Marabastad, Salvokop, Berea & Schubartpark : Community Organising

In *Marabastad* we have been involved with the informal housing sector for the past 4 years. Initially our emphasis was on establishing a long-term presence in this community, to highlight the issues people in Marabastad face, to bring these issues to the attention of the church and local authorities and to find ways in which we could serve the residents and their interests.

Out of the relationships which were formed in Marabastad a Marabastad Residents' Association and Marabastad Development Forum were launched (cf. 1.4), both looking at the redevelopment of Marabastad and at the real issues the stakeholders of these Forums are facing. In the formation of both the Residents' Association and the Development Forum we played a facilitating role, helping the community to organise themselves.

Both Forums are up and running today and we still participate in both. With regard to the Marabastad Residents' Association we sometimes play a consultative role and journey with the informal residents seeking for viable alternatives. We also provide a leadership training program to key people in the Residents' Forum.

Proper, decent and affordable housing became one of the real issues for the residents. However, the relationship of the formal business community with the informal residents (bias, ambivalency or compassion), the city council's lack of involvement at first, and then its strategy of forced removals, the violence of the security department of the city council against residents, and the church's growing solidarity with the realities of Marabastad, all contributed to my reflections on the role of the church in inner city housing, also in a community such as Marabastad.

Recently we were drawn into the realities of *Salvokop* (cf. chapter 3; 1.1), another inner city community. Many of the residents from Salvokop have visited our ministry centre before. We knew that this was a multi-cultural community facing different social problems. Rumours of developments in Salvokop, crime in the area, the lack of municipal involvement, the poor management by Transnet, overcrowding of the existing housing units, and other factors, caused concern amongst residents of Salvokop.

On the basis of these issues and concerns we were asked to play a facilitating role in helping the community to organise itself. The Salvokop Development Forum was launched in the process and the residents of the community as well as other stakeholders joined hands to dream about the future of Salvokop.

We were struck by the power of community organising in Salvokop, and we look forward to see how the empowerment of a whole community could lead to its transformation.

*Berea* is a different kind of community, accommodating a more diverse spectrum of residents, ranging from sectional title owners to single room occupants and the homeless. Its diversity made community organising more difficult, and after numerous ineffective attempts a large group has met recently to launch the Berea Community Forum (March 1997).

Besides other pressing issues, property matters were itemised high on the agenda of this community forum. On the one hand new property owners faced difficulty in understanding sectional title arrangements and were often exploited by estate agents and misinformed by financial institutions in the process of them purchasing their properties. This must be understood against the background of black people moving into the inner city and purchasing property for the first time. A lack of information leads, in some instances, to a non-payment of levies, which lead to the deterioration of a specific building's maintenance and thereby a loss of quality of life, decreased property values, and eventually the emerging of slum factors. The process if more complex than stated here, although this kind of cycle is common in the inner city.

Another property issue is the withdrawal of or neglect by existing property managers of rental properties in the inner city, often connected to the changes of racial composition in the area, and coinciding with the general disinvestment of business from the inner city. Poor management leads to overcrowding, loss of quality of life, dangerous buildings (electricity, crime, etc.), negative impact on surrounding properties

and their values, and so forth. Since most of the staff people of Pretoria Community Ministries live in this area, these issues are not foreign to us, but they affect us and our future on a daily basis.

*Schubartpark* is a high-density residential complex, accommodating more than 2000 people in 800 apartment units. This complex represents the single highest concentration of people in the inner city. Therefore, what happens here could significantly impact the surrounding communities. Our organisation wants to be involved in the community organising process in Schubartpark, on the condition that the local residents are central in this process.

*We are of the opinion that community organising is a very relevant pastoral-diaconal response to inner city problems and challenges, it is a contextual process of leadership development, and it could facilitate real and lasting bottom-up transformation.*

### 2.4.6   Other Projects & Support Structures

We are developing an integrated process for inner city transformation. Our projects do not exist in isolation, but we are intentionally integrating them to effect healing and empowerment of inner city people and communities.

Our presence on the streets and in the community, our community organising efforts, transitional housing facilities (The Potter's House & Lerato House), and low-cost housing developments, are strengthened by other processes.

A **Street Centre** provides support to homeless people and unemployed people. Support groups with victims of sexual abuse and substance abusers are being developed. Through the transfer of life and social skills programs, community leadership development, a centre for legal aid and tutoring programs, we seek to build on the capacities of marginal people in the inner city, helping them to develop their full potential and to help themselves. The leadership development program is intentional about assisting local people with leadership potential to develop their latent skills and to assume responsibility in the inner city.

We are continuously working at the development of **economic initiatives** in the inner city which will generate income and jobs, and which should be closely connected with the housing developments and other processes. At present a low-cost restaurant and second-hand shop are two viable church-based economic initiatives. A newspaper of the homeless, Homeless Talk, is a self-help project in which homeless people take responsibility, and we provide assistance. Currently we envisage the development of two or three additional **community businesses**, i.e. second shop, a printing press and a laundrette.

The **Tshepo Adult Skills Training Centre** provides various educational and training opportunities, developing people's basic literacy and numeracy skills, assisting people to complete school, to develop employment-related skills, as well as life and social

skills.

In our engagement with people in the city there is a built-in focus on life-style discipleship and emotional healing, as we help people to discover themselves as created in the image of God. Human and spiritual development are vital to bring about real and lasting change.

### 2.4.7 The Values, Vision and Objectives of Pretoria Community Ministries

Pretoria Community Ministries has generated a set of **values** that functions as a framework for our common journey. These values communicate about the nature of our spirituality, contain our core commitments, and are guidelines in terms of decision-making within our ministry community and its various projects (see Addendum 1).

The **vision** of Pretoria Community Ministries (PCM) is a more specific image of what we envisage for our communities. It is an image or picture drawing us into the future. The vision of PCM is :

> *whole, restored and empowered communities,*
> *where people flourish in God's presence.*

Through integrated development processes we work toward this vision. We believe that God's redemption is for individuals, but also for the city as a whole. We need a theology of people and a theology of place. God also wants to redeem urban systems and inner city communities. This is our vision : to build healthy communities in which people will be able to live healthy life-styles, experiencing God's love and justice in practical ways. Our various projects all feed into this vision and integrated development plan. The housing praxis to be suggested in chapter 7, is an integral part of the over-all ministry plan of Pretoria Community Ministries.

To work towards this vision, we have set certain clear (but broad) **objectives** for ourselves which run like a thread through each of our projects. We use these objectives as a yard stick to evaluate our own development. These are not strategies (such as proposed in chapter 7), but broader objectives. The following table provides a summary of these objectives :

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. | To demonstrate the love and justice of God in practical ways in the inner city |
| 2. | To create small communities in which people can take responsibility to help themselves |
| 3. | To develop partnerships between the local community, city centre churches, local business, local government, SAPS, various service agencies, and other stakeholders |
| 4. | To work for shared resources, facilities, people and vision |
| 5. | To develop leadership with an emphasis on local community leadership |
| 6. | To cross barriers of race, culture, language, gender and denomination, and to build bridges of understanding and co-operation across these different boundaries |
| 7. | To develop a holistic approach to involvement in the city, integrating aspects such as housing, economic development, life and social skills, counselling, spiritual empowerment, and others |
| 8. | To develop income-generating mechanisms in partnership with various role players |
| 9. | To manage available resources as good stewards of God's gifts |
| 10. | To call people of resource and pastors of city centre churches back to the city |

## 3. GLOBAL EXPOSURE TO CHURCH-BASED INNER CITY MINISTRY

### 3.1 Washington DC : Church of the Saviour

In Washington DC the Church of the Saviour has developed some of the most innovative housing ministries that exist. Jubilee Housing purchases abandoned buildings and convert it for residential use. In doing so they renew the face of the inner city, but at the same time they create opportunities with the inner city poor for decent, affordable housing. In other words, they don't remove the poor to renew the city, but the poor themselves becomes the agents of transformation. Their ministry is transformative, improving the housing stock, but also building lives, families and a strong sense of community (unstructured interview with Killian Noe on visiting Church of the Saviour, November 1994).

Lazarus House is their ministry focussing on drug addicts. Transitional houses in the community accommodate recovering drug addicts. After moving through a transitional housing program recovering drug addicts need a low-cost residential option within a healthy community. A few years ago Church of the Saviour helped recovering drug addicts to purchase an abandoned building which they've renovated into a mixed-use facility, including apartments which accommodate ex-addicts in a second phase of healing. While living here most of these people have started to work again, they are studying and they are slowly rebuilding their lives.

To witness this facility and the people moving in and out of it, was to witness the transforming power of God, not only in individual lives but also in communities and in buildings (visit to Church of the Saviour and Lazarus House, November 1994; participate in the Lazarus House Fellowship Evening, November 1994).

## 3.2 Atlanta : FCS Urban Ministry & Summerhill Neighbourhood, Inc.

FCS Urban Ministries is a rooted organisation in the inner city of Atlanta. This organisation is working alongside the Summerhill neighbourhood of Atlanta, not only providing counselling services, but working towards the economic development of this poor community. Through their involvement in this community, the Summerhill Neighbourhood, Inc. was born which is a very pro-active development corporation, run by the community, and focussing on building the capacity of Summerhill for future generations.

One of the signs of hope is a student residence on the edge of Summerhill, right down the street from the 1996 Olympic Stadium. This used to be a hotel, acquired by the community and converted as a student residence. This large facility, accommodating 800 students from neighbouring universities and colleges, is generating income for development and ministry purposes, it has drawn 800 new people into the community which has tremendous economic benefits, and students are linked to neighbourhood children through tutoring programmes, sport and arts, also contributing to the human and social development of Summerhill.

The Tapestry Community was born as a result of the Summerhill community's emerging vision and on the garbage dump of Summerhill a mixed-income housing development was built, accommodating low- and middle-income families, and providing a decent living environment and a stimulus for further inner city transformation to take place.

Through the success stories of the Summerhill community, assisted by FCS Urban Ministries, and through extensive lobbying and advocacy, one of the first public housing projects in the United States was transferred to residents for management, and this happened in Summerhill. This facility has been transformed since the residents took responsibility for the management of the facility, and they are now in the process to privatize the building.

Numerous houses were renovated, land was purchased, new houses are built, and the plan of the community envisages 6 000 new residents in Summerhill over the next few years. This partnership of church and community, resulted in the rebirth of a dying inner city neighbourhood. The transformation of inner city communities is indeed possible. (cf. Lupton 1993 : 93-95; tour of community led by Bob Lupton, November 1994 : Atlanta; unstructured interview and group discussion with Bob Lupton, 16 & 21 November 1996 : Pretoria)

### 3.3    Habitat for Humanity : Alexandra (and globally)

Habitat for Humanity is an international Christian organisation with the big vision of eradicating homelessness and poverty housing from the face of the earth. Founded by Millard Fuller in Georgia, America, this organisation has grown and thousands of houses are built annually in close partnership with poor communities everywhere in the world.

Habitat does not build houses *for* people, but build houses *with* those who are going to live in them and own them. The people owning Habitat houses are low-income or very poor people. It is a non-profit, non-interest organisation, basing their housing philosophy on Biblical values and demonstrating the Jubilee principles in practice. They are not only about building houses, but about building lives and communities.

Besides inner city projects in the US they also build in rural and urban places elsewhere. In Alexandra, Sandton, and in Stanza Bopape, Mamelodi, they have been in partnership with the local community, and the first houses were built by women from the community.

### 3.4    Bethel Lutheran Church & Bethel New Life, Chicago

In 1979 the Bethel Lutheran Church started Bethel New Life on the notorious West Side of Chicago. Their community "was devastated by extreme poverty, abandoned housing, crime and high unemployment" (taken from information brochure by Bethel New Life, Inc., 1992)

Since then they have come a long way and Bethel New Life is impacting their community greatly year after year. Their vision is for an affordable, livable and just community. They focus in four main areas, being care for the elderly, affordable housing, accessible health care and community economic development. They have already renovated hundreds of housing units and they have also developed new units for affordable, decent housing. This is supported by their economic development programs, health care and education. Through this holistic ministry, addressing the complexity of human need in the inner city, they have been able to erect signs of God's kingdom, building an affordable, livable and just community on Chicago's West Side.

Their motto is "Focussing on Strengths" and that is what they do in every project of theirs - they build on the strengths and hidden assets of the people and community on the West Side.

### 3.5    Johannesburg Trust for the Homeless

Two female ministers from inner city churches in Johannesburg were involved for the past few years with homeless people in Hillbrow, Joubert Park and Central Johannesburg. Through these relationships as well as the broader Central Johannesburg Partnership which was primarily an initiative of the business community,

consensus has been reached for the formation of the Johannesburg Trust for the Homeless.

The Board of Trustees is representative of the homeless communities, business sector, Central Johannesburg Partnership and inner city churches. This is a concerted and strategic effort in Johannesburg's inner city to address homelessness and its effects. The commitment of the city has been demonstrated in huge investments to secure transitional housing facilities, and the Central Johannesburg Partnership has employed a full-time person to deal with issues relating to homelessness and informal trading. The Johannesburg Trust for the Homeless liaises very closely with these bodies and individuals (unstructured interview with Tudor Maxwell, 10 September 1997).

The Johannesburg Trust for the Homeless is advocating and supporting the establishment of transitional housing facilities and the reintegration of homeless people into society. Low-cost rental facilities and projects initiated by the Johannesburg Housing Company, would eventually be linked to the people represented by the Johannesburg Trust for the Homeless. Projects such as the homeless newspaper, Homeless Talk, and other related activities, are also covered by the Johannesburg Trust for the Homeless.

The church has played a facilitating role, serving the homeless community, and journeying with them towards alternatives. In the process the church had to cross its ecclesial and cultural barriers into the public arena.

## 4.      Tentative Theological Reflections on my Insertion Experience

These are tentative reflections on my experiences in Pretoria's inner city and in the various ministry areas and cities outlined above. It includes insights that I have gained and  lessons that I have learnt, but at the same time it is a kind of a summary of theological issues and questions raised by the inner city context in which we work. These will be explored in greater detail in the phases if analysis (chapter 4) and reflection (chapters 5 & 6).

- The importance of *incarnational Christian presence and Christian community* have been emphasised in the past few years in our ministry praxis. The successes of Church of the Saviour in Washington DC and Bethel New Life in Chicago, also underline the importance of incarnational Christian communities in the city. The content and purpose of such a presence must be defined clearer, however, for it to be meaningful. Ours is an attempt to be an incarnational Christian community in the inner city. The content of such a presence or such a community needs to be explored more. On the other hand, there are churches leaving the city in the face of cultural and social transition.

- The concept of *integral liberation* (cf. Gutierrez - ch.5, 7.8.2; ch.5, 8.2.4) makes more and more sense to me every day. We need to fight and overcome sin as it destroys people personally, as it dehumanises individuals and groups, and as it perpetrates violence, poverty and oppression in many forms in the inner city. We need to recover a biblical vision on sin as being personal and social, and on people being sinners and sinned against.

- It is important in human and social development to build on *people's capacities*, instead of focussing on their deficiencies and weaknesses. A ministry of transformation needs to take this seriously as one of its values. Bethel New Life is one model which builds on the strengths of people. Dorr (1984 : 79-80) suggests that the poor must opt for themselves as the first step in their own empowerment, believing in their own potential and building on what they have got instead of highlighting their needs only.

- The journey toward *holistic ministry* is complex, as one struggles to detach oneself from false dichotomies and a privatised gospel, and as one engages in a relearning process for the sake of a transformed ministry praxis in the inner city.

  Holistic ministry needs a theology and spirituality that takes the totality of life and all spheres of society seriously. Without a theology to inform and sustain attempts to develop more holistic ministry, the pitfalls of false dichotomies will emerge again.

  In our own experience we need to develop a theology and spirituality that will integrate evangelism and social activism, discipleship and community development, church planting and community organising, responsibly. Rooted in such an integrated spirituality, one will be able to work for wholeness in every sphere of society (shalom), facilitating integral liberation, i.e. personal salvation, humanisation, and socio-economic transformation. It will facilitate the gospel in private and public spheres and take the church into the secular city to be salt and light.

- An integral part of such a holistic theology of ministry should be the re-discovery of *social justice* as a central notion in diaconal ministry. Diaconal ministry must go beyond compassion and service to include deeds of justice and advocacy. In the inner city, issues such as homelessness, urban renewal, land development, housing and job creation, all become social justice issues, where powerful people can choose to dislocate the poor, and where urban renewal often enriches the developer at the expense of the surrounding communities and their real needs. The realisation of social justice principles based on kingdom values could be the foundation for a transformed inner city.

*This is perhaps the difference as I understand it between urban renewal and* **urban transformation**. *Renewal does not imply reorganisation of resources and power relationships. Transformation calls for a fundamental rethinking of all relationships and for justice and equity in urban society. It questions the status quo if it favours some and destroy others. A transformed inner city will result in equal opportunities for everybody, decent and affordable housing options, and access to all of life's opportunities.*

We need to develop transformational models of diaconal and development ministry. The roots of inner city problems such as decay, economic disinvestment, and so forth, need to be discovered and addressed. Cycles of poverty in which people are trapped, need to be broken. To address root problems and to break cycles of poverty, we need to develop transformational models of ministry.

- Gregory Pierce (1984) in his book, *Activism that Makes Sense*, writes about **self-interest** as opposed to selfishness. I briefly introduce this concept, as it relates to incarnational ministry, but in a less than "spiritual" vocabulary. To Pierce self-interest is an important concept to be built upon as we organise communities and seek to affect change (cf. Marabastad & Salvokop). It is also an important concept to be considered by the urban minister. I want to suggest that self-interest will determine the nature of one's ministry in the inner city to a large extent.

My wife and I have purchased a flat in the inner city to live where we are called to work. The change form rental accommodation to ownership have caused psychological adjustments with regard to the place where we stay. Suddenly we looked through different eyes at our flat and our neighbourhood. That is a basic human principle called self-interest.

Bob Lupton (1993 : 59-60), a minister in inner city Atlanta, writes about vested leadership, explaining it this way :

> When the community is *my* community, when safety affects *my* child, when neighbourhood life impacts *my* property value, then you can be reasonably certain that I will want to make my opinions known.

I am vested in a community when my interests are invested there. Self-interest plays an important part in all of our choices. Inner city pastors choose to live in the suburbs and not in the inner city, considering their own self-interest. I want to suggest that the depth of our solidarity with the inner city will be determined by the extent to which we are vested in the communities we want to serve.

- In discovering a holistic vision for ministry, the church will be exposed to its own **barriers** and its **captivity** to suburban, middle-class theology, deeply influenced by Western missionaries and theological thought, and a privatised gospel which can hardly relate to real urban issues. For the church to live its bias for the poor,

to address social injustices, and to develop holistic ministry, it will have to make a prior choice to become an agent of healing in the *public arena*. As of late, theologians such as David Tracey (1983) and Don Browning (1983) others have developed what they call a "public theology". In the inner city a public theology is vital if the gospel is to be incarnated in the realities of inner city life. This requires a fundamental shift across sacred or private barriers to engage with the city. We need to allow the inner city and its people to inform our ecclesiology, i.e. the models of church we would need as vehicles for the gospel to be fleshed out in the realities of the inner city.

- In our organisation we have intentionally chosen *a bias for the inner city poor*. We believe this is essential, not only theologically, but also from an urban planning point of view, to ensure the sustainable revitalisation of the inner city. If the weaker groups of the city are marginalised, the whole community would be affected. If they are strengthened, the whole community would be stronger.

- *Power* has become an important concept in our theological understanding and in the way we interpret the city and its dynamics. My insertion experience in Pretoria's inner city (and elsewhere) raises serious questions with regard to the church's position in the inner city, as it relates to the powerful and the powerless, as well as to its own power or lack thereof. Where and how should the church position itself ? Power, powerlessness and the empowerment of the poor, need to be explored simultaneously.

- Our experience of managing a low-cost housing facility has brought us to an understanding of the nature and importance of *housing as a Christian ministry* in the inner city of Pretoria. Decent housing serves various human interests, as it provides a safe environment for family life, social and human development, educational advancement, and so forth. It is an unique opportunity for ministry that will reflect kingdom values, and that will facilitate integral liberation.

  The ministry of Habitat for Humanity, Church of the Saviour, Bethel New Life, and FCS Urban Ministries, are all witnesses to the necessity and power of housing as a Christian ministry. Especially in Summerhill, Atlanta, housing has been fundamental in transforming a dying inner city community.

- As we continue to live and work in the city, we become more and more aware of the power of *partnerships*. As church we are able to speak with an united voice and to do creative ministry on the basis of our shared resources, shared vision, and shared trust, in partnership with one another.

  Partnerships imply that we call together the gifts and resources of God's people, inside and out of the church, to be good stewards of these gifts and resources, and to bring it to bear on the challenges and problems we are facing in the inner city.

Partnerships should include relationships with other churches, local inner city residents, the business community, local government, the police, service organisations, and others.

Although all the individuals in the various forums do not necessarily belong to the Christian faith community, they have gifts and resources to offer as well. Partnerships, in my understanding, create an opportunity for people from all sectors of life to be stewards of their gifts and resources, for the sake of inner city transformation.

In the inner city the Christian community should act as *stewards of God's urban resources*, calling together people of resource and people of need, and allowing both groups to share from their gifts with one another.

## 5. Summary

The questions and issues that were introduced by this description of insertion, correspond to the research goals as formulated in chapter 1; 5. The most important questions or issues that were introduced by this insertion, include the following :

- *What is the role of the church in inner city communities ?*

  -the importance of the local church in mission, community-based ministry projects, and ecumenical partnerships to facilitate change
  -the importance of an incarnational presence and Christian community in the city

- *The importance of a transformational model of inner city diaconate and community development*

  -how can the church learn from its insertion in order to establish an appropriate Christian presence in the inner city
  -how can the insertion of the church into inner city communities inform and shape an appropriate inner city ecclesiology ?
  -how can the church go beyond its sacred captivity to embrace a more public agenda ?
  -self-interest, stewardship and housing as important concepts for a transformed inner city ministry praxis

- *How can social justice be facilitated and ensured as part of the inner city development process ?*

  -the importance to distinguish between urban renewal and urban transformation

- *How can the church contribute to the integral liberation, transformation or shalom of inner city communities ?*

  -How can the church address the causes of inner city decay or slum formation ?
  -Could or should the church engage in initiatives to reverse slum formation ?
  -The importance of ministry that is truly holistic

- *What is the role of power in the inner city, how does the church position itself with regard to power, how does the church understand its own power, and how can the church contribute to the empowerment of the inner city poor ?*

  -the importance of building on the latent capacities of people and communities
  -the importance of a bias for the inner city poor

# CHAPTER 4
# ANALYSIS
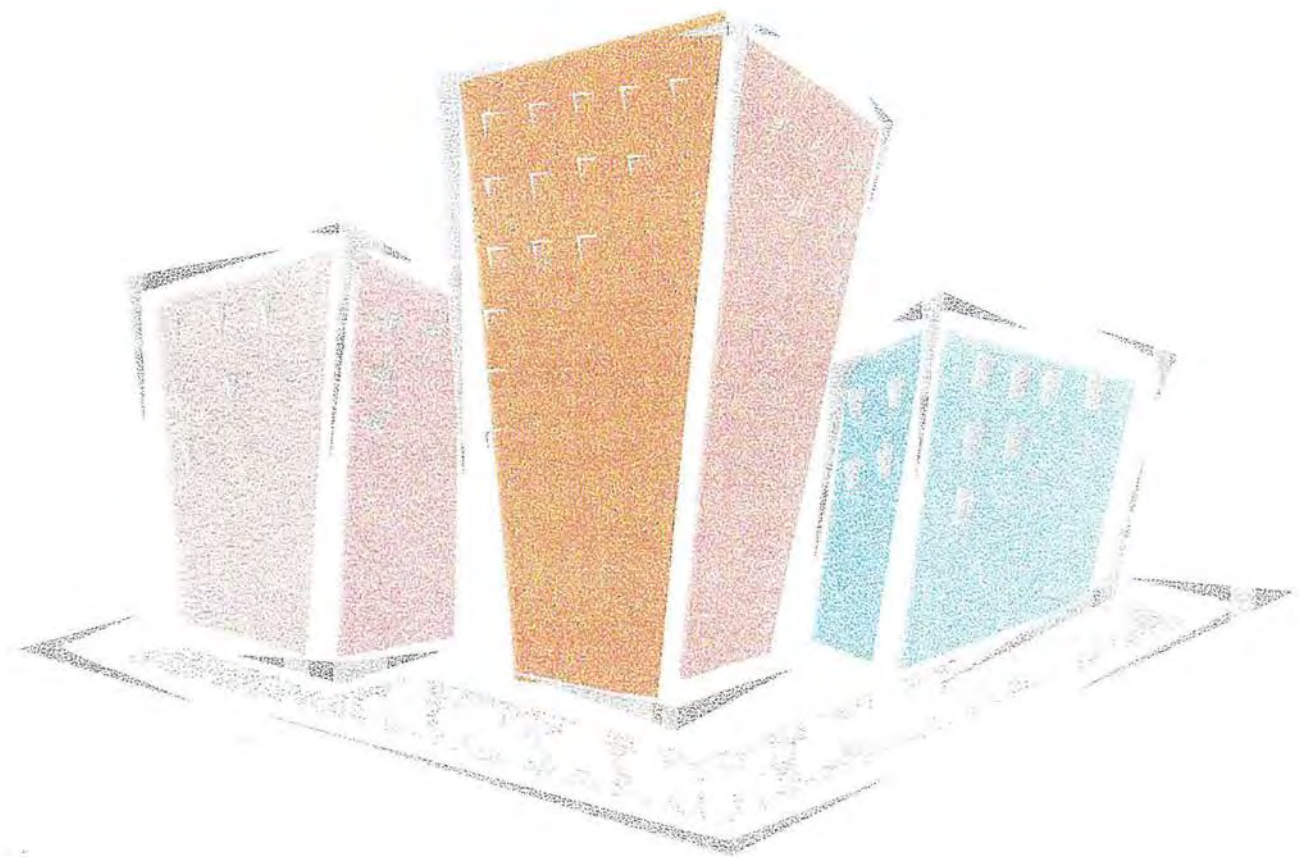
## ANALYSIS :

## Exploring Trends in Urban Development, Urban Renewal & Housing the Urban Poor - Globally and Locally

## 1.    Major Shifts in Development and Urban Theories

### 1.1    Shifts in Development Theory

In chapter 2 fundamental problems have been outlined with regard to much of the previous development theory and practices. It was suggested that the church should develop a radical alternative perspective on development through contextualised theology and ministry. In development studies itself major shifts have occurred in response to Western development theory. The recent publication of Swanepoel and De Beer, *Introduction to Development Studies* (1997), provides a helpful framework for understanding changing trends in development theory.

### 1.1.1  Macro-Theories : Between Modernisation Theory and Dependency Theory

After World War II an increasing concern emerged for developing the Third World. This led to the so-called modernisation theory, which was nothing else than a western capitalistic dream for development in the Third World (Treurnicht 1997 : 18).

The modernisation theory was based on the Western progress thinking, which relied heavily on the technological advances of the West. It assumed that the Third World will develop if it does as the north or the west do. Western values and lifestyles are hardly questioned in this theory . Development is equated with economic growth and is seen as a process which can be controlled; in other words, certain inputs would deliver expected outputs. It is further expected that development will spread its benefits to the poorest section of undeveloped places (the "trickle down" theory) (Treurnicht 1997 : 18-21).

> Development is therefore equated with a universal process of modernisation where Western values, production systems, technology and consumption patterns have to be simulated by poor countries in an attempt to modernise their societies along capitalist lines.
>
> (Treurnicht 1997 : 18; cf. Fair 1982 : 5)

In more recent development studies traditional models of development have been severely criticised. In global terms a heavy reaction emerged against developmentalism which was based on growth-oriented modernisation and progress thinking, especially since the 1970's.

In chapter 2 it has already been indicated how older development theories led to the poor becoming poorer and the rich richer. Changes in poorer countries were very often

"nothing more than new and underhanded ways of increasing the power of strong economic groups" (Gutierrez 1988 : 17).

> In the hands of powerful people development became a tool of marginalisation and disempowerment.
>
> (Swanepoel & De Beer 1997 : xi)

Sarvodaya is a Sri Lank an model of community development, rejecting "the Western model of development as unbalanced, exploitative of natural resources, profit oriented, and greed driven" (Lean 1995 : 38).

In developing countries themselves there are many examples of token development, where projects are initiated to house the urban poor, but the kind of housing erected was often so expensive that it ultimately housed middle-class people instead. The real problem of the poor is not addressed, but token development has political significance to potential voters as well as foreign visitors.

Alternative development strategies were suggested and radical criticism on the growth theory advocated. With regard to urban development specifically, Gilbert & Gugler (1992 : 33) caution us to distinguish between the welfare of a region and the welfare of people :

> ...greater regional prosperity does not guarantee greater prosperity for all.

Economic development and growth does not guarantee a trickle-down effect and benefits for the poorest sectors of society.

Alternative development strategies should be based on radical participation, land reform, asset distribution and so forth. Grass-roots organisations were to spearhead these alternative models of development, creating the opportunities for the poor to take control of their own situations, to identify their needs and work towards their own development (cf. Wisner 1988 : 13-14).

The dependency theory emerged as a response to the modernisation theory. This theory, emerging from Latin America originally, holds that the core tends to exploit the periphery in a world-wide hierarchy of dependence (cf. Brookfield in Fair 1982 : 21). Poor countries are drawn into the international capitalist system and it promotes the underdevelopment and exploitation of poor areas (Treurnicht 1997 : 22).

There are some key elements in the response of the dependency theory (Treurnicht 1997 : 22-23) :

- At the heart of the dependency theory is political economy. This theory holds that the interaction between politics and economy is important to explain poverty situations and how the rich countries keep the poor countries underdeveloped.

- The dependency theory views underdevelopment as a historical process and a result of years of capitalist manipulation, in which poor countries have become dependent (and therefore remained underdeveloped).

- This theory highlights the class struggle, indicating that the modernisation process is not such a harmonious process, but a battle of interest between middle class and working class groups. Some of the more radical advocates of the dependency theory calls for a complete break with capitalism through a revolution of the working classes.

- The dependency theory suggests a break with the world capitalist system by a promotion of local self-reliance.

Friedmann (1992 : 6-7) warns against some overreactions against the modernisation theory:

- Advocates of alternative development believe that the state, as part of the problem, must be avoided and even opposed as much as possible.

- Local communities are perceived to be almost perfect, as if they cannot do anything wrong.

- Community action is seen as adequate for alternative development and change, without having to engage in political action.

Friedmann (1992 : 7), although a firm believer in alternative development models, do not agree with these beliefs. The state remains an important player and a strong state can enhance local empowerment processes. It is important, however, to make the state more accountable to poor people and their claims .

Communities are not perfect and Friedmann speaks of many "fault lines" that run through communities : religious, ethnic, social class, caste, linguistic, gender. Communities are thus not homogeneous units where everybody always sees eye to eye.

Against the last belief, Friedmann (1992 : 7) states that conflict should not be dealt with merely on a local community level. To really be about the empowerment of the poor, structural and social constraints which maintain poverty levels and dependencies need to be addressed, and that may lead community action into the political sphere of regional and even national structures.

> If an alternative development is to advocate the social empowerment of the poor, it must also advocate their political empowerment.

The modernisation and dependency theories represent the two major opposing schools of thought within development theory today. They have influenced current

developmental thinking and even practice. Treurnicht (1997 : 23) is of the opinion that dependency theory focussed too narrowly on external variables and ignored internal factors which affected developing countries. On the other hand, modernisation theory ignored external variables and wanted to transfer western values and systems of knowledge to developing countries indiscriminately. The contribution of local knowledge systems to the process of development and change was largely ignored.

Both theories based their suggestions on a high level of generalisations, but are valuable to help us understand the thinking about development. Although criticism is growing against the modernisation theory, at a local level it is still dominating much of the urban development practices.

## 1.1.2 SOME APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT TODAY

### 1.1.2.1 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

It is difficult to analyse community development as it relates to so many fields of study or professional practices - sociology, economy, social work, geography, political science, planning, administration, and so forth. It also relates to both Third World - rural and urban - and Western urban and rural situations. It can be viewed as a process (progress through time), as a movement (commitment of people to a cause), as a method (means to achieve some end), or as a programme (carrying out procedures to produce action) (cf. Davies & Herbert 1993 : 110).

Davies and Herbert (1993 : 110) provide a definition in their work, *Communities within Cities - An Urban Social Geography* :

> *...community development is the purposeful, locality-based attempt of people - either from inside or outside an area - to initiate some action to improve their local environment, associations, services and other attributes in their area.*

Treurnicht suggests that community development seemed to have adjusted itself to the reigning theory of the day. Initially it reflected the basic outlook of the modernisation theory and it was an instrument in the hands of governments to achieve development according to that mind set. Participation was nothing else than involvement in government programs (Treurnicht 1997 : 24-25).

When the basic needs approach was popular community development focussed on the basic needs of communities. Later it encouraged grass-roots participation when participatory development took precedence (Treurnicht 1997 : 25). Today the main focus of community development is on grass-roots development initiatives. It follows a bottom-up approach, or it allows bottom-up and top-down initiatives to reach each other halfway, and to strengthen the development process.

Sarvodaya, a large-scale Sri Lank an model of community development, offers a

holistic, bottom-up approach, in which both the individual's mental make-up, and the social environment are undergoing revolution (Lean 1995 : 46). Sarvodaya has as their aim to create a society where there is neither rich nor poor, so that every individual, family and community could live as part of a just and peaceful society (Lean 1995 : 38).

Different community development programmes have different emphases. Davies and Herbert describe four different "delivery systems" or types of community development (1993 : 112-132) :

- Any community development process usually starts with a philanthropic or charitable intention. This still takes the form of the basic needs approach which focuses on alleviating the basic problems of communities. This approach is often a "top down" approach and tends to be paternalistic.

- Community development sometimes takes the form of technical assistance by "experts". Also essentially a top-down approach, local governments would send experts to provide services or infrastructure to a local community, which are unlikely to be provided in another way.

- The self-help model assumes that people can and should work together to provide the services that they need in their local community. Co-operative movements, self-help housing in Third World cities and community-based movements in inner cities advocating for alternative development, are examples of this approach.

> ...the self-help process in community development has been considered to represent a grass-roots revival of real democracy (Kotler 1969; Williams 1985).

> (Davies & Herbert 1993 : 120)

- The fourth type of community development, is the more radical critical or conflict approach, which was initially introduced by Saul Alinsky (1969) in Chicago. This has become known as community organising and is widely used today. Alinsky maintained that even self-help processes that worked were largely ignored by local governments. Through organising diverse interest groups, communities took collective action and created conflict, exposing the imbalances and injustices of society, addressing the problems of power and redistributing power, and thereby bringing change to their local communities. This approach would be discussed at greater length in subsequent chapters.

### 1.1.2.2 BASIC NEEDS APPROACH (BNA)

One of the alternative developmental approaches is the so-called basic needs approach, which Wisner (1988) discusses in detail. Wisner (1988 : 14-15) suggests a radical re-interpretation of development, rooted in people's own analysis of their needs and in participatory development, whereby the poor get involved in actions towards

their own well-being. Wisner (1988 : 15) says that this often leads to conflict with vested interests which is facilitating the growth of the group in "consciousness and political power". The basic needs approach is not so much focussed on economic development than on a human-centred approach which takes the basic needs of people for food, shelter, health, clothing and education, seriously (Treurnicht 1997 : 27).

Wisner (1988 : 14) identifies a strong basic needs approach and a weaker, watered-down basic needs approach. A more moderate version (the weak approach) has been advocated by bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, seeing participation as a more limited, formalised process, without the direct political involvement of the grass-roots. It watered down the political power of the stronger basic needs approach - which transferred power to the poor themselves -, and the weaker approach still resembled too much of the modernisation model of development. Wisner is of the opnion that this weaker approach to development has prevailed and is the base of most development projects today.

Friedmann (1992 : 62) refers to the origins of this approach, within the international bureaucracy, and maintains that only certain needs were taken seriously by this approach. The need to make political claims on resources was not accepted by governments, who continued to patronise the poor by prescriptive developmental aid. It seems as if there is no Friedmann has no doubt that the so-called weaker approach of basic needs were dominant, as is suggested by Wisner also.

The radical version of the basic needs approach is insisting on participation, beginning with the poor themselves and their reflection on their own needs.

> The strong BNA encourages poor people to understand the social origins of their poverty and to struggle to change them.
>
> (Wisner 1988 : 27)

Common approaches by those who have watered down the basic needs approach (weak BNA in Wisner's words) are to deliver goods and services thought to address needs in the community, or to provide skills and technology that are supposed to help a family to earn their own income. At the heart of these responses is the fact that the poor remains recipients instead of becoming activists or the primary actors in changing their own situation (cf. Wisner 1988 : 27).

Proponents of the weak BNA suggests reform and evolution as the preferable paths for development; eventually governments and the markets will solve problems of poverty. They disregard the stronger, radical response as "an overreaction to temporary deficiencies in the welfare system" (Wisner 1988 : 52). It is implied by Wisner that this approach is basically a way of safeguarding the status quo against radical alternatives which will involve power transfer and grassroots societal transformation.

Wisner (1988 : 268) refers to other social scientists in suggesting that participatory development should be transformative in nature, i.e. building the confidence of the

small group, increasing negotiation, planning and managerial skills, and empowering the group to defend and act on behalf of its own interests in the political arena (cf. Kruks 1983; Oakley & Marsden 1984).

On the other hand there is what he calls an instrumental concept of participation. This concept never looks at participation beyond the efficient management of a specific project. The participation of the community group is a way of reducing project costs and could increase the possibilities of an efficient project. The group is used as an instrument in the developer's project. Transformative participation allows for the group to be transformed and to become an actor, also beyond the immediate needs to be addressed by projects, addressing its long-term developmental needs.

## 1.1.2.3 PARTICIPATION

With the development of the basic needs approach and the emerging criticism on development which took a human-centred form, the participation of people in the development process became increasingly important, at least theoretically.

> Participation is one of those contentious themes that is open to many interpretations which mean many things to different people.
>
> (Treurnicht 1997 : 25)

Treurnicht (1997 : 25-26) offers some examples of participation and how it happens :

- For some participation is a way to inform the poor after decisions have already been taken by the decision-makers. People are only involved after crucial decisions for development have already been taken.

- Co-operative movements are involving the people themselves, or are even organised by the people themselves to be agents of self-development. Often these organisations are hijacked, however, and because of a lack of capacity could be misused, sidetracked, or not as efficient as they are supposed to be.

- "Participation as empowerment" assumes structural change and the poor obtain access to resources. People like Wisner (1988) and Friedmann (1992) advocate this approach, whilst Linthicum (1991) has developed an empowerment model from a Christian or church-based perspective.

## 1.1.2.4 EMPOWERMENT

Friedmann (1992), also in reaction against mainstream development approaches which exclude the majority of poor people, advocates an alternative development approach, based on a politics of empowerment. People's collective empowerment "lies at the heart of the practice of an alternative development (Friedmann 1992 : vi).

Poverty is seen as social, political and psychological disempowerment. An alternative approach to development based on the theory of empowerment, will transfer initiative back to the local communities that are disempowered.

> The empowerment approach... places the emphasis on autonomy in the decision-making of territorially organized communities, local self-reliance (but not autarchy), direct (participatory) democracy, and experiential social learning.
>
> (Friedmann 1992 : vii)

The model of Friedmann (1992 : 66-70) indicates how poor households lack the social power to improve their own lives. He identifies indicators for assessing the relative access of poor people and communities to power. His model is helpful to assess relative poverty or absolute poverty levels, according to the level of access that people have to the various indicators of power. His model is, thus, a model for evaluating poverty and deprivation, but at the same time a model for empowerment, i.e. how poverty can be overcome through genuine development. Later in this study the empowerment model of Friedmann will be discussed at greater length.

Robert Linthicum (1991 : 2), an urban theologian, writes about the empowerment of the urban poor :

> Any urban ministry which does not enable the poor to directly deal with their own problems will not really deal with a city's overwhelming needs. World Vision's Urban Advance pulls churches and the poor together into coalitions that empower the people to solve their slum's deepest social, economic and political problems.

The primary strategy of empowerment advocated by Linthicum is that of community organising (cf. Saul Alinsky). Linthicum, in describing urban poverty, also suggests the unfair distribution of social, political and economic power as main causes. He is using Biblical material to analyse power and he applies that to contemporary inner city situations.

Perhaps one of the weaknesses of Linthicum's study is the lack of interaction between theology and other social sciences, i.e. development or urban studies. Unlike the strong critical voices against the modernisation theory, who did not hesitate to implicate the world capitalist system, Linthicum speaks of power and its unequal distribution in local terms only, failing to interpret the local situation against global urban development dynamics.

## 1.1.2.5    SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development is an attempt to offer a more inclusive framework for interpretation than the older theories or approaches. Unlike empowerment, participation or community development, sustainable development is not a single approach to development, but a more inclusive framework, asking questions about social, economic, ecological and even cultural sustainability in development.

Sustainable development has become the emerging paradigm for developmental thinking. Its focus is on the empowerment of people to take responsibility for their own development in ways that will not be harmful to the future of their children; in other words, at a local level it refers to local development efforts that are in harmony with the local ecology (cf. Cobb 1992). Increasingly the American dream of "bigger is better is beautiful" has been questioned as harmful for the environment and in the long run it could ruin the world in which we have to live (Treurnicht 1997 : 30).

One of the best-known definitions of sustainable development is offered by Brundtland (1987) :

> Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Treurnicht (1997 : 31) asks critical questions of this definition, such as what the "needs" are that are referred to, how to achieve sustainability, and so forth. Such a definition also leaves room for people to live way beyond their needs as long as future generations will still be able to address their needs.

The issue of sustainability has emerged as the world has come to terms with its own limits. As cities grow (e.g. Mexico City) it is difficult to sustain them ecologically. Where would continuous economic growth lead us, especially if it does not seem to make a difference to real economic welfare ? Is it possible to develop new economies and developmental models which will steer away from growth, individualism and ecological exploitation (cf. Cobb 1992 : 72-81) ?

The debate on sustainable development is still taking shape, but it will probably occupy development thinking at length for years to come (Treurnicht 1997 : 40).

## 1.1.2.6    AN INTEGRATED, HOLISTIC & HUMAN-CENTRED PROCESS

Another aspect of a transformed development paradigm is the increasing emphasis on development models that are integrated and holistic. Development should address all the manifestations of poverty, instead of separating the tasks into sectors that are too well defined. Development, to be effective, is increasingly viewed as an integrated process. This means that different aspects of development should be integrated into one process.

Development projects often adopt a one-sided focus to make it more manageable. In the process, however, it tends to lose its holistic nature. Government departments are also divided according to different sectors, which lead to a fragmented approach.

Another important shift has been the central place that the human being started to take in the whole process of development.

One of the most important changes in development thinking over the last few decades has been the central position the human being has begun to occupy. Development is not the development of an area or of things such as roads and railways, but it is total life transformation. The entire development process has a human and emotional quality and function (Cohen & Uphoff 1980 : 216). And development must entail the liberation of human beings (Oakley & Marsden 1984 : 10).

(Treurnicht 1997 : 43)

## 1.1.2.7    SUMMARY

The following table summarises the newer approaches to development today.

| **NEW APPROACHES IN DEVELOPMENT TODAY** |
|---|
| 1.1.2.1    community development<br>1.1.2.2    basic needs approach<br>1.1.2.3    participation<br>1.1.2.4    empowerment<br>1.1.2.5    sustainable development<br>1.1.2.6    integrated, holistic and human-centred approach |

## 1.2    Shifts in Interpreting the City

If the approach to development has undergone major shifts in the previous decades, the response from those who think particularly about urban development and planning issues, has been even more dramatic.

Older urban development and planning approaches corresponded to Western development models in their top-down, (almost arrogant) progress thinking, modernisation trends, emphasis on economic growth, the belief that "bigger is better is beautiful". In the long-term this approach in cities, globally but especially in developing countries, would merely be unsustainable.

Most of the urban planning theory has been generated by the Western intellectual elite and adopted all over, without always taking the unique context of a city seriously.

During the last two or three decades, many of these theories such as master planning, zoning by usages, density and plot ratio control, highway construction, urban renewal, and slum clearance have all been applied and tested in numerous urban centres of developed countries without much success and at times with even disastrous environmental and social consequences

(Lim 1990 : 67)

Zoning usage, to use one example, was implemented mainly to regulate health, safety and pollution standards. It has caused lack of opportunity to the informal sector who needed to feed their families from their small pavement operations. It created lifeless city centres, where everything is dead at night and where crime is rife. Density control is an accepted standard, but what applies to Western situations could not be transferred directly to Third World cities (Lim 1990 : 68-69).

John Short (1989 : 59) refers to a practical example of top-down development practices that often lead to the destruction of whole communities. The construction of roads "generated more traffic, they were expensive, and they involved the destruction of existing communities as neighbourhoods were sacrificed so that the better-off could enjoy improved accessibility". Again, the "better-off" dictated the type of development that should happen and the minority of people who own cars, determine the outcome of neighbourhood life for the majority of poorer residents.

In the previous section I referred to the dependency theory which emerged as a reaction against the modernisation theory in development. The 'dependency' theory holds that Latin American development was 'conditioned' by its incorporation into the global capitalist society (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 19-20). This theory which emerged in Latin America was also applied to other Third World regions later.

The critical argument is that the development of developed and underdeveloped countries was integrally related, which is what Castells referred to as "dependent urbanization" (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 22).

It is possible to argue that in many Third World countries, if it were not for colonialism and industrial capitalism, there would still not be major cities. Indigenous urban civilisations in Mexico, Peru, China and India have been radically altered and sometimes destroyed by colonisation (cf. 1992 : 16).

> The most obvious effect of European and later United States expansion into the Third World were the creation of new cities, the generation of new urban forms, and sometimes the destruction of existing urban cultures...
>
> City and country became inextricably linked with most of the conquerors living in the city and most of the conquered in the country side. The city became the centre of the local aristocracy and the main link in the chain of political control held by Spain.
>
> (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 16)

Cities were shaped which were entirely dependent in a "hierarchy of dependence" of capitalist world systems.

Marxist literature shows that the results of urban capitalism are not only evident in Third World society, "but are entrenched even in the most affluent of capitalist cities" (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 28). So-called urban problems are merely results of capitalist development.

There is a clear universality evident in most cities today. Patterns of consumption, production and technology have internationalised most cities, even of the developing countries. Poorer cities were not always able to afford the latest technology, however. Some countries and cities have also rejected certain forms of the international life-style and value system, and many socialist societies have not gone all the way in internationalising their urban centres (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 30). Yet, the world capitalist system has co-opted urban centres to a large extent.

Urbanisation simply cannot be understood unless placed in a broader societal context. The future of the Third World city cannot be understood without questioning the basis of the world division of labour and the interests of governments ostensibly managing the city (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 6).

## 1.2.1 Seeking a New Approach

Studies of urban development has shifted its focus in the 70's towards what is known as a 'political economy' approach (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 1).

> This approach was consolidated and diffused widely through the academic community during the 1980s. It is a move towards a more holistic and class-based view of society, away from a functionalist, positivist, and consensual view. In the field of development studies the rise of 'dependency' and 'neo-Marxist' schools of thought shifted the scale of analysis away from the individual.
>
> (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 1-2)

The focus was not so much merely on the plight of rural peasants migrating to the cities, for example, but more on the causes underlying urbanisation, urban poverty and the rural-urban income differentials. Poverty was not seen as something attributed narrowly to the individual person, city or country, but rather as "a consequence of a historical process of incorporation into the world capitalist system" (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 2).

Similarly, in urban studies a shift towards a more radical approach occurred with Castells and others who reformulated the urban question (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 2). The urban form was shaped not so much by individual decisions, but rather as a result of conflict between classes which was an outcome of the capitalist dynamics.

> "...urban form, urban issues, urban government, urban ideology could be understood only in terms of the dynamic of the capitalist system"
>
> (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 2)

Space and the use thereof was socially determined and urban problems arose not by chance or mismanagement but because it served the interests of one social class.

The response to older urban development and planning practices was characterised by a more radical approach, based on the political economic analysis of cities and an exploration of causes which led cities and especially the poor urban masses to the

situations in which they have found themselves.

Perhaps it would suffice to identify a few essential elements in search of a new paradigm or approach to urban development.

### 1.2.1.1      Human-Centred, Contextual Approach to Urban Planning and Development

John Short (1989 : 2) writes in The Humane City about a new paradigm which views the city as if people matter.

> Definitions of what makes a good city have been dominated by questions of economic growth and issues of administrative convenience. In this book I want to outline the vocabulary for cities as if people matter.

For Short (1989 : 136) the goal of urban development lies essentially with the people of the cities.

> If we want to improve out cities, then it is important to 'see' cities as if people matter. The real urban development issue of the 1980's (and still) is how to create better cities for all the citizens by providing better environments, a sense of engagement in civic life and sustainable, enjoyable employment.

A human-centred or contextual approach assumes a major shift from top-down planning and development practices to a bottom-up approach. The Third World have imported urban theories form rich countries, which have not always helped them in terms of their unique dynamics and problems. Likewise, typical inner city problems in the West can not be solved by relying on Western top-down approaches.

> I think the time and circumstances are ripe for a reversal of the flow. We have much to learn from the self-help schemes of city-dwellers in the Third World cities with their organizational mechanisms for coping with few formal jobs and limited public services.
>
>                                          (Short 1989 : 3-4)

Urban planning and development should start, therefore, with the people who will benefit from the development, and especially with the poor. This compares with the contextual approach to theology, looking at the church and ministry through the eyes of the poor and developing new approaches to ministry from the bottom up.

Short (1989 : 42) illustrates the alienation of planners from the people, by challenging the hypocrisy of architects, developing certain types of buildings as if people don't mind living in them. They themselves refuse to live in these buildings, however. He refers to such architects and advocates of high-rise developments as Grotius and Manser.

William Lim (1990 : 58-59) is a Singaporean with a practice involving architecture, planning and development economics. He adds to the voices of people like Lewis Mumford, Jane Jacobs, Short and others, calling for urban planning to be multi-disciplinary and humanistic, as a reaction against economic progress, technological

advance, sophistication and prestige, as the goals of urban development. These have often resulted in elaborate road networks and sophisticated buildings, at the expense of local communities and people as a whole.

Lim (1990 : 61) continues to call for a contextual approach.

> Modern architecture is critically sick and alienated from society. It is dehumanising and soulless.

If architecture and planning is alienated from the society in which it works, it means that it is clearly not a rooted discipline which is drawing from its own context. Lim (1990 : 61) is expressing the need for more creative design in cities, which requires a creative process that is both individual and social. It happens through interaction in small groups sharing the same objectives or interests. Such a creative process is comprehensive. To become creative, he suggests we must start by questioning our present assumptions : Why taller buildings ? Why priority to private vehicles over pedestrians and public transport ? Why air-conditioned buildings ? Is zoning appropriate and facilitating humane and sensible community ? Lim (1990 : 61-62) is asking for alternative urban strategies to be implemented "within the context of our particular national, social, economic and political frameworks". What is required is a contextualisation of urban design and planning.

The element of power and exploitation are added by Ravetz (1980), who holds that clean-sweep planning, without the clear involvement of people, is in essence exploitative. In other words, an approach to urban development that is not human-centred and contextual, will be exploitative. It ignores, underestimates or condones the exploitation by the powerful of powerless people in the city. A new approach to planning is needed that would consider power and exploitation, that would be life-respecting and culture-respecting (Ravetz 1980 : 345). Such a new paradigm requires a new consciousness and new values, which will create opportunities for diversity, for imaginative environments with greater richness and variety than conceived of before, and so forth (Ravetz 1980 : 345-348; cf. also Smith 1994).

### 1.2.1.2    PARTICIPATION & EMPOWERMENT

Two terms which were already introduced in 2.1.2 are "participation" and "empowerment". Urban scholars also use these terms in advocating a new approach towards urban planning and development, in which participation and empowerment will be key elements.

Short (1989) writes about cities and refer to them as places where only some people matter. Cities give expression to relations of power which do not have equal weight and which ultimately result in marginalisation and even poverty.

Short (1989 : 9) identifies three forces or powers which contribute to the nature of cities.

- the power of capital create cities as merely revenue-generating machines.
- the power of professionals create cities in their own image.
- the power of political structures create cities that marginalise many of its people.

These powers and their negative effects cannot be overestimated, but Short (1989 : 9) suggests ways to convert these forces to more constructive ends.

> Social forces present us with opportunities as well as constraints.

Short (1989 : 54-57) suggests, contrary to those who argue for a complete overthrow of the present system as the only solution to urban problems (radical approach), that the fundamental problem lies in these power relations. He suggests a middle route in between waiting on the great day of revolution and accepting the present situation. This middle route has to do with encouraging people to gain more power over their own lives and communities. The urban people themselves become then, not the problem, but the solution to urban problems. Short places people at the heart of urban history (cf. liberation theology). Short (1989 : 6) warns us against "waiting for the Great Day when revolution comes and everything will be better" and is suggesting that people get involved as subjects and objects in the urban planning and development process.

To gain more power over their own lives and communities, urban people need to understand the concepts of power and prejudice, and need to participate in a process which will lead to their own empowerment and that of their communities. The concepts of power, prejudice, people's participation, empowerment and engagement, are key elements in the thesis of Short (1989).

Short (1989 : 51) pleas for greater people's participation in urban planning processes.

> The development of the expert is a function of the creation of the non-expert.

He is not suggesting dispensing with experts but that their skills would be used properly, and as part of a multi-disciplinary and participatory process (Short 1989 : 51; see also Lim 1990 : 58-59). We should neither deny their professional credibility nor abdicate our collective responsibility (Short 1989 : 53).

> Our cities are too important to be left to the 'experts'.

The participation that Short advocates is much more than token participation as often witnessed in the past and still today (see also 2.1.2.3), and is rather a move towards real democracy as Lewis Mumford envisioned it in 1968.

Lewis Mumford (1968 : 224) wrote about democracy in the following way :

> For democracy, in any active sense, begins and ends in communities small enough for their members to meet face to face. Without such units, capable of independent and autonomous action, even the best-contrived central governments, state or federal, become party-orientated, indifferent to criticism, resentful of correction, and in the end, all too often high-handed and dictatorial.

Participating communities, involved in planning and decision-making processes should form the basis of democratic processes of governing cities.

With regard to urban welfare programs Short (1989 : 106-107) is critical in suggesting that urban development should go beyond welfare. Recipients of charity usually have to accept the decisions of those who made decisions about welfare distribution. The power lies with the welfare professionals and decision-makers and creates dependency amongst the recipients. Short argues for a caring city that will respect the dignity of all residents, and combine the resources of the central government systems, with sensitivity of local welfare or development mechanisms. Community involvement, decentralisation of power, participation of the recipients in decision-making processes, are all elements of the new approach that Short advocates (cf. 1989 : 117-118). Again the emphasis is on participation and the empowerment of the recipients of welfare themselves.

Short (1989 : 69) is of the opinion that there is great prejudice at the heart of planning and development processes.

> There are many people in the city whose voices are rarely heard. They live in a city of other people's making. Ultimately we need to incorporate these other voices, we need to feminize the city, and encourage the engagement of the young and old; we need cities which reflect the needs and preferences of all citizens. If not, we impoverish our cities and our society. The real wealth of a city lies in the collective and individual creativity of all its citizens.

Short (1989 : 69) singles out gender prejudice and says :

> There is a real need to feminize the city; for too long now it has borne only the imprint of male perceptions and male power.

To make the concept of participation more concrete Short (1989 : 76) suggests as strategy for urban development towards a humane city, the twin concept of empowerment and engagement. Empowerment

> implies giving more power to individuals over the compass of their lives through better administrative structures and improved social arrangements.

Engagement implies people's involvement in all spheres of public life "and a democratization in the way we arrive at social goals" (Short 1989 : 76).

Short (1989 : 78) suggests that engagement is a deep human need, that we should build upon.

> Empowerment and engagement are related : empowerment without engagement is power without responsibility; engagement without empowerment is responsibility without power. Power with responsibility entails both empowerment and engagement.

Not only should urban development models go beyond welfare, but also beyond liberalism (Shorter 1989 : 93-94). Liberalism often focusses narrowly on individual rights without helping people to have a collective focus on shared social goals for the common good of everyone. To overcome this he suggests the civic tradition which encourages people to participate in the formation of civil (urban) society. The civic tradition created space for both empowerment and engagement to happen.

He suggests that the basic way of government to create space for empowerment and engagement, is to make government structures more accessible and responsive, by shifting the locus of power to the local levels. At local government level interaction could be more immediate, visible and accessible (Short 1989 : 93-94). In such a scenario it is also more difficult for corporate interests to influence government and therefore the local communities. This remains a huge challenge, in which civic society has an important role to play. Local governments on their own seem not to have the capacity to really ensure participatory processes that will work. There are positive examples of attempts to set up frameworks for participation - but within these frameworks it will rely heavily upon the people of the city to ensure the development of participatory processes of government in every sphere, as well as the increasing involvement and power of "normal" citizens. Intentional, affirmative steps should be taken to ensure the participation of marginal groups and individuals.

### 1.2.1.3 Towards an Alternative Economy

Whereas older urban development paradigms focussed solely on economic growth and progress, incorporating the world into the world capitalist system with all its negative consequences, newer radical paradigms have often called for a complete break with capitalism, and even for a social revolution to usher in change.

Short (1989 : 6), in criticising both modernisation and dependency theories, suggests that we look at the city, not exclusively in terms of capital - i.e. economic growth, neither exclusively in radical terms criticising capitalist tendencies. We need to

> see the city as something more than 'marxopolis' or 'profitopolis', and citizens as more than just puppets of old political theories or new market forces.

For Short (1989 : 133), both socialist and capitalist views on the city, tend to ignore the elements of empowerment and engagement in their approaches. For him, "n(N)aive socialism is as bad as crude capitalism". Neither respect the people themselves nor base their approaches and plans on the inhabitants of the city.

Gilbert & Gugler (1992 : 3) likewise adopt a critical position towards the left and the right, referring to Lefebrer who claims that "the same problems [of urbanism] may be found under socialism and under capitalism with the same absence of response".

Neither privatisation or a free market economy, nor a social revolution in itself, provide the long-term answers to solve urban problems.

Gilbert & Gugler (1992 : 5) highlight the changes that occurred in the world economy, the incorporation of the Third World into the world capitalist system, the increased development crisis of African and Latin American countries, and increasing levels of poverty in the Third World in the 1990's - "...in some cases incomes had fallen back to the levels of the 1960's (World Bank 1989)".

They leave sobering thoughts indicating that inequalities exist at a global level but also within Third World countries (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 12-13). Urban poverty in the Third World is both a result of national poverty and the unequal distribution of resources globally. The severity of urban poverty in these countries would be less if Third World countries themselves were more equally organised (cf. 1992 : 12).

Short (1989 : 124) goes beyond merely criticising capitalism and modern radical approaches, as he suggests alternative economies. In the vacuum created by capitalism, which tends to focus on corporate growth and development, traditional economic growth at community level offer much opportunity.

> Here the national and local governments could support diverse experiments in co-operative ventures, self-help schemes and community enterprises. Such schemes may provide the basis for a human use of capital and the opportunity to create places where economic growth is not the only definition of the good life.

When Short (1989 : 124-125) speaks about the creation of alternative economies, it implies a local economy of small-scale concerns, linked to specific local needs, local resources and knowledge, sustainability and resource conservation. Important, however, is that the size of the enterprise is not what constitutes an alternative economy, but rather the social relations of production and ownership. In other words, if we interpret it in its real consequences, how can the poor be allowed access to production and ownership of the product, in order to be empowered, and in order for available resources to be fairly distributed.

In such an alternative economy, or mixed economy, experiments in community ownership and co-operatives can be very fruitful.

> If we begin to see people as emancipators rather than prisoners of their economic situation, then we can begin to develop schemes that build upon human resources.
>
> (Short 1989 : 133)

With regard to housing, land uses and land prices are often upheld as limiting factors for inclusive developments and accessibility to the poor. Market outcomes are seen as fixed and market-driven development is at the order of the day. In other words, the market dictates who can live where under all circumstances. Growing criticism against such a rigid interpretation of land use and land prices have begun to develop;

especially against the background of a more radical interpretation of the city and the way cities are shaped.

Increasingly, social-conscious urban scholars refuse to accept market-outcomes as natural and final. They are of the opinion that the market is shaped by various factors, including landlords, government intervention, migration of people, and so forth (cf. Smith 1994 : 280; Smith & Williams 1986 : 206,223; Hamnett & Randolph 1986 : 124; Marcuse 1986 : 174). Reliance on market forces only to shape cities will be disastrous for the poor of the city.

Southeast-Asian urban scholar, William Lim (1990 : 70), writes about land prices and says

> Land has intrinsic value depending on its physical characteristics, usages and location.

Competition by land users as well as governmental development policies, urban development strategies, planning regulations and rules also have an effect on land prices. The traditional master plan approach, which assigns certain areas with certain usages, have often resulted in higher land prices in the CBD and lower prices the further you go from the central core. Escalating land prices in the city centre also lead to slum clearance and urban renewal, which adversely affects the urban poor. Policies are often founded on the argument that land will be used most effectively if it goes to the highest bidder. Lim (1990 : 71) suggests that this assumption will have disastrous effects for the urban poor.

Lim (1990 : 64-65) suggests that planning regulations and bye-laws are powerful tools to achieve social, economic and political objectives in urban development, provided that these are applied appropriately. He suggests intervention to ensure the fair distribution of meagre urban resources, and to facilitate that the urban poor will have access to land.

Part and parcel of an alternative economy, would have to be serious thought about land use, land prices, the way market forces are marginalising the poor, and the accessibility of affordable land and housing close to employment opportunities.

### 1.2.1.4 Sustainability as Goal of Urban Development

In line with current trends in development thinking, the limits in the world's (and cities') resources are clearly recognised, which led to the emergent paradigm of sustainable development.

Lim (1990 : 59-60) argues that there is a growing awareness in our time of the limitations of natural resources. Therefore we need to readjust our development priorities accordingly. The unequal distribution between countries should be discontinued, to offer poorer countries the opportunities to improve their own situations. Third World countries have often adopted Western planning practices, to further

disempower themselves. Western practices do not take the unique dynamics of Third World cities into account adequately. Lim is also arguing for redressing the urban-rural imbalances. Urban development should not deprive rural people of their fair share of resources. At the same time urban development should not ignore the urban poor, who are often rural migrants into the cities.

The equal distribution of sources, globally, between cities and the countryside, and between the rich and the poor within cities, are to be considered as part of a more sustainable urban development approach.

As a goal Lim (1990 : 63) suggests that the urban designer can demonstrate "the possibilities for revitalising and humanising the urban environment within the scope and range of the resources and capabilities available to, or in, his country".

Obviously sustainability is implying social, economic, ecological and cultural sustainability, as was identified already in 2.1.3.

## 1.2.1.5 SUMMARY

The following table summarises a changing approach to interpreting the city.

| A CHANGING APPROACH TO INTERPRETING THE CITY | |
|---|---|
| 1.2.1.1 | human-centred, contextual approach |
| 1.2.1.2 | participation & empowerment |
| 1.2.1.3 | towards an alternative economy |
| 1.2.1.4 | sustainability as goal of urban development |

## 1.3 WHERE CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY AND NEW URBAN DEVELOPMENT THEORY MEET

Theology, development studies and urban studies have undergone parallel epistemological shifts in recent years. I have already indicated how all three disciplines have responded critically to reigning Western ideological frameworks which exploited developing countries and poor people in the West alike. As response more radical theories have developed, such as contextual theology (liberation theology, black theology, etc.), the dependency theory in development studies, and various Marxist readings of the city (Castells, et al).

As this is an intra-disciplinary study (cf. chapter 2, section 5), I will attempt to integrate elements from contextual theology with new trends in development and urban planning theory. I have already indicated certain overlaps, such as a bottom-up approach, a shared focus on viewing reality from the basis of the poor, a holistic approach, a multi-disciplinary approach, and development that goes beyond renewal or token development to achieve real transformation, i.e. justice and wholeness in all spheres, including the urban poor.

The following table will summarise the similar shifts in these three fields of study :

## WHERE NEW APPROACHES TO THEOLOGY, DEVELOPMENT STUDIES & URBAN STUDIES MEET

- ***Towards a New Epistemology*** *:* In all three disciplines there is an epistemological shift, as knowledge is gained by interpreting reality through the eyes of those at the bottom of society.

- ***A Contextual Approach*** *:* The context is taken seriously and instead of applying rigid theory to every context, the context is allowed to raise its own critical questions in the light of which current theory is revisited and revised.

- ***A Narrative Approach*** *:* Not only in theology but also in the other disciplines, a narrative approach to science has been embraced, retrieving the stories of communities and people and learning important principles and lessons from these stories. Subjective experiences and processes have been recovered as a legitimate element in the practice of science.

- ***Human-Centred Approach*** *:* The new approach is more human-centred. Slogans such as "cities as if people mattered", and "development as if people mattered", were introduced. In theology the concept of humanisation has been emphasised more in recent years, both by the liberal theologians of Europe and the liberation theologians of the Third World.

- ***Emphasis on the Poor*** *:* In the newer approach the poor becomes a fundamental category and the yardstick for the integrity of theology, development and / or urban planning. The poor becomes the interpreters of reality and should be allowed to shape our theories significantly. The newer approaches emphasise a bottom-up reading of society.

- ***Participation*** has been emphasised in all three disciplines, and jargon such as participatory development and participatory planning was coined. In contextual theology the laity has taken a central place.

- ***Empowerment*** should be the outcome of participation; in other words, the new approach requires something more radical than token participation or so-called consultation, but participation that will lead to the empowerment of everybody, including the poor. It requires a fundamental restructuring of the way in which power is distributed in society at present.

- ***Integrated, Holistic Development*** *:* There is a radical shift away from separation, and human, social, political, economic, cultural, spiritual and physical aspects of development, are integrated in planning practices, urban ministry, and development projects.

- ***Towards Alternative Economies*** *:* In the new approaches there is criticism against the dictating global economy, without necessarily advocating a social revolution; however, there are suggestions towards alternative economies.

- ***Sustainability*** *:* The concept of sustainability is becoming more relevant daily, as it dawns upon city planners, development experts, and theologians alike, that global resources are limited, and need to be utilised and distributed with far greater responsibility and justice.

- ***Transformation or Liberation*** *:* A more radical restructuring of society is suggested, that was not achieved through either the traditional models of development or urban renewal projects. As a response to this failure, theology has developed along liberation lines. This study is suggesting transformation as the goal for urban development.

- **The Task of Contextual Theology**

The task of contextual theology will be more than merely integrating some of the new insights of development and urban studies. If Ravetz is right, and I believe she is, that development which excludes people from planning and decision-making processes is essentially exploitative, then the task of contextual theology would be that of prophetically addressing the exploitation, and also guiding processes to more inclusive and participatory places.

Contextual theology, as it operates in the public arena and in dialogue with various professions and disciplines, will advocate human-centred urban development, a bottom-up approach, participation and empowerment. It will continue to ask critical questions about development which does not take people seriously, about development from the top down, about development which does not bring true and lasting change to the lives of the poor, and so forth. Contextual theology has as challenge to help urban planners and developers to embrace new thinking paradigms in their own fields.

*Ultimately the goal of contextual urban theology would be to facilitate humanisation in dehumanised inner cities, and signs of God's shalom in the public arena.*

# 2. Global Urban Realities

This section deals selectively with certain issues in terms of global urban realities.

- In 2.1 I will explore definitions of the city and propose a working definition for the inner city.

- In 2.2 I will touch very tentatively on issues of global urbanisation and its effects, the reality of urban poverty and housing of the urban poor.

- In 2.3 and 2.4 urban informal settlements and inner cities will be introduced briefly in global terms, highlighting the main shifts in thinking about informal settlements and the key issues in inner city dynamics today.

- The next aspect to be dealt with, *Urban Renewal in 2.5*, is a key issue in the debate on inner city development. Revitalisation, gentrification, abandonment of neighbourhoods, dislocation of the poor, unequal land distribution, are all aspects that will be introduced in 2.5. These are important concepts that will be central in the rest of the study as well (chapters 5 & 6), especially with reference to specific inner city communities in Pretoria.

## 2.1 Defining the City

### 2.1.1 Cities Defined by Form or Function

Cities were originally defined in terms of form, and structural criteria such as population, density, and heterogeneity, were used (De Beer 1998 : 20). Lewis Mumford (1945 : 11) and others defined cities in terms of their function. Cities represented centres of power and culture, and were symbolic of integrated social relationships.

Ray Bakke (1987 : 37) clarifies what is meant by a functional classification of cities :

> Early urbanologists classified cities by place and form, but later ones, led by Lewis Mumford, defined them by functions - the roles they play in the large society. There is one aspect of the form of cities which Mumford regards as unique. Cities contain and transmit cultures; by bringing together all the separate parts (as racial groups find themselves living side by side) they enable direct relationships that become engines and catalysts of cultural change.

Bakke (1987 : 37-38) continues to offer examples of functional classifications of cities.

> Cultural cities lead the culture in fashions, trends and ideas. Paris, Oxford, Boston and San Francisco include the cultural role among their functions.

> Political and administrative cities contain governments and their bureaucracies. Their product is power and decisions. Examples are Washington DC, New Delhi and Brasilia.

> Other cities are primarily industrial. A third of the entire economic product of India passes through Bombay. Sao Paulo (with about 15 million people), Chicago-Gary and Bombay function

like engines and throb with power. They are dirty, ugly, noisy, blue-collar factory cities. They have more in common with each other than with the other types of city.

Commercial cities function like giant markets. New York is like a huge bazaar. The purpose of these cities is to make money, and the appearance often indicates the presence of wealth.

Some cities are symbolic. Soweto, Belfast, Berlin, Beirut or Jerusalem symbolize the divisions within their countries, oppression, warfare or religious hatred.

The cities which combine all these roles are called primary cities. Berlin, Paris or the capitals of most Two-Thirds World countries are examples.

### 2.1.2 Qualitative or Quantitative Definitions of Cities

Others make a distinction between a qualitative and a quantitative understanding of the city. Harvey Cox (1966 : 4) describes the city as "a structure of common life in which diversity and the disintegration of friction are paramount". He finds the "urban condition" anywhere, not only in Johannesburg or New York City or in Calcutta, and sees the process of urbanisation as a qualitative event (cf. De Beer 1998 : 22).

Danie Louw (1980 : 41-42) , Afrikaans theologian, expresses the same in his book, *Die Stad in die Mens* :

> And therefore we find the city in the heart of people. The city is a condition in the heart of our twentieth century human beings. In a sense all people are "city people". The "uncle" on his rustic farm in the Karoo, also inhales the atmosphere of "the city".
>
> (translation - SdB)

On the other hand the quantitative approach focuses on cities in terms of size and concentration. Esterhuyse (1986 : 1-2) refers to cities in terms of the concentration of population and economic activity. Urban geographer, Truman Hartshorn (1980 : 3), defines the city and speaks of

> ...a concentration of people with a distinctive way of life in terms of employment patterns and lifestyle. A high degree of specialized land uses and a wide variety of social, economic, and political institutions that co-ordinate the use of the facilities and resources in the city make them very complex machines.

Although he also refers to a distinctive lifestyle (which is more qualitative) his definition still concentrates more on the quantitative dimensions of the city.

As we seek to understand the city we need to consider both dimensions of urbanisation. In a workbook on urban ministry (De Beer 1998 : 22), dealing with urban power and systems, these dimensions were summarised as follows :

Urbanisation has quantitative consequences :

Urban populations are increasing, cities are getting bigger and more complex, cities accommodate an increasing diversity in terms of culture and economic activity, and so forth.

Urbanisation also has qualitative dimensions :

Urban life has a formative influence on people and communities. Religion, culture, business, and life-styles are affected and even changed by the process of urbanisation. Urbanisation brings about a new condition in the lives of people and communities, which also spills over to other areas and smaller towns.

## 2.1.3 Defining the Inner City

The inner city is an area within the larger urban area, which have its own dynamics and realities.

Inner city communities are not exactly the same everywhere in the world. There are clear distinctions between first-world cities and third-world cities. In South Africa elements of both worlds are to be found in inner cities.

(De Beer 1998 : 25)

In subsequent sections we would reflect on global and South African trends in inner cities, before focussing on the experience in Pretoria.

Some current observers locally want to argue that the "inner city", as a concept, should also be understood more qualitatively; thus, it could be applied equally to the urban township as well as to the central areas of the city. In other words, inner cities should not only refer to the geographical areas in and around the centre of the city, but rather to a certain condition within urban communities generally. In Britain, referring to "inner areas" could also include the low-income housing estates, which are often situated on the periphery of large cities.

In this study inner city will still be defined in a narrow geographical sense, as describing the city centre and its immediate surrounding areas.

A small network of urban ministry workers in South Africa, who hosted an international consultation on urban ministry in 1996, has made an attempt to overcome the terminology problem, by adopting an umbrella term to include urban townships, inner cities, urban informal settlements, and urban transitional communities. They have opted to understand these as *"struggling and / or transitional urban communities"*. These are communities which have considerable struggle in terms of crime, unemployment, homelessness, social decay, infra-structural problems, cultural transition, and so forth.

Neither my suggested definition for the inner city, nor this umbrella term, pretends to solve the terminological debate, as the debate on South African cities continue, and as major shifts and transitional processes in various urban communities are still underway.

For the purposes of this study, however, I will define the inner city as follows :

> The inner city in the South African context is a geographical area in the centre or around the centre of the city,
>
> with a quantitative concentration in terms of size, density and heterogeneity,
>
> and a qualitative concentration in terms of culture, power and existential human processes.
>
> (De Beer 1998a : 25)

It is important to conclude by emphasising the importance of the inner city in relation to the metropolitan area. The inner city still remains the hub of economic activity and the concentration point of both economic and political power, although the residents of the inner city do not necessarily share in this. The significance of the inner city as the heart of the metropolitan area, justifies a focussed study like this and bold partnerships and actions to guarantee the health of inner city communities.

## 2.2   The Urban Explosion :   Urbanisation, Poverty & Housing

### 2.2.1   Urbanisation

By the end of this century, "for the first time in history, more people will live in and around cities than in rural areas" (Time International; 11 January 1993, p.27). The growth of cities will be the single largest influence on development in the 21st century (cf. United Nations Population Fund 1996 : 1).

> By the end of the century, there will be 21 'megacities' with populations of 10 million or more. Of these, 18 will be in developing countries, including some of the poorest nations in the world... According to the World Bank, some of Africa's cities are growing by 10% a year, the swiftest rate of urbanisation ever recorded.
>
> (Time International; 11 January 1993, p.27)

What is especially alarming is that most of the urban population increase is to be found in the developing countries of our day. Urban poverty will be greatly affected by this ever-increasing growth rate.

To fully understand the rural-urban migration patterns it is important to grasp the real conditions of the rural masses. Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : ch.3) describe the urban-rural interaction comprehensively in *Cities, Poverty and Development.* Girardet (1992 : 71) also addresses these issues, saying

> All over the developing world people succumb to the magnetic pull of urban centres. This is far from irrational - average earnings in the city can be three to four times greater than in the country...
>
> ...Diseases may be a problem, but doctors are easier to find; worldwide the number of children surviving infancy is significantly higher in cities than in the countryside.

Although many urban dwellers live in great poverty, many people in Jakarta, Indonesia, who could barely feed their children, said that they were better off than in the rural areas where they have come from (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 64). Even casual labourers who worked for only 240-260 days of the year, had more than twice the working days than they had in the rural villages. If rural areas would offer the same opportunities, many people would probably prefer to stay there.

Millions of people live in two worlds, or what is called "life in a dual system", maintaining both rural and urban links. Migrant labourers find employment in town which have to sustain themselves and their rural families (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 82-86). Hundreds of domestic workers in Pretoria have to sustain themselves and their rural families; they do not have any money left to invest in a pension fund, permanent housing, or real educational opportunities for their children. Yet, working as a domestic worker in the city at a subsistence rate is even more than what the rural economy can offer.

It is important to understand the role of the extended family or kin groups in urbanisation patterns. A social network can mobilise greater resources than nucleus families; a wide range of families help pay the migrant to settle, to find a job, to provide temporary shelter, to assist parents, wife and children who stay behind, and so forth.

> The extended family thus acts as an agent of urbanization (Flanagan, 1977; Eqames, 1967).
>
> (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 70)

There are many examples of this in informal housing areas such as Marabastad and Stanza Bopape in Pretoria, and even in formal housing facilities where management has been abandoned and where overcrowding has become a problem.

Besides all the obvious social challenges that urbanisation presents and that this study is concerned with, urbanisation results in serious ecological threats. It causes the absorption of the city's hinterland and the city then needs to supply for its inhabitants from outside. Water, food, fuel and timber have to be imported and the soil fertility around the city becomes depleted.

Cities are sometimes like parasites, being an organism that lives and is dependent on another host for nourishment. Cities live and depend on a steady flow of supply from the countryside, forests, fishing grounds, and so forth. Cities are generative economically, but they also function parasitically (cf. rural areas; Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 14-15). They are parasites of rural areas, but Western cities have also been parasites

of foreign empires that they have conquered (cf. Angola, Mocambique, India, etc.). Paris, Amsterdam, Vienna and Madrid are exceptions in Europe (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 16).

> The actual environmental costs of urban consumption patterns are still unacknowledged in the purchase price of commercial products and processed foods...
>
> (Girardet 1992 : 86)

The costs of cities are suspected to be much higher than the actual reflected costs. Furthermore, the sustainability of cities are under serious threat.

> This one-way traffic of natural products to the city is the main cause for the inherent environmental instability of cities.
>
> (Girardet 1992 : 42)

If sustainability should be seen as a goal of urban development, these issues obviously need to be considered very urgently and carefully.

### 2.2.2  Management of Urbanisation

In a situation of overwhelming urbanisation, the management of cities has become a pressing issue.

In a survey which the Ford Foundation did, using thirteen developing nations, they noted that urban management in the developing countries is usually an ad hoc adaptation to given circumstances. These countries were not able to respond or adapt quickly enough to meet the pressure of these circumstances, or even to be pro-active in preventing certain trends (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 240).

The management of cities is a key issue in today's world. This is not only true of developing countries, but rings true of other cities in the world facing overwhelming problems as well, as well as of South Africa with its combination of First World and Third World dynamics. The Urban Foundation (1993) published extensively on the whole issue of urban management in South African cities.

Part of the problem with effective urban planning and management, is that local politics is often manipulated by interest groups with capital power, refusing tax increases, equitable distribution, and so forth (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 240-241). A few local governments have been able to cut through red tape and to implement policy and strategy that will manage cities, urbanisation and associated problems effectively.

Various suggestions are made to prevent or reverse the current-day urban explosion. Those suggesting these alternatives are of the opinion that it can go far in addressing urban problems.

One approach is *to establish new urban central places, or small cities,* providing services to the rural areas. In Europe there is one central place for every 16 villages, but in the Middle East there is only one central place for every 157 villages (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 226).

Rondinelli (1983 : 197) highlights the importance of *secondary city developments*, especially in developing countries. The function of the secondary city would be to strengthen the productivity of regions, linked to rural areas, stimulating rural development and generating more socially and geographically equitable distributions in rural areas.

There is the danger of exploitation, however, as has been evident in some rural areas (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 227).

Other writers feel that the development of secondary cities is still taking people away from the rural areas and that it would not really contribute to rural development. Friedmann and Douglas (1976) suggest a so-called agropolitan development. Instead of investing in cities, governments should invest in rural areas, in which small villages and rural places are linked to each other into a so-called agropolis or city in the fields. Such a district would be self-reliant, self-financing and self-governing, within the broader national policies, similar to a metropolitan area (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 227-228).

Other authors regard more intentional rural development programmes or rural investment projects as sound alternatives for uncontrolled urbanisation. In Jamaica the rural community of Walkerswood addressed the problem of rural-urban migration by dealing with the problem at the source, which is "creating a contented, progressive, and employed rural community" (Lean 1995 : 19). Although some people from Walkerswood still migrate to Kingston, the capital of Jamaica, this process has been reversed considerably.

> Thanks to a remarkable partnership between classes and colors and to a continuity of leadership, principles, and visions, a small village in Jamaica has created facilities and job opportunities enjoyed by few other rural communities on the island. And that, whatever the current problems, is a miracle in itself.
>
> (Lean 1995 : 33)

Another suggestion for limiting urban growth, besides secondary cities or new cities, or rural investment, is that of *employment deconcentration*. In terms of employment deconcentration, companies only invested in those "undesirable" areas very accessible to the larger industrial centres. From experience it is learnt, however, that the employment deconcentration programmes have done very little to actually impact upon local poverty in those areas.

> Industrial deconcentration may serve to reduce pressure on the metropolitan areas, but unless accompanied by other, often more radical programmes brings little benefit to poorer regions.
>
> (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 253)

In the long-term deconcentration programmes that does not impact adequately on the locations where new industries have been developed, will have a reverse detrimental effect on the whole metropolitan region, nullifying the initial attempt to take away some of the pressures on the metropolitan area and its existing employment centre/s.

Gilbert & Gugler (1992 : 242) suggest *policentric economic development*, which is not exactly the same as employment deconcentration. It speaks about the development of secondary employment centres within the same metropolitan area (or beyond it), taking the pressure off single central city developments. "Sensible policentric development may be the answer to the major problems of the world's mega-cities" (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 242).

However, Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 251) is not convinced that any of the attempts to facilitate migration control have really been successful.

> In general, migration control does not recommend itself as a suitable policy in most Third World countries. It can be effectively applied only where there is an efficient and authoritarian government or where a genuine rural development programme reduces the differences between urban and rural living standards. In many cases its effects is likely to be harmful to the poor; in most countries it will have little effect beyond increasing the scope for corruption.

In the South African situation, the Urban Foundation (1993) has recommended a three-pronged approach of urban management, secondary city development, and rural investment. They have refined their suggestions in a report on cities and the global economy, saying that the South African focus on large cities should be complemented with a growth strategy for secondary cities, the development of small towns, and an effective rural development strategy (Urban Foundation 1996 : 31).

### 2.2.3 Urban Poverty

Most of the urban growth takes place in the world's poorest countries, and especially women and children will be among the poorest of the poor (cf. United Nations Population Fund 1996 : 1). The migrants from rural places into the cities are generally amongst the poorest of the poor. This is a global reality, but also a local fact in South African cities.

According to the United Nations Population Fund (1996 : 5), conditions of life for the most vulnerable groups in the cities of the world are either poorly documented or the data is difficult to access. The lack of provision in basic needs such as shelter, employment, health care, water, education and sanitation, might affect one third of the world's urban population directly, but the whole society feels its indirect effects.

> The ability to meet the challenge of eradicating extreme poverty and providing basic needs will define and to some extent determine the viability of urban centres and the economies which they increasingly dominate.
>
> (UNPF 1996 : 5)

Thus, eradicating poverty will have to be much more central in any urban planning and development strategy. Neglecting this priority would be detrimental to the whole of urban society. In the light of this, the corrections in newer approaches to development and urban planning might be very timely to facilitate real bottom-up and contextual strategies which will indeed combat poverty and empower poorer communities in cities.

In an executive summary produced by the Urban Foundation (February 1993 : 11), urban poverty is redefined :

> Conventionally the urban poor were seen as people in households who earned a low income. Recently, a fuller understanding of urban poverty has gained international credence. In essence, the urban poor are better understood as a 'vulnerable group' with poor 'job access' in labour markets. Poor people are most vulnerable to permanent unemployment, casual employment, to the negative effects of changes in the economy and to remaining trapped in low-paying jobs.

## 2.2.4 Urban Housing

A characteristic of urban poverty is poor housing conditions or no housing at all. Poor housing affects the whole community and often results in social breakdown, domestic violence, violent crime, illegal drug use, and other related problems. Housing is a key factor in the decay or revitalisation of urban communities (cf. UNPF 1996 : 6-7).

The most severe expression of the housing crisis is found in homelessness which is an ever growing phenomenon.

> Estimates of actual homelessness in northern industrial states vary considerably. In the United States, estimates range from about 250 000 to over 3 million people. Despite social safety nets, European homelessness is estimated conservatively at 2.5 - 5 million. Outside the industrialized countries, figures are hard to come by and confused by the informal nature of much housing : homelessness by the same measure as industrialized countries would give a figure of 200 million for the less developed world.
>
> (UNPF 1996 : 7)

Gilbert & Gugler (1992 : 127) distinguishes between the poor and the very poor. The very poor have less opportunities to consolidate their housing situation. Turner (1969 : 513) views the squatter population as different from poor non-squatters and as people who are socially and economically able to cope with the problems of spontaneous settlement. He speaks about the process of consolidation, i.e. people being able to move through a process of establishing themselves properly in the city. Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 127) respond to Turner's argument, saying

> The worrying implication of this argument is that within every city there will be a sizeable group of people who are unable to participate in the consolidation process. In particularly poor countries this group of non-consolidators may constitute a majority of the urban population.

A property developer and consultant to church-based housing initiatives in Pretoria's inner city, speaks of the "unhouseables". Yet, somehow in the over-all housing strategy there should be a place to accommodate the so-called "unhouseables". Housing options should be broad and diverse enough to address the encompassing housing needs. In my opinion we should be creating affirmative housing options that will indeed exclude the possibility of having so-called "unhouseables" - because everybody will have access to some form of housing.

After having said this about the existence of poverty housing, or the absence of housing opportunities for the poorest of the poor, it is also important to hear the caution of Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 115). As a background to their discussion about housing the urban poor, they make three important observations.

- Services in Third World cities compare very favourably to those of surrounding rural areas.

- Most of the criteria by which we measure housing are highly ethnocentric and subjective. Poor families view their priority needs much differently than outsiders

who determine the needs of the poor. (For example, in warm climates food might be a much more pressing need than shelter.)

- Housing evaluations must consider cultural, social and environmental conditions of the specific context. Housing does not happen in a vacuum, but within a specific context with its own cultural and social dynamics.

A further observation is the highly relative nature of poverty housing in cities. The pressure on low-cost housing in Pretoria's inner city is not half as intense as the situation in Hillbrow. The absolute poverty of a community such as Hillbrow is much less when compared to the informal inner city area of Marabastad, Pretoria. Comparing Marabastad to Calcutta is almost absurd. Poverty in housing is relative (cf. Friedmann, Gilbert & Gugler, et al).

In the book on community development by Swanepoel and De Beer (1997 : 2-3), they also discuss the difference between absolute and relative poverty. The level of disadvantage determines whether poverty is absolute or relative. With absolute poverty the income is so low that even a minimum standard of nutrition, shelter, and so on, cannot be maintained. The next meal is a matter of life and death for those exposed to levels of absolute poverty. About 20% of people in the world survive at this level (1000 million or 1 billion).

Relative poverty is the expression of poverty in comparison to another area. In relationship to South Africa, for example, Lesotho is the poorer country. At levels of relative poverty, basic needs might be met, but in terms of the social environment and access to certain spheres of power, there are still disadvantages (varying from major to some disadvantage).

Swanepoel and De Beer (1997 : 2-3) makes a further distinction between case poverty and community poverty. Case poverty is when certain individuals or families do not share in the general well-being of society. Community poverty is when almost everyone in the community is poor.

Even within one area the nature of housing might constitute a certain level of poverty, which is very different to housing two or three blocks away. In Pretoria's inner city there are homeless people on the streets, people who live in "self-help housing" or "squatter housing" in Marabastad, low-income people living in single room facilities or subsidised high-rise buildings, and those who are able to consolidate to the extent of purchasing property in the inner city. These different housing types also indicate the different levels of poverty, or how people have managed to even break the cycle of poverty.

The chances of the poor consolidating their housing, can be reduced by the nature of urban growth. Urban expansion might lead to increased land prices, as well as urban sprawl which takes the poor further away from job opportunities, leading to a cut in family budgets but also in the time they have available for home consolidation (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 127).

On the other side of the scale is the outward flux of higher-income consolidators from transient communities. This might cause local urban problems, as the improvement of a community is enhanced by a mix of income groups. The higher-income people create a market for local stores, and a stronger political voice, which are of benefit to the welfare of the whole community (1992 : 128).

With regard to spontaneous settlements, consolidation of housing is also dependent upon the extent to which public agencies are able to provide infrastructure and services. This is often linked to the per capita income of a city, as well as the efficiency and allocation procedures of public utilities (1992 : 129).

Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 232) continues to distinguish between the welfare of "place" and the welfare of "people".

> A region may be rich without its inhabitants participating equally in that wealth, while another region may be poor but contain rich people.

The inner city might in many places still be a concentration point of economic activity and wealth, without the inhabitants of the surrounding area (formal or informal) participating in that wealth. In fact, the surrounding areas could be plagued by sporadic slum formation in residential facilities, but the generators and owners of wealth transfer the money generated locally into bank accounts outside of the inner city.

## 2.3 Spontaneous Settlements

The urban informal settlement differs by definition from the slum in its permanent and spontaneous character, often emerging illegally and without it being part of a pro-active planning initiative by the local government. It is also known as "squatter settlements" in South Africa, and in different parts of the world different terms are used to describe the informal settlement (favellas, barrios, shanty towns, etc.)

Alison Ravetz (1980 : 256) writes about the so-called spontaneous settlements (informal settlements), saying that official policies with regard to these are often depriving the poor of the productive use of land, making access to city centres with their job opportunities difficult, imposing high transport costs, often with the lack of efficient and affordable existing public transport systems. This is a global reality in most Third World countries and also true of South Africa. One of the major challenges facing urban planning locally, is to transform urban structure in such a way that poor people will have easier access to centres of employment, also allowing for them to have their housing and job opportunities in closer proximity of each other (cf. Gauteng Dept. Of Development Planning & Local Government Draft White Paper October 1997; GPMC Land Development Objectives Draft Report,. Vol. 1; January 1997).

In the United States the poor are often closer to the inner cities in a belt surrounding the Central Business Districts. In South Africa the poorest of the poor increasingly move to areas closer to the central cities, either settling in emerging informal

settlements closer to the city centres, taking over abandoned buildings as was often the case in inner city Johannesburg, living homeless on the streets of the inner city, or sharing a flat with family or friends, thereby contributing to overcrowding.

Ravetz makes it clear that housing should not be viewed in isolation from the whole complex of informal settlements. The social and economic structures provided by informal settlements are vital in creating hopeful opportunities to the vulnerable residents of these communities (cf. Marabastad) (cf. 1980 : 257).

The common Western and evangelical approach to these communities would be to view them as sub-standard, underdeveloped, and an eyesore to a "civilised" city. People like John Turner and Ravetz have started to challenge these traditional views, recognising that "the function of housing... was to enable other parts of life to be lived" (Ravetz 1980 : 258; cf. Turner & Fichter 1972). Turner made the distinction between what housing did for people and what it was by government or professional standards. Marabastad offered people access to the formal city, and an economic and social environment more conducive than the poverty-stricken rural or peripheral urban communities where they came from.

Ravetz (1980 : 258) refers to different scholars who have adopted a more positive perspective on spontaneous housing settlements, seeing it as a mechanism that absorbs urbanisation in a way that would overwhelm the public and social services of any city. It should therefore be regarded as an essential transitional phase in the housing delivery process.

Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 140-141) are of the opinion that a growing consensus has been reached in the seventies that Third World governments were incapable of providing sufficient housing as alternatives to spontaneous or informal settlements. As an alternative governments were encouraged to provide assistance to self-help projects initiated by communities themselves.

The Urban Foundation (1990/1 : 25 [no.9]) has suggested that informal housing should be embraced positively by government policy as a significant component of the whole housing delivery process.

Initially most governments world-wide responded to informal and spontaneous settlements through widespread removals and emphasised state-provided high-rise accommodation for the poor (Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 26 [no.9]). Informal settlements have a history of confrontation between landlords and squatters and governments. The most natural response to squatter problems, especially if these areas are close to city centres and unsightly, are to eradicate them altogether (Girardet 1992 : 74). It proved to be almost universally ineffective, with various factors contributing :

- removal exercises were costly and unsuccessful,
- no alternatives were in place for those who were removed so that they were just settling spontaneously somewhere else (in other words, the problem was shifted),
- political resistance to removals,
- the high cost of state-provided housing,
- the lack of availability and affordability of the existing state-owned public housing facilities.

From the mid-60's observers began to realise that informal settlements should be appreciated as a viable alternative. It provided a foothold for newcomers to the city, it was more economical than public housing, and it "should be seen not as housing in the process of deterioration, but as housing in the process of improvement" (Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 26 [no.9]).

Widespread removals still continued, site-and-service schemes were introduced, but often these were far away form employment and consumption opportunities, being located at considerable distances "to keep the poor away" (?!?) (Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 26 [no.9]).

The most important factor for urban land invasion is the shortage of affordable land and housing for the poor (cf. Urban Foundation 1994 : 5 [no.7]). As Ravetz, Girardet, Turner and others are indicating, informal housing becomes a more affordable, self-help option, which is a pro-active step on behalf of the people in need of housing themselves, and which needs to be supported by government structures.

In line with people like Turner and others, Girardet (1992 : 76) suggests self-help housing as part of the solution to urban problems. Squatters demonstrate great resourcefulness and provide low-cost options by housing themselves, relieving urban authorities. He goes so far as to say

> It is now widely accepted that upgrading squatter settlements is the only way of solving urban housing problems...

Self-help housing can indeed go a long way as part of an overall urban housing strategy to alleviate the problem of homelessness and absolute poverty. Whether self-help housing alone is sufficient, is questionable. Girardet (1992 : 68) is indeed correct when he states earlier

> Given half a chance people will do their best to turn squatter camps into neighbourhoods to be proud of..., using informal patterns of mutual support. But often they are hindered by the authorities who don't like "disorderly" camps.

For a brief moment I want to pay more detailed attention to the concept of self-help housing or spontaneous or informal settlements. Since it is a growing phenomenon and has become part of the inner city housing scenario in Pretoria, it indeed justifies some reflection.

There are different definitions to describe this kind of housing, each definition reflecting a different approach or philosophy to the housing issue. The terms that are used vary and they are often misleading. Shantytowns, squatter settlements, spontaneous settlements, irregular settlements, self-help housing, are all terms used to describe the same phenomenon. In South Africa the politically correct term that was coined to describe this form of housing is "informal settlements".

Each of the terms say something else about the nature of the housing. "Spontaneous" communicates something of the innovation of poor residents. "Irregular" emphasises the individual and transitional nature of this kind of housing. "Self-help" focuses on houses being built by owners themselves. "Squatters" communicates illegal occupation of land, "shanties" says something about the quality of the housing, and so forth (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 121-123).

Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 123) use the term self-help housing, although they do not want to defend any of the terms with great passion. They rather focus on the nature of self-help housing than on the term to be used, stating that, in general, self-help housing falls into two or more of these categories :

- most of the dwellings are built by families who originally or currently occupy houses
- settlements suffer from a degree of illegality or lacked permission from planners
- most forms of infrastructure and services are lacking
- most of the dwellings are occupied by the poor


Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 123) continue to distinguish between different types of self-help housing :

- invasions : private or public land, organised or spontaneous, with no purchase of land
- pirate settlements : land is purchased, but without planning permission
- rental settlements : houses are built on rented land
- usufruct settlements : permission to use communal land given by tribe, local government or private owner
- other variations and overlaps between subtypes

Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 124) stress the importance of consolidation in the self-help housing process. Turner (1967, 1969) emphasises the importance of security of tenure in the consolidation process.

Security of tenure depends largely on government attitudes and on the amount of political pressure that can be maintained (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 125). In the case of urban renewal programmes there is little that squatters can do to prevent dislocation from occupied land (1992 : 125). In South Africa black migrant workers were effectively prohibited from obtaining land which will permit consolidation. They lived in workers'

hostels with their families remaining in "homelands" or rural areas. Or alternatively they ran the risk of being evicted from living in squatter areas.

## 2.4   Inner City (Central City) Dynamics

Inner cities worldwide are under pressure. Jim Wallis (1994 : 54) refers to Washington DC and other American cities as the tale of two cities. This rings true globally, where almost every city  tells a tale of two cities (cf. also Gamble 1991 : 113-120).

> My city, like cities around the country, is divided in two. The centre of power that is Washington sits next to the disenfranchised in the District of Columbia. Everyone knows "official" Washington with its marble, monuments and malls. But the "other Washington" has been off-limits to the blue-and-white tour buses and to the consciousness of the rest of America.
>
> Here are substandard tenements instead of stately government offices. Here children play in rat-infested back alleys strewn with glass, trash and syringes, instead of running in beautiful parks. Here the only monuments are to neglect, indifference and the stranglehold of entrenched racism in the city that proclaims itself a beacon of freedom to the world.

And (Wallis 1994 : 55-56),

> Washington, D.C., dramatically exemplifies what the entire global economy has become - a tale of two cities. The bipolar structure of our stratified global city is reflected in hundreds of communities across the country and around the world.
>
> The story is always the same. Everywhere now there is an upper city and a lower city; in some places it's more visible than others, but it's true everywhere and becoming more evident. On a world scale, the reality is overpowering. It is the central reality of our global crisis - foundational to understanding all our other problems. And yet it is the reality we still want to deny or simply choose to ignore. Increasingly, that will no longer be possible. To face up to the tale of two cities is rapidly becoming a political and moral imperative.

Time Magazine offers the same disturbing picture (Time International; January 11, 1993 : p.31) :

> Urban experts often say that inside every First World city is a Third World city. In the case of New York City, that could be construed as an insult to the Third World. After a series of editorials depicting the city as 'the New Calcutta', the New York Times ran a rebuttal pointing out that the poorest neighbourhood of the Indian city had less crime and more community spirit than the Big Apple.
>
> A walk through the South Bronx fulfills every outsider's vision of urban decline. With their cracked facades and broken windows, abandoned tenements stare vacantly, like blind sentinels over street corners and rubble-strewn lots where drug dealers congregated openly.

The challenges or problems of inner city communities are caused by different factors, interpreted differently by different observers. For John Perkins (in Lean 1995 : 146), inner city community developer and pastor, the major forces behind urban poverty in America is racism, middle-class flight, unjust economic structures, and misguided welfare programmes. Some of these factors are global, and in the South African context

Perkins' analysis might be as appropriate. White people look at America's inner cities, see black or brown people, and say "it is not my fault", "it is not my responsibility" (Lean 1995 : 146). This is very similar to the more general response of white middle-class South Africans to the changing inner cities. This lack of responsibility is increasingly also the response of the emerging black middle-class.

John Perkins (in Lean 1995 : 147) refers to the days of segregation, and is of the opinion that professional people were the glue that kept communities together in those days. As things changed in the US and the middle-class moved on, a serious leadership vacuum has developed. In the South African context there is an exodus from urban townships and inner cities alike, leading to a similar leadership vacuum which needs to be filled.

The more radical interpretations of the inner city use class and capital as hermeneutical keys to interpret inner city change and decay (cf. Manuel Castells 1977). Lean (1995 : 146) is again referring to John Perkins when she says "Neither power nor wealth are fairly distributed". There is something essentially unfair about the relationship between the inner city and urban power structures with regard to the ways in which urban society is organised socially, economically and politically.

Land prices and land use play a fundamental role in the way in which the inner city is organised, both in the West and in developing countries. Land prices play a vital role to the effect that the poor are priced out of the land market in central city areas (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 126) and are generally confined to marginal areas. Land prices in city centres in Asia and Latin America compare favourably with that of Central London or New York today (1992 : 125-126). This results in increased transport costs, less family time, and great distances from employment for poorer families.

On the other hand, where it is possible for the poor to come closer to the centre, many inner city areas experience extreme problems with overcrowding since people want to be as close as possible to perceived job opportunities, and they put high pressure on existing accommodation. Absentee landlords, receiving the same rentals than before for lesser services, allow overcrowding as long as they receive their rental money. In the long-term this leads to slum formation and serious decay. In extreme situations people will sleep on a rotation basis, day and night. This is referred to as the "hotbed" system and is also true of certain high-rise blocks in Hillbrow (Girardet 1992 : 72).

Decay, attempts to renew the city through urban renewal programs, gentrification and token development, creative partnerships to reverse decay, and more participatory development programs, will all be considered throughout this study. The very next section will deal with attempts to renew the inner city through gentrification.

In many places high-rise buildings provide the bulk of inner city housing. Especially when conditions in these buildings have deteriorated, scholars tend to be negative about them (unlike original advocates of high-rise buildings such as Le Corbusier, et al).

Girardet (1992 : 73) says

> Stacking people in high-rise "filing cabinets" may make sense in crowded cities. But living in noisy little boxes in mid-air with nowhere for children to play is many people's vision of hell on Earth.

I am of the opinion that Girardet offers a one-sided critique of high-rise living. Not all inner city high-rises are slums, and high-rise buildings in themselves need not necessarily be oppressive. The same criticism that people like John Short (1989) and William Lim (1990) have against architects and planners who erect high-rise buildings without ever living in these, can be held against Short, Lim and Girardet themselves in favour of the high-rise dwellings. How many of the critics of high-rise buildings have lived in these buildings themselves ? Do they criticise these buildings on the basis of first hand experience or as outsiders looking in?

The negative criticism against high-rise buildings might have many correct observations which need to be considered. Yet, critics might base their harsh criticism on singling out extreme forms of accommodation, without appreciating the success stories of Singapore and the high-rise condominiums where the rich live in the absence of serious social problems. Is the high-rise buildings in itself the problem, or does the problem lie with a more complex combination of social, political and economic issues ?

In the same way, a one-sided criticism of slum life must be reflected upon critically as well. Without romanticising the misery of slum dwelling, Abrams (1964 : 5) has already provided new insight into slum living and a more positive appraisal in 1964, when he wrote

> Slum life is not always the symbol of retrogression. It may in fact be the first advance from homelessness into shelter, or the way station on the road from abject poverty to hope.

His observation seems very similar to those of self-help advocates such as Turner and Ravetz. Abrams (1964 : 5) argues that

> (t)he slum exists because no nation is able to produce adequate housing at a cost that workers can afford.

Slum clearance, in his observation, would not do good because the government would not be able to afford better housing for the poor anyway. The opinion of Abrams requires serious reflection when a social housing strategy for the inner city and the reversal of slum situations are considered.

## 2.5 Urban Renewal, Displacement of the Poor & The Land Issue

Urban renewal sounds positive as a response to inner city decay and the multitude of inner city problems. Yet, below the surface of this positive term is a complexity of processes which are often not as positive for those who are "sacrificed" for the sake of urban renewal. The following paragraphs will attempt to explain this.

It is important to remember that this study is done as a contextual theological study, looking at the city "from below", always weighing urban processes from the perspective of the possible outcome for the poor. It is also integrating elements of newer development and urban planning thinking, which is also contextual, human-centred and "from below" (cf.1.1 - shifts in development thinking; 1.2.1 - a human-centred, contextual approach to urban planning). Urban renewal is thus evaluated from this more radical perspective.

### 2.5.1   Urban Renewal : Different Things for Different People

One of the problems of urban renewal is the lack of clarity and agreement in terms of its goals and objectives. It has arisen as a response to uniquely inner city situations (but the same kind of processes might well apply in areas outside of the central city). Other terms sometimes used to describe the same process of attempting to give a new lease of life to an old, deteriorated inner city area, are terms such as urban revitalisation, urban improvement, or urban regeneration. I would rather opt for "inner city transformation" as the goal of inner city development processes, viewing the inner city from a theological perspective.

The goal or content of revitalised or renewed cities differ. Jacobs (1963) finds joy and vitality in urban neighbourhoods when there is a diversity of economic opportunities, physical structures and social relationships. Others focus on stability in neighbourhoods which often needs to be read as homogeneity - ethnically, socially and economically. Donald Rosenthal (1980 : 11) and Harrison (1974) focus on the building of an economic base for lower-income groups which constitute the larger percentage of inner city people.

Scott Greer (1965 : 165) writes about urban renewal and says that much of the present-day confusion in the term results from the mixture of three different goals : the goal of increased low-cost housing and the elimination of slums, the goal of a revitalised city centre, and the goal of broad-based community renewal. As these goals are integrated, the emerging program is often focussing only on revitalising the Central Business District; a danger for the Pretoria Inner City Partnership is also to shift from a broad-based revitalisation goal to a narrower focus on the Central Business District only - see chapter 5).

Rosenthal (1980 : 10) also suggests different approaches to urban revitalisation. One approach is to focus resources selectively, sometimes requiring the partial abandonment of areas which are already healthy in terms of business and residential patterns. Resources are focussed on those areas which show signs of deterioration and which could reverse the inner city socio-economically.

Important is to ask what the costs and benefits of revitalisation or renewal are for the different interest groups. Traditionally, hearing the term urban renewal immediately evoke positive reactions from the average middle-class, suburban resident. The social activists and the poor of urban communities that have been affected by urban renewal

programmes, react very differently to urban renewal, however.

> ...the process of neighbourhood revitalization could result in a variety of different outcomes or scenarios. On the one hand, neighbourhood revitalization could yield healthy, diverse communities with a mix of race, age and income. It could help cities to achieve many long-standing goals, such as improving the housing stock, increasing the tax base, keeping or attracting middle- and upper-income households to the city, bringing back business, and improving the quality of services delivered. At the same time, revitalization could be accompanied by significant social costs. Revitalization of central city neighbourhoods by upper-social-status newcomers could merely work to shift intractable problems of poverty, unemployment, and inadequate housing, to other parts of a metropolitan area through the wholesale displacement of the old, the poor, and minority residents.
>
> (Cicin-Sain 1980 : 50)

Cicin-Sain (1980 : 51) adds to the emergent voices, demonstrating that research on the subject has evoked different reactions from observers.

> ...revitalization alternately being praised as the salvation of urban America or being condemned as a new white middle-class plot to drive out the blacks, the poor, and the Hispanic.

## 2.5.2 Urban Renewal & the Loss of Housing

Urban renewal processes are usually linked to demolition of slum housing. Often it has been linked to segregation policies also, not only in South Africa. In the last few years urban removal programs have been criticised severely, evaluating them as not being interested in the improvement of the conditions of the poor, but rather in making space for profitable ventures or prestigious buildings (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 136). This is being done at the expense of certain marginal interest groups.

Like Cicin-Sain, many other observers share the opinion that urban revitalisation or urban renewal could often merely be sophisticated strategies to keep black people or poor people away from the centre of the city, having traits of racism or classism at its roots.

If this is true, urban renewal could not be understood to be a transformative process as it only shifts crucial problems from one part of the city to another. That is also why it is so important to see the inner city, not in isolation, but as an integrated part of the greater metropolitan area. Important in this regard is the observation by Robson (1987 : 15) in *Managing the City*

> ...that the economic and social problems which have prompted concern about inner areas are no longer - if ever they were - simply an inner city phenomenon. Cities as a whole are now suffering a general constriction in their economic base and all show the associated problems of social distress and environmental dereliction that are concomitant to this.

Goran Cars (1991 : 2) makes a distinction between urban regeneration of the past and regeneration of today.

> Following the Second World War, demolition and new construction were considered the most effective way of overcoming housing problems and raising housing standards. Over the last decade the wisdom of demolition has been questioned with increased intensity. Some have claimed that demolition in conjunction with new construction is not only a very expensive improvement method, but one that usually fails to meet the most urgent needs of the neighbourhood residents. Demolition has also been criticized because it destroys the social fabric of neighbourhoods and the built heritage that gives neighbourhoods their identity.

In many countries regeneration of the inner cities have increased the quality of inner city areas and thus the rental or purchase price increased. Poorer households have been pushed out of the city centres as a result (cf. Cars 1991 : 3). Sometimes governments build new housing for the poor on the ashes of the demolished buildings, but at architectural standards above what the poor can afford. It then becomes middle-income housing, too expensive for the poor, inflexible in use and often in unsuitable locations (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 137).

Although many advocates of urban renewal have include as a goal the provision of decent, low-cost housing units, this has not always been the case.

> The urban renewal program has done little to increase low-cost housing. In fact, the policy of destroying occupied houses without providing any compensating new housing, has had the effect of decreasing the supply of low-cost housing
>
> (Greer 1965 : 166)

Abrams (1964 : 126) said long ago

> Demolition without replacement intensifies overcrowding and increases shelter cost.

Even Karl Marx (Smith & Williams 1986 : 205; referring to Marx 1967edn, vol 1 : 657) noted, referring to improvements as they were then known in British cities :

> "Improvements" of towns, accompanying the increase of wealth, by the demolition of badly built quarters, the erection of palaces for banks, warehouses, etc., the widening of streets for business traffic, for the carriages of luxury, and for the introduction of tramways, etc., drive away the poor into even worse and more crowded hiding places.

With increased prices there is often a transition from rental housing stock to ownership. Again, physical renovation is not always part of this transition. Often the physical improvements are merely superficial, however, i.e. painting the exterior and adding security doors on the front of the building. The renewal of the building has been nothing more than a face-lift with fundamental problems remaining.

With Abrams, Cicin-Sain, Marx, Gilbert and Gugler, and others, this study questions the benefits of urban renewal, in the first place for the poor who are generally displaced by renewal programmes, but also for the whole city, who will continue to carry the social burdens resulting from the displacement of the poor and the lack of decent, affordable housing for all the city's people.

Urban renewal has too often been a sophisticated program behind which overt

manipulation of class, race and markets, have been achieved. It has seldom contributed to a transformed city where all residents had equal access to diverse housing and other options.

That is why this study will focus on the renewal of the inner city, with *comprehensive transformation* as the goal of renewal or development. This will be explored at greater length in chapters 5 and 6.

### 2.5.3 Gentrification : A Method of Urban Renewal

The term gentrification was first used in the late 1960's. It originated in the United Kingdom and became very popular in the United States and later also in Australia and New Zealand.

The American Heritage Dictionary of 1982 defines gentrification as

> restoration of deteriorated urban property especially in working-class neighbourhoods by the middle and upper classes.

The Oxford American dictionary of 1980 defines it as

> Movement of middle class families into urban areas causing property values to increase and having secondary effect of driving out poorer families.
>
> (cf. Smith & Williams 1986 : 1)

It contains the rehabilitation of a deteriorated working-class area into a middle-class neighbourhood. Some use the term transformation to describe the process, but dislocation of the poor would not fit this term in my definition.

Initially gentrification has been hailed uncritically as an appropriate response to alleviate problems of inner city decay.

> The notion that gentrification represents some sort of urban renaissance or revival is widespread...
>
> (Smith & Williams 1986 : 204)

Increasingly, however, it has been noted by social scientists that the causes of gentrification were not always adequately accounted for. The focus was on the gentrifying middle-class and on the gentrified neighbourhood, but never on the consequences for those who have been displaced (cf. Smith & Williams 1986 : 2).

Whereas initial observers only viewed gentrification as residential rehabilitation, it became increasingly clear that gentrification was the medium used for comprehensive economic, social and spatial restructuring of society (Smith & Williams 1986 : 3).

> Underlying all of these changes in the urban landscape are specific economic, social and political forces that are responsible for a major reshaping of advanced capitalist societies...

Smith & Williams suggest that the process to get urban areas to where they are today, were so complex that simple rebirth through gentrification would not be a long-term remedy (1986 : 204).

To understand gentrification, capital and class are themes running like threads through all the studies on this topic (Smith & Williams 1986 : 2). Williams suggests that gentrification is a class-based process which reinforces the reconstitution of class structure on capitalist societies (1986 : 3-4).

Traditional urban theory maintained a separation between the social and spatial dimensions of urban processes. The gentrification process, however, as an urban spatial process, has a clear effect also on the social form of the city (Smith & Williams 1986 : 9-11).

Smith and Williams (1986 : 206) argues that gentrification is

> a highly visible spatial process deeply rooted in current patterns of social and economic differentiation.

The term gentrification has caused discomfort with some analysts, because of its obvious connotations to class. They have suggested as alternative terms "neighbourhood revitalization", "Back-to-the-city movement", and so on (Williams 1986 : 65). Attempts to hide the class issue behind discreet terms, are essentially dishonest. If this process is highly connected to class differentiation, it needs to be acknowledged and accounted for.

### 2.5.3.1 How Does It Happen ? Preparing the Soil for Gentrification

There is a very clear process which prepares the soil for gentrification. Usually gentrification follows a process of deterioration. For example, original families were often middle-class. As they became upwardly mobile they moved out to the suburbs. Sometimes racial transition in the neighbourhood hastened the process of change. The South African inner cities experienced such rapid transition in the past few years.

Smaller quantities of capital are invested in inner city areas and into the maintenance and repairs of existing building stock. As the first signs of deterioration tread in, the in-migration of poorer and poorer households gain momentum, and factors such as overcrowding, absentee landlords and decreasing property values, will eventually lead to continued disinvestment and ultimately abandonment, until a neighbourhood's housing stock is inexpensive.

Residential change or deterioration could, at most, either lead to total abandonment or to gentrification of the area (Beauregard 1986 : 48). Between these two extremes there are many other options as well. Abandonment is either economic or physical. Economic

abandonment happens when landlords lose interest in the property for profit purposes and are willing to surrender title without compensation. Physical abandonment is when the building is no longer maintained by owners, although they still pay property taxes, and they are still legally accountable.

Capital is leaving the inner city, which leads to a rent gap between the actual ground rent capitalised from the present land use and the potential rent that can be capitalised from the "highest and best" use (Smith, in Smith & Williams 1986 : 23). Smith refers to the uneven development of land markets. While inner cities lose their investments, a parallel process of suburban development occurs, leading to central city residential areas whose capitalised ground rent is well below the actual potential (Beauregard, p.38).

The rent gap eventually creates economic opportunity for the restructuring of central and inner cities (1986 : 24). This paves the way for would-be gentrifiers to slowly move in (Beauregard 1986 : 48).

The existing residents usually lack economic and political power, and are often exploited by current landlords. It is difficult for them to resist the gentrification process. Where existing residents are owner-occupiers they are often eager to sell their properties at good prices, thereby being co-opted into the process of gentrification and relocation. In many cases gentrification does not happen without an intense struggle as community groups and individuals organise against the would-be gentrifies or corporate developers.

Once the land prices have decreased to the point of abandonment, the soil is fertile for investments to be returned. Gentrification is then enhanced by public and private enterprise's efforts to "reclaim" the inner city from decline, by perceived racial takeover and impoverishment.

> Such campaigns for an urban "renaissance", promoting the historical qualities of the landscape of commercial and early industrial capitalism, its tourist potential and its cultural significance, have become commonplace in Europe and North America. It is interesting to note that these programmes are not unlike the urban-clearance campaigns undertaken in the 19th century, which were promoted for reasons of health, security, and the establishment of urban settings commensurate with the importance of the emergent urban bourgeoisie.
>
> (Williams 1986 : 57-58)

The process of the Pretoria Inner City Partnership is very similar to the process of urban renaissance sketched by Williams. The elements emphasised in these processes make sense. If only the poor of these communities are not marginalised through envisaged renewal programs, but rather included as foremost beneficiaries of any economic development initiatives, new enterprises, tourist revenue, and so forth.

The concept of race intensifies the debate about gentrification and the future of our cities, especially our inner city areas. In America the inner city areas have become

predominantly black while the suburbs are predominantly white. Gentrification has been welcomed as a private initiative and

> one means of reinserting 'middle-class' whites into central areas.

> (Williams 1986 : 62; cf. also Schaffer & Smith 1984)

Private individuals are often interested in gentrifying since they are closer to their jobs, commuting times and costs decrease, they will have more time at home, and usually they can purchase property in the area-to-be-gentrified at much lower cost than elsewhere (cf. Beauregard 1986 : 46).

Gentrification is not achieved by coincidence. It is often finely orchestrated and deliberate processes, which are encouraged by local governments as

> (I)t stands to benefit directly through dislocation of lower-class groups which burden it through federal programs, and from their replacement by middle-class consumers whose income will circulate in the local economy and whose investments will enhance the tax base.

> (Beauregard 1986 : 51)

## 2.5.3.2 The Agents of Gentrification

Who are the gentrifies ? Local governments, para-state organisations such as Spoornet (in the Salvokop community), corporate developers, or private individuals, might be the instrumental agents of gentrification. Often it might be a combination of actors achieving the gentrification product.

Missiologists suggest inner city communities as frontiers for missions. Often urban pastors who have returned to inner cities to work and live there are referred to as urban pioneers. In gentrification terms, inner city communities have become frontiers for profit, and the "urban pioneers" are those who risk themselves and their savings to turn a deteriorated and undesirable neighbourhood into a place for good living (Beauregard 1986 : 35). Yet, they often assist in the process of displacing the poor. They have not fundamentally changed the urban landscape since they have just helped to relocate the poor into another area of the city.

Individual gentrifies are usually situated within the urban professional-managerial fraction of labour; they are often younger people, singles, childless families, gay, and so on. Large areas in San Francisco have been gentrified by predominantly gay men. In America, the boom in post-secondary education and an increasing number of well-qualified single women, needing accommodation which is very accessible to attractive job opportunities, have contributed greatly to gentrified communities (Williams 1986 : 68-70).

As gentrifies move in they bring with them new needs for facilities and services foreign to the specific neighbourhood. As these facilities enter the neighbourhood it further

contributes to increased land values, rental prices, and poorer individuals find it more difficult to move into these areas. Existing residents often have to consider alternative housing somewhere else as rentals increase and become unaffordable (Beauregard 1986 : 41-46).

The gentrifiers have little in common with the local residents in many ways and soon after arrival they discover a gulf between their own needs and what the local working-class community provided.

> Many of the "middle-class" people who moved into these areas eventually moved on. Taking advantage of substantial capital gains, they moved out to the country or to the established "middle-class" enclaves of inner London. Their replacements, as prices would dictate, came from more secure and affluent locations in the employment structure.
>
> (Beauregard 1986 : 72)

### 2.5.3.3 Effects of Gentrification

Gentrification has different effects.

- It definitely contributes to the physical renovation of a deteriorating area.
- It facilitates an upwardly mobile transition drawing professional and higher-income people into an area.
- It contributes significantly to displace poorer families and individuals.
- A tenure transition occurs - from rental housing to ownership.
- It often goes hand in hand with demographic and even racial transition.

(cf. Hamnett & Randolph 1986 : 121)

Hamnett and Randolph (1986 : 121) describe the demographic and social changes :

> ...tenurial change commonly results in a degree of both demographic and upward socioeconomic transition, as younger, more affluent owners replace older, poorer renters.

Through gentrification urban life becomes a commodity, removed from the sense of "community" which it once meant to its people (Williams 1977 : 11-20; Beauregard, p.36).

Abandonment and gentrification seem like opposites; yet, they are closely related. In the United States in the 1970's abandonment was even a recognised policy for certain neighbourhoods, in order to try and save others (Marcuse 1986 : 153). Until as late as 1979 the official position of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development was in favour of gentrification as a strategy for urban renewal. Their official position was that the displacement of less advantaged citizens caused by the processes of gentrification created relatively small problems, compared to the reversal of inner city decay and the renewal of abandoned or deteriorated neighbourhoods (cf. Smith & Williams 1986 : 8). Gentrification contributed to urban renewal, upgrading of housing qualities, contribution to the tax base, and so forth. In fact, gentrification was seen as

the only cure for abandonment (Marcuse 1986 : 153). Marcuse (1986 : 153-155) distanced himself clearly from the assumptions made by the US government.

Urban renewal in the form of gentrification was further advanced by the superficial facades of renewed cities, boosted by its advocates.

> The thinnest and outermost layer of our comprehension of the gentrification process is that of journalistic and public-relations hyperbole fostered by its "boosters" : redevelopment bodies, local newspapers, "city" magazines, mayors' offices, real-estate organizations, financial institutions, historic preservationists and neighbourhood organizations comprised of middle-class homeowners. Each has an interest in increased economic activity within the city and an affinity for the middle class who function as gentrifies. Their descriptions, analyses and advertising both present and misrepresent the phenomenon as it exists, and convey and ideology meant to foster continued gentrification.
>
> (Beauregard 1986 : 36)

It has become more and more evident in Australia, Britain and the United States, that gentrification has caused large-scale displacement of poorer groupings and individuals. Some authors have still maintained, however, that gentrification should be encouraged until viable alternatives are found. If not, revitalisation of inner city areas would be postponed indefinitely which would have harsh effects (Williams 1986 : 62-63).

The assumption in such an argument is that viable alternatives to classical models of gentrification have not been found yet. I would say that the problem rather lies with the investment priorities of governments, private and public enterprise, and so forth. There are viable alternatives to gentrification in the narrow sense, if only the perceptions and goodwill can be generated to invest in these alternatives.

As already suggested, displacement of the poor has become synonymous with gentrification and urban renewal. Displacement, according to an article by LeGates & Hartman (1986 : 178-200), affects a broad range of people, but low-income, blue collar workers, are still those affected most. A substantial number of displaced people recorded that the quality of their post-move dwelling unit decreased considerably. The rental increases were often quite significant. Others were not able to find proper alternatives for quite some time. Elderly people were particularly affected by displacement. Social conflict, violence and class and racial differentiation were often triggered by the process of gentrification. Especially in the South African context renewed differentiation on any grounds, is not what we particularly need right now.

It is important to note an observation made by Williams (1986 : 70-71) that residential location is not only an expression of class, but part of the process of constituting class differentiation. Through gentrification differentiation is fostered deliberately.

Williams (1986 : 11) also says that gentrification has contributed considerably to the differentiation of class and social strata in the United States and elsewhere where it has been practised. From a theological perspective this raises serious questions, especially against the historical context of the South African city.

In Britain the government tried to balance preservation of low-cost housing with revitalisation of the housing stock, and they came under pressure from all the different parties. In the United States gentrification contributed to

> (T)he promise of a partial halt to central-city disinvestment, but at the price of substantial displacement.
>
> (Williams 1986 : 74)

Williams (1986 : 75) mentions that some of the gentrifiers have lost financially in the process, while some of the working-class people have gained financially by selling their properties at substantial prices. It is important to note in this regard that displacement or relocation does not only hold financial consequences.  As Williams (1986 : 76) rightly closes his article, for working classes the "loss of residence has been just another facet of the destruction of their class...".

The demolition of abandoned or slum housing also meant the destruction of mutual support networks, whole communities, and so forth (cf. the forced removals in South African cities). It is a much more comprehensive process of destruction than the casual observer might think. And seldom was the inhabitants of to-be destroyed buildings asked about the alternatives that they would like to have (Girardet 1992 : 80).

Marcuse (1986 : 154) speaks about the vicious circle in which the urban poor often gets trapped.

> Abandonment drives some (higher-income) households out of the city, others to gentrifying areas close to downtown, still others (low-income) to adjacent areas, where pressures on housing and rents are increased. Gentrification attracts higher-income households from other areas in the city, reducing demand elsewhere and increasing tendencies to abandonment, and displaces lower-income people, likewise increasing pressures on housing and rents. Both abandonment and gentrification are directly linked to changes in the economy of the city, which have dramatically increased the economic polarization of the population. A vicious circle is created in which the poor are continuously under pressure of displacement and the well-to-do continuously seek to wall themselves in within gentrified neighbourhoods. Far from being a cure for abandonment, gentrification worsens it.  Both gentrification and abandonment have caused a high level of displacement in New York City. Public voices have contributed to this result, but are also capable of countering it.  Whether they will or not hinges significantly on political developments.

To local government structures, as the pressure on the CBD increases, business is needed more than residential facilities. Where there are residential facilities, higher income are needed more than low income residents. This put the low cost housing scene at risk.

Marcuse says (1986 : 155) :

> ...for the gentrifies, all roads lead to downtown. For the poor, all roads lead to abandonment.

The different types of developments always seem to displace the poor.

> The poor end up displaced by each of these developments. They are displaced when business wants to move in, because the land is too valuable to house them further. They are displaced where gentrification takes place, because the buildings and the neighbourhoods are too good (read : too expensive) for them. They are displaced where abandonment takes place, because the buildings and the neighbourhoods are not good enough to provide decent housing for them.

> (Marcuse 1986 : 155)

In the South African inner cities slum clearance (forced removals) in places like Marabastad, Sophiatown and District Six, were crude examples of so-called urban renewal programmes (although that is not what it was called locally). Today, similar processes of demolition or more sophisticated gentrification processes, which might even include token participation of the poor, are still threatening the inner city poor. The challenge is not only an economic one, touching on the housing and economic well-being of people, but it has indeed become a political issue.

> From the perspective of working-class residents and their neighbourhoods, however, the urban frontier is more directly political rather than economic. Threatened with displacement as the frontier of profitability advances, the issue for them is to fight for the establishment of a political frontier behind which working class residents can take back control of their homes : there are two sides to any frontier.
>
> (Smith 1986 : 34)

## 2.5.3.4    Displacement, Access to Land & Market Forces

In the previous sections it was hinted already that class and capital play a considerable role in the displacement of the poor and in the renewal of the city. It is odd that the assumption is generally that the city can only be renewed if the poor are displaced. But such an assumption certainly works within a very narrow-minded, locality-bound and short-term approach. Because the poor are only displaced temporarily to another area which will also be in need of renewal quite soon. It is vital to find transformative alternatives, which will integrate the poor as part of a process of revitalising inner city areas.

But before we look at alternative strategies, it is important to explore the issue of displacement even more thoroughly.

Displacement happens, not only by forced removals, war, etc. but merely by the way the market operates. Market forces account for a great percentage of displacement.

Homelessness, the most extreme form of displacement, and its growth in capitalist societies can be subscribed to, among other things, the fact that housing is a market commodity (cf. Smith 1994 : 273). Housing in capitalist economies is a commodity for profit (cf. Hamnett & Randolph 1986 : 130). Homelessness is a result of the process of socio-economic polarisation (1994 : 273). Often unemployed people, living in poor communities, might still survive as part of a closely-knit community. When displacement happens, such a person will not only have lost employment, but now also community, and eventually he or she will be homeless.

> Loss of community accompanying unemployment can mean loss of home in a literal sense.
>
> (Smith 1994 : 272)

Friedmann (1992 : 40) , in speaking about place and community, motivates for the importance of thinking about displacement and the issue of space, saying

> We are interested in territoriality not because of some obscure spacial metaphysics but because people inhabit these spaces, and it is these flesh-and-blood people who suffer the booms and busts of the economy. People are not an abstract category of labor that move mechanically at the right time and in just the right proportions to wherever economic opportunities arise. They are social, *connected* beings who live in families, households, and communities who interact with neighbours, kinfolk, friends, and familiars. Over time, people inhabiting particular places evolve typical patterns of speech, ritual practices, and social practices with which they are comfortable and feel 'at home'.

Displacement is affecting whole sets of rituals, life patterns, and social relationships. It is indeed placing whole communities at risk. At the heart of the issue of displacement and community destruction, is the notion of housing as a mere commodity, and the capitalist process of socio-economic polarisation.

Displacement ultimately threatens the stability of the whole city. In 1964 Charles Abrams wrote that the failure to deal with land distribution and housing issues in the world's cities could contribute to a threat against the stability of the whole world. Shelter and land are vital issues "in the destiny of the city and in the reaffirmation of its values" (Abrams 1964 : 296). This still rings true more than 30 years later in the South African and in the broader African urban context. That is why it is so essential to get behind the causes of gentrification and displacement, to analyse the processes, and to seek for viable and just alternatives.

Social justice, in the opinion of Smith (1994), should not be left to some market forces. Market outcomes should not be considered as if they are necessarily the results of a just process of distribution.

There is a problem with the way in which land and market forces operate; even in the most affluent societies people do not even have a guarantee of land to live on, never mind a housing unit in which to live. Land goes for prices which most cannot afford, and therefore market forces are able to price people "out of a place in the world" (Smith 1994 : 280). Many people in the Third World, also in South Africa, occupy land illegally on the only sites that they can find on which to live. A system depriving people from this basic necessity in life, does not facilitate social justice.

Smith (1994 : 281) feels that "(t)here are practical as well as moral problems with approving market outcomes". Those without power or capital are dependent on those with access to power. Those with most money and land can influence the market processes as they desire.

Landlords adjust their behaviour according to the market environment. Where there is a demand for owner-occupation and where house prices are rising in relation to rental incomes, selling for owner-occupation makes a lot of sense to a landlord. On the other hand, landlords can play a much more active role to maintain the profit levels instead of allowing it to decline. Markets are not autonomous objects but are created and shaped. In the same way tenure transformation does not simply happen, but they are produced (Hamnett & Randolph 1986 : 124).

The upgrading of single room occupancy units generally result in displacement of the poor residents as well (Marcuse 1986 : 161). Re-zoning practices, changing buildings from low-income housing to upmarket guest houses or office blocks, also result in displacement.

Family changes also contribute to homelessness and in the South African society the slow collapse of the extended family in urbanised settings have been a contributing factor to homelessness amongst older black people. The growing number of female single parents are particularly vulnerable (Smith 1994 : 273). Yet, the break-down of the extended family can partly be related to past policies of migrant labour, the break-up of family units with the homeland system, and so forth.

Stereotyping is a major effect of displacement. Casual observers do not have insight into the market forces and other forces which have led people to situations of extreme poverty. Culhane and Fried (1988 : 184-185) provides a clear analysis of the way in which the homeless are stigmatised by society. They describe how the economic, social and cultural contexts of homelessness are ignored, and how homeless people are caricatured as "tramps, bums, alcoholics and psychotics".

It has been recorded earlier that social segregation is enhanced by dislocation. Often this is done, not by crude methods such as demolition, but by the sophisticated method of residential zoning. Residential zoning often uses spatial distance to ensure social segregation (Jager 1986 : 83).

Displacement is often the trigger of a continuous cycle of crisis for the urban poor. Various studies recorded the incidents of repeated displacements as the boundaries of urban renewal continued to move (LeGates & Hartman 1986 : 191).

Smith (1994 : 276) writes about the emotional or psychological effects of displacement. He argues that the loss of place is equal to the experience of death, or the loss of a loved one. He refers to Marris (1986), who wrote about slum clearance and the effects it had on the people affected by it. Smith then draws the conclusion that societies have their rituals whereby they mourn the loss of loved ones. While this is true in the case of the loss of people, there are no rituals to come to terms with the loss of place through displacement. What requires a process of grieving and mourning, often just end very abruptly, and has long-term psychological effects.

The church in particular has a clear pastoral function, to guide people who have been

victims of displacement through rituals and processes of healing and recovery; similar to other forms of trauma or crisis. The problem is only that this is sometimes an on-going crisis as there are not overnight remedies to homelessness, unequal access to the housing market, and so forth.

### 2.5.3.5    Searching for Alternatives to Displacement of the Poor

Not much has changed since Greer (1965 : 168), already in 1965, advocated for social housing that will address the housing needs of those that cannot afford standard housing.    In fact, instead of adopting comprehensive social housing strategies integrating the poor effectively and with dignity into society, continuous displacement has contributed to on-going marginalisation of the poor in the inner city.

But there are alternatives to displacing the poor. I will spend substantial time in exploring principles and strategies for transforming the inner city; i.e. revitalising it through the integration of all inner city residents, including the marginal and poor groups and individuals. Here I will only draw some lines from studies on the subject which will form the basis of an alternative framework.

*Self-determination through Participation*
Marcuse (1986 : 174) suggests that neighbourhoods in danger of abandonment and gentrification should be given control of their own destinies. Resources must be made available to them for that purpose. Public policies dealing with housing should make as objective the elimination of any form of displacement. But only through the involvement of the poor residents themselves, would such an objective be achieved.

In the past participation was inhibited by perceptions that everything was working well. It is human "to leave alone those things that seem to be working" (Ravetz 1980 : 295). The majority of people would leave the environment in the hands of professionals, as long as it does not show signs of severe breakdown. Another impression of Ravetz (1980 : 294) is that people would participate on the presupposition that the environment was very special and indeed worth working for.

Participation has become a word widely used in planning circles, and in South Africa is often referred to as consultation. When translated it refers to

> a game played strictly to official rules and it is understandable that it should take a rather special person to join in.
>
> (Ravetz 1980 : 295)

Participation in this sense is obviously not adequate. Sherry Arnstein (1969 : 216-224) suggests that

> ...participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless. It allows the power-holders to claim that all sides were considered, but makes it possible for only some of those sides to benefit. It maintains the status quo.

Only a fraction of the population actually benefits from urban renewal projects. The poorest of the poor are marginalised even more and once more dislocated from a place where they were able to reintegrate themselves, without huge public costs, into the economy of the city.

Urban planning processes need to undergo fundamental epistemological shifts in order to include the poor in participatory planning processes, to transfer power to the communities themselves, to ensure alternatives to dislocation through the promotion of self-determination and self-help housing initiatives (this is not self-help only in the sense of informal settlements, but meant in the broadest possible sense).

> The people can, and ought to be encouraged to, help themselves. Self-help and group participation are essential inputs to be developed in the building of socially meaningful communities.

(Ravetz 1980 : 8)

*Public policy*
Although public policy could encourage abandonment and gentrification, public policy could also reduce and eliminate displacement.

> Government plays a major role in land-use questions, and the courts have increasingly come to recognize the power (and indeed the obligation) to regulate land use for the public welfare. If the objective is to improve the conditions of those with the most serious housing problems, the basic concepts are not difficult to lay out.
>
> (Marcuse 1986 : 174)

This calls for public policy which is clear in its intention to serve those at the margins, and for government intervention in unfairly structured housing markets. It depends heavily on the decisions taken in the political arena.

> ...some approaches that will *not* reduce displacement or improve housing for those most in need can be identified. Most importantly, gentrification does *not* provide the "cure" for abandonment. In the first place, gentrification only succeeds abandonment in a limited number of neighbourhoods (only pockets and perhaps some borders, but certainly not in centres of abandonment) by any operation of the private market. And, if it did, the cure would be as bad as the disease, because gentrification is as inherently linked with the displacement of lower-income households as is abandonment itself. Public resources invested in such fashion as to "upgrade" a neighbourhood (gentrify it), by introducing higher-income or status groups into an area, will not help those of "lower" status already there; on the contrary.

> **The large question is not *whether* abandonment can be avoided, gentrification controlled, displacement eliminated, or even *how* these things can be done, but rather whether there is the desire to do them. That is a question that can only be answered in the political arena(bold - SdB).**
>
> (Marcuse 1986 : 174-175)

Local authorities could play an important role in recycling land in the inner city. In Canada Neighbourhood Improvement Programmes were legislated for by Parliament in June 1973. A role for resident participation has been formalised, as well as placing

an emphasis on selective clearance, repair of existing structures, provision of funds for social and community purposes, improvements to public infrastructure, protection for displaced persons, conservation and rehabilitation of the housing stock, additional social and recreational amenities and municipal services, removal of blighted land use, and promotion of the maintenance of neighbourhoods after improvement was done (cf. Carter 1991 : 11). Such legislation builds in protection for the poor households affected by regeneration or renewal, but it also ensures that the existing housing stock is maintained.

The Canadian experience shows that programmes should be long-term and comprehensive in nature. They have included social, educational and economic programmes to complement and reinforce housing and community improvement programmes (Carter 1991 : 24). Furthermore the necessity of community involvement in the decision-making process and of senior levels of government involvement are emphasised by Carter (1991 : 24).

*Addressing & Shaping Market Forces*
The role of market forces in the displacement of the poor has already been illustrated. Some view gentrification as a natural cycle in the life of cities. Smith and Williams (1986 : 205-206) reject this notion, stating that urban processes are very closely linked to specific periods, societies and modes of production. The contemporary process of gentrification is a result of the capitalist city. They view gentrification as a visible spatial process, deeply rooted in current patterns of social and economic differentiation. Williams (1986 : 75) also says

> (G)entrification is not a conspiracy by a set of secretive capitalists. Rather it is a process that emerges from the interaction of a whole set of relations, which include the conscious will of individual capitalists, competition between capitalists, and the capitalist class as a whole.

There are examples where gentrifies formed alliances or cooperatives with potential displacees, but there is not substantiated evidence that it has slowed down displacement (Smith & Williams1986 : 223). In fact, the contrary has happened. Through them providing better social services, taxes were increased, industries left the area, jobs were lost for the poorer individuals in the neighbourhood, and so they were not able to afford to live in the area any longer.

Achtenberg and Marcuse (1983) use the term "decommodification of housing" which could be seen as the only defence against gentrification (Williams & Smith 1986 : 222). Housing namely is not a privilege but a basic right.

> Decent housing and decent neighbourhoods ought to be a right, not a privilege. That of course is unlikely to be achieved through a series of reforms; rather, it will take a political restructuring even more dramatic that the social and geographical restructuring we now see. Only then will it be appropriate to talk about social renaissance.
>
> (Williams & Smith 1986 : 222)

The notion of Williams and Smith (1986 : 223) again calls for quite a comprehensive

political restructuring process. Political intervention are vital in the way the market operates. It can shape the market either for the benefit or to the detriment of the poor.

> What is apparent, however, is that the answer to whether gentrification will continue to spread and intensify will not be found in an analysis of the process itself. Whether the future brings an extension of the present market-led process and the displacement of the poor will depend on economic changes in that market and political interventions that push the market one way or another. *This in turn depends on the success of different classes and groups organizing in defence of their own interests (italics - SdB).*

The nature of political intervention will depend on the way in which the poor organises themselves to ensure housing which will benefit their concerns.

*Human Involvement in Shaping the City*
This goes even deeper than the notion of participation. It goes back to the fundamental question of whether human involvement can actually reverse the tide of the city; if the involvement of human agencies could actually make a difference to the outcome of powerful urban processes and to the activities of strong urban systems.

In an article on gentrification, both human agencies (i.e. the involvement of people), and demographic and economic structures, are said to be forces determining urban change or neighbourhood development. Revitalisation depends on various factors, including the interplay between key individuals and interest groups, shifting finance and property markets, unpredictable electoral responses, consumer demands, changing priorities and interventions by government.

> In brief, our emphasis does stress the capacity of human agency to initiate significant urban change, but within a well defined context, alternately constraining and enabling.

(Cybriwsky, Ley & Western 1986 : 92)

The skeptics among us have to recognise the importance of people in the process of challenging unfair urban systems, and transforming urban communities. People can make a difference and therefore people's participation in the planning process is vital.

*Alternative housing*
Sometimes relocation might be justifiable when the long-term advantages for the whole of the city, and also for the poor itself, can be established. It should first be asked if demolition is indeed essential for the over-all renewal process. If that is established as a vital part of the process, there should be a clear plan for alternative housing developments (replacement) that will accommodate those detrimentally affected by the demolitions (cf. Abrams 1964).

At some stage there were plans to remove the informal residents of Marabastad as part of preparing the ground for urban renewal, to an area 30-40 kilometres away from the central city, without any transport infrastructure, industry and accompanying economic opportunities in the new area. It would have destroyed the existing informal businesses run by the people of Marabastad.

> The higher costs of transportation, rents, and services, and the disruption of informal social networks which previously had helped to sustain the low-income economy, have often been the main results of these removal plans.
>
> (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 137)

*Integrated, Holistic Strategy (Comprehensive)*
In Britain various social analysts have shown the need to link housing and job markets more specifically at a local level, and also that it is important to deal with the problems of the inner city poor within a regional (metropolitan or even provincial) framework (cf. Robson 1987 : 16-17).

It is important to develop integrated, holistic urban development processes, that will include infrastructure, housing, economic development, social services, and so forth. If local communities can be supported to become self-reliant in a holistic manner, it would benefit the whole region.

If inner city development initiatives can be linked to a broader city-wide or metropolitan plan, or even to provincial initiatives such as Gauteng's Four-Point Plan for Regenerating the Cities, it can go a long way in addressing inner city problems.

*Canadian Case Study*
Cybriwsky, Ley and Western (1986) reflect on two case studies of revitalisation projects in Society Hill, Philadelphia, as well as False Creek, Vancouver. The first example shows how low-income people who used to be in the Society Hill neighbourhood were affected negatively by the process of renewal. The social costs for them were immense.

With False Creek the contrary was achieved.

> ...False Creek was designed to be innovative in social goals. The reform landscape explicitly embraced the mixing of life-styles, income groups, and tenure types. The mandate that False Creek be a residential development for "all the people" rather than a gilded ghetto had been presented in a TEAM Council motion as far back as January 1970.
>
> (Cybriwsky, et al 1986 : 114)

Cybriwsky, et al (1986 : 115-116) elaborates on the details of the new development.

> The 865 units of False Creek's first phase were to include housing for families, couples, the elderly and singles; the income mix was to reflect that of the metropolitan area, with approximately one-third low income, one-third middle income, and one-third high income; tenure types included subsidized rentals, market condominiums, and cooperatives, whose sponsors included service clubs, an ethnic association, an association for the physically handicapped, and even a floating homes society. In addition, the financial realization of the various housing clusters differed greatly, from more-or-less conventional market investment by developers, to subsidies offered to the nonprofit sector via markdowns on city-owned land, as well as grants from the housing programs of senior governments.

The degree of social mixing in False Creek was so considerable that it could be seen as a celebration of diversity. The planning team worked with the assumption that little

social and physical diversity was unhealthy and that health in any form was somehow connected to diversity (Cybriwsky, et al 1986 : 116). The implementation of the project seemed to be highly successful with a very low turnover rate of 5% in 1980.

The movement who established the False Creek neighbourhood managed to establish a social mix through housing subsidies, and the redevelopment of False Creek was one facet of their redistributive agenda for Vancouver. They have indeed facilitated redistribution of resources to ensure housing for all, at least in False Creek (Cybriwsky, et al 1986 : 119).

*In Conclusion*
Alternatives to the displacement of the inner city poor, are indeed an appropriate objective.

- First of all, it has been established that the market is not a naturalistic process, but it can be shaped.

- Political will can change the market through appropriate and timely interventions, incentives, policy and strategies.

- Human agencies can impact upon the market as local people (individuals and groups) act boldly and wisely, as communities organise themselves, as grass-roots organisations develop their capacity to advocate and develop local initiatives.

- Organising around grass-root concerns remains one of the most vital elements in transforming the city and in ensuring viable options for the inner city poor.

- The development of local community leadership is essential (cf. 2.2).

In conclusion, the problem of housing the urban poor can be overcome as urban land is an available resource in all countries. Lack of political will and inadequate understanding of the dynamics of urban development, together with ideological hang-ups about land rights and the short-sightedness and self-interest of the urban elite are what have long caused the problem to seem insoluble.

The church and church-based organisations should guard against captivity to middle-class norms and life patterns, which often demonstrate a lack of will, a lack of insight into inner city problems and dynamics, ideological captivity, short-sightedness and narrow self-interest.

The church should rather position itself close enough to the inner city poor, so as to adopt a position "from below", seeing the effects of urban renewal which disregards the

poor, and discovering the hope of grass-roots initiatives that can transform the lives of the poor and of inner city areas alike.

# 3.    The South African Scenario

## 3.1    The History of the South African City

This is a simplistic overview on the history of the South African city since the 1800's. Smit & Booysen (1982) have identified four distinct phases in the development of the South African political-ideological history, and the history of the South African city also coincides to a large extent with these phases.

### 3.1.1   The 1800's

In this era there was initially not much of an urbanisation process happening amongst any of the population groups. With the discovery of gold and diamonds late in this century, the emerging mining houses and the influx of people to places where minerals were discovered, the urbanisation process gained some momentum, however.

### 3.1.2   1910-1948 : The Segregation City

Already now the Government of the day suggested separate areas for separate racial groups. Magubane (1979 : 125; taken from the Report of the Transvaal Local Government Commission 1922 [Stallard Commission] : p.22) refers to the work of the Stallard Commission that laid down principles for African urbanisation, already back in 1921. The commission suggested that :

> the Native should only be allowed to enter urban areas which are essentially the white man's creation when he is willing to enter and minister to the needs of the white man, and should depart therefrom when he ceases so to minister.

Magubane indicates how many of the laws with regard to black urbanisation and territorial segregation have been introduced already back in the 1920's.

This era was influenced by factors such as a steady process of influx by black women into the city, the initiation of influx control on the other hand, and the development of slum communities as well as emerging trends of squatting in urban areas.

Van Jaarsveld (1985 : 53) speaks about this era as the era of the Segregation City. Black people moved into traditionally white areas and in 1930 there were between 30 000 to 40 000 black people in and around Pretoria. Only 8 663 of these people lived in recognised black residential areas.

**SOUTH AFRICAN SEGREGATION CITY**



| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ▦ WHITE CBC | ▧ INDIAN CBC | ▨ CBC | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ WHITE RESIDENTIAL | ▦ INDIAN / COLOURED RESIDENTIAL | ■ formal |
| ▨ "GREY AREAS" | ☐ INDUSTRY | ▦ informal |

BLACK RESIDENTIAL

ECONOMIC STATUS.

H - HIGH          M - MIDDLE          L - LOW
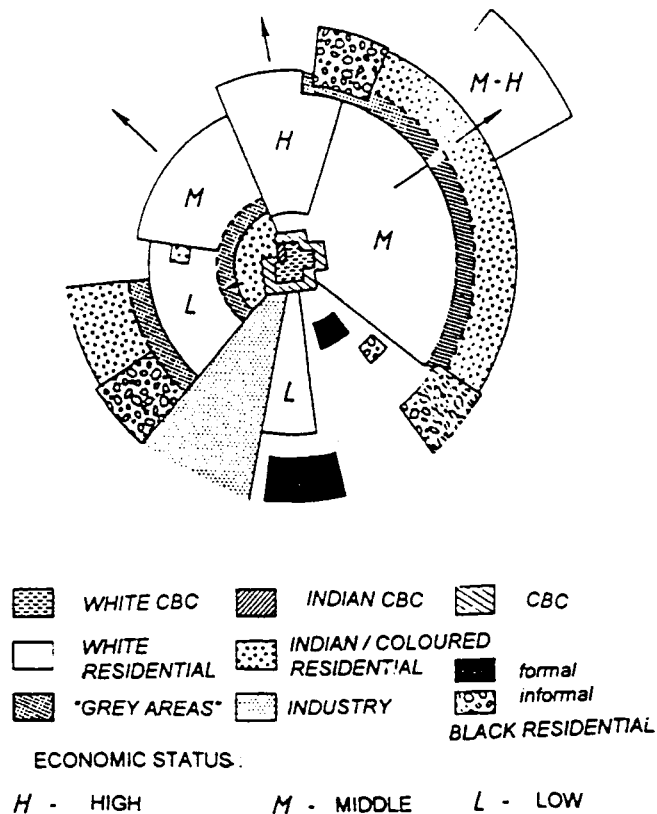
## 3.1.3  1948-1990 : The Apartheid City & The Separate City

The apartheid policy has been introduced as a master plan of white South Africans to maintain political, social and economic control, whilst at the same time drawing heavily from black labour. This plan was introduced by the government of the National Party after 1948. In these years a powerful Afrikaner nation has emerged and their leaders implemented influx control with greater force than before. The apartheid policy also led naturally to apartheid cities.

> In this period relocation and forced removals of black people took place, and urban slums were cleared. This was done to prevent conflict which would result from ethnic and cultural differences. Areas such as Marabastad and Lady Selborne in Pretoria, and Sophiatown in Johannesburg were affected.
>
> The Group Areas Act of 1950 entrenched the apartheid city on the law books.
>
> The central cities were characterized by Western-American structures while the black cities were typical Third World cities (Van Jaarsveld 1985 : 51).
>
> (De Beer 1996 : 41)

The apartheid plan was the characteristic of the political economy of South Africa until the early 1990's.

This plan has been called by Smit & Booysen the interaction between economic-centripetal forces (the concentration of production in core centres and political-centrifugal forces (the political emancipation of black "homelands" and the connection of black labourers in "white" residential areas to these "homelands")   [Smit & Booysen 1982 : 8].

(De Beer 1996 : 36)

Magubane (1979 : 119-192), in his book, argues that  Afrikaner capitalism, Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid legislation, were inextricably linked. He further argues that urbanisation in South Africa should be understood within this context. He also maintains that urbanisation in South Africa cannot be understood apart from the reigning political economy of the past.

He links the apartheid policies of the past to the capitalist mode of production, as it was expressed in Afrikaner capitalism...

(De Beer 1996 : 36)

A weakness in his book is the one-sided focus on Afrikaner capitalism, whilst the role of the large mining houses and other predominantly English corporations in maintaining the apartheid status quo, has been understated.

The Urban Foundation (1990 : 1) also concluded that the government had as official belief that cities were for white people and that black people were only to be seen as temporary "sojourners" in the city, who really belonged to the rural "reserves".



| WHITE CBC | INDIAN CBC | CBC |
| WHITE GROUP AREAS | INDIAN / COLOURED GROUP AREAS | BLACK GROUP AREAS |
| INDUSTRY | | • Hostels |

ECONOMIC STATUS :

H - HIGH          M - MIDDLE     L - LOW
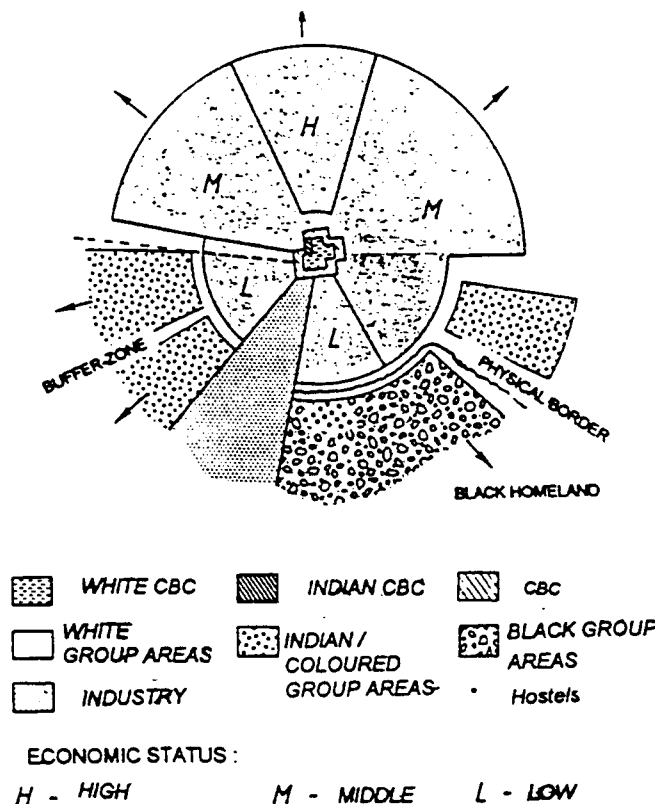
The process of separate cities were even intensified in the 1950's when the government further developed its urban policy.

> In the 1950's the government went a step further with the implementation of territorial separation. Urbanisation was encouraged in the former "homelands" away from "white" cities in the hope that it would discourage influx into white areas.
>
> The separate city included apartheid structures and white domination, black townships and informal settlements, a black transport system, and industrial areas closer to the townships. Its whole development envisaged the concentration of black people in their own cities in the "homelands". In one sense it was the full implementation of the apartheid ideal (Van Jaarsveld 1985).

(De Beer 1996 : 42)

**PRETORIA : SEPARATE CITY, 1984**
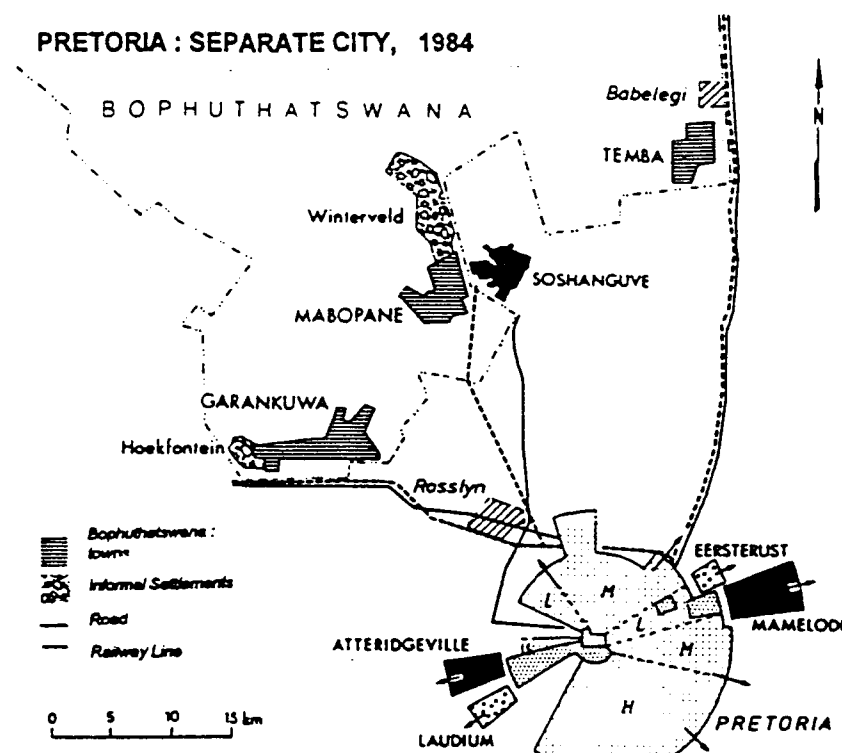
The so-called push- and pull forces, coined by Wilson (1972 : 122-123), have been important in determining urbanisation. Urbanisation is determined by push factors from rural areas, such as a lack of job opportunities, poverty, lack of water, and so on. On the other hand there are the pull factors from the cities, which include job opportunities (or the perception thereof), money, educational opportunities and the social attractions of the city.

In the South African urban situation, men often came to the cities in response to job opportunities, but apartheid legislation prevented them from becoming permanent residents with their families.

> This has been one of the major reasons for family breakdown and the birth of the so-called "lost generation".
>
> (De Beer 1996 : 37)

Although black urbanisation has been limited to a great extent by past policies, these were not able to prevent urbanisation altogether. And all along there were millions of black South Africans living as "sojourners" in the so-called white cities. The need of black people for jobs in the city, and the need of white people for cheap labour, have contributed to this phenomenon.

The push- and pull factors have played a role in the past, even under apartheid legislation, but in an open society these factors are contributing greatly to increased urbanisation, especially of some of the poorest members of society.

### 3.1.4 1990-1998 : The Quasi-Integrated City

In the past the growth of South African cities was controlled artificially by preventing black urbanisation through government policies of influx control, the homeland system, the group areas act, and so forth. The South African city is currently undergoing major changes, sparked by the political reforms of the past decade.

> Since the abolition of Influx Control, which regulated black urbanisation (Smit & Booysen 1982 : 8), as well as the Group Areas Act (1991), the whole urban scenario has changed and is still changing profoundly. Black urbanisation has gained momentum in the early eighties and the faces of traditionally "white" cities (especially inner cities) have changed dramatically.
>
> (De Beer 1996 : 37)

The South African city is still in this process of transition and transformation. Some of the changes that are evident in urban communities are :

- The influx of the poorest of the poor into inner city areas and onto the streets; Marabastad in Pretoria and Joubert Park in Johannesburg are very visible signs of this new trend. Urban informal settlements are not only on the urban periphery any longer, but have also moved closer to town, and even into the heart of the Central Business District.

- Middle- and higher-income white people still concentrate in traditionally white suburbs, and an increasing number of middle-income black people move into these communities.

- Urban townships will not necessarily change significantly in terms of its racial make-up. The danger, however, is the exodus of the emerging black middle-class and professionals, depriving these communities from professional leadership. The same departure is seen in inner cities where white professionals, the middle-class, and organised business are increasingly withdrawing, leaving behind deprived communities.

- Ironically, the new urban sprawl or suburbanisation is not dictated by apartheid legislation (as was separate cities in the past), but by the desire of the middle-class (white and black) to be away from the rush of the city. In the past the white middle-class has kept the central city and its surroundings for itself, whilst developing black residential areas on the urban periphery. With the socio-political changes, there is a sense in which a direct reversal of former trends are now occurring. Another phenomenon, which is part of suburbanisation, is the so-called security villages that are mushrooming in suburban areas, almost exclusively accommodating white people.

- Another reality is the growing population of people from outside South Africa's borders. People from Francophone Africa, political and religious refugees (from Mocambique, Angola, Rwanda, Somali, etc.), and illegal immigrants are concentrating in urban areas. Many of these people are to be found in inner city areas, but in places such as Gauteng and Mpumalanga many of the townships and informal settlements accommodate significant numbers of people from elsewhere.

It can be concluded that urban society has not become completely integrated in the way in which neighbourhoods are structured. From what has been said above it is clear that there will still be predominantly white suburban areas, and the former black townships will remain largely black. The inner cities are almost the only communities which experience more fundamental processes of integration, but this is often like a pendulum swinging from largely white to largely black in many inner city areas.

Some of the on-going urban challenges in this era, are :

- *Broader participation by all sectors, including the poor, in the process of democratic local governance for our cities*

- *The challenge to reconstruct and develop forgotten urban areas and urban informal settlements, to revitalise deteriorating inner cities, and to maintain healthy and vibrant central business districts (CBD's)*

- *Grass-roots integration as people from different cultures live in an integrated society with integrated schools, residential areas, hospitals, churches, and so forth*

- *The challenge to transform cities through restructuring urban land arrangements, in such ways that the poorest of the poor will have greater access to land, jobs and housing, and this not only restricted to the urban periphery, but also focussing in and around the central areas of the city*

*These on-going challenges will be spelled out clearly in the next paragraphs.*

## 3.2    Urban Explosion in South Africa : Urbanisation, Poverty & Housing

### 3.2.1    Urbanisation

In 1980 the population of South Africa was estimated at 29,1 million. This will double to 59,7 million by the year 2010 (Urban Foundation 1990 : 6). There is an expanding population in the cities, creating great demands for employment, housing, services, and education (1990:  6).

According to Ms. Sankie Mthembi-Mahanyele, Minister of Housing, South Africa's urban population is growing at a rate of 200 000 households a year (cf. Pretoria News, 10 October 1996). Black urbanisation was legally hindered by formal government policies of influx control, the homeland system, and so on. With political changes the face of our large urban centres are also changing, and black urbanisation is an on-going process that will continue through the 1990's into the next century.

It is suspected that the largest urban centre in South Africa (Johannesburg-Soweto-Midrand-Pretoria), could be amongst the twenty largest urban complexes by the year 2000 (Urban Foundation 1990 : 8-9). In the period between 1970 and 1980 Durban has shown the highest population growth in the world at a rate of 100%. Durban and Johannesburg are amongst the fastest growing cities in the world today.

You only have to walk the streets of Pretoria to sense a changing city. For the first time Pretoria is starting to feel like a big city and statistics in one of the next sections will confirm the phenomenal growth taking place in the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Area.

In 1990 the City Engineer of Cape Town has said that 5000 families were moving into the Greater Cape Town Metropolitan Area per month from the rural Eastern Cape. He was expecting inner city housing in and around the city centre to be attractive to these new migrants to the city which obviously put much stress on the existing infra-structure (Schlemmer 1991 : 367).

In 1985 53 % of the black population was already urbanised, of which almost one half was in the then "homeland" metropolitan areas. This has changed and by the year 2010 69% of the black population is expected to be urbanised, more than two thirds of which will be in the metropolitan areas (Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 22).

Besides the growth of South Africa's major cities, there is a growing interest in the so-called secondary cities of South Africa. A secondary city falls outside of the largest metropolitan complexes, but has a significant role to play in a region, such as Nelspruit in Mpumalanga, or Pietersburg in the Northern Province. They fulfil the role of urban centres for their region, although they are usually significantly smaller.

There are currently 23 secondary cities in South Arica, accommodating between 50 000 and 500 000 people. 14% of the total South African population live in these 23 secondary cities. Although their total population amount to only 3,1 million people, they

are servicing 21 million people of surrounding towns and rural areas (Urban Foundation 1994 : 1-3).

### 3.2.2 Urban Poverty & Housing

The majority of families requiring housing are very poor and "the poor will constitute an ever increasing proportion of the total urban population over the next 20 years" (Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 6 [no.9]).

Minister Mthembi-Mahanyele (cf. The Pretoria News, 10 October 1996, p.16) estimates the urban housing backlog at 1,5 million units. Unless there is a dramatic increase in housing provision, the housing backlog will increase at a rate of 178 000 units per annum.

If housing supply cannot keep pace with the growing requirements, it will have an impact also on the health, welfare and security of those without shelter as well as the wider South African community. Housing is at the heart of a decent and humane existence.

Two of the consequences of the shortfall in housing are increasing occupancy rates in existing housing stock (cf. urban townships, informal settlements, and inner cities), and the growth of unplanned informal settlements (Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 4 [no.9]).

Urban Foundation (1990/1 : 15 [no.9]) used the term housing

> to denote all forms of shelter provided on the basis of security of tenure, including formal housing, informal shacks within safe and healthy environments and serviced sites.

Their vision for housing in the South African context was expressed in a possible national urban housing goal (Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 15 [no.9]) :

> To ensure a sustainable housing process in South Africa which enables all people to secure housing within a safe and healthy environment and within viable communities.

At present many individuals and groups are still excluded, as was indicated in the previous sections on urban renewal as well. In South Africa, as it were, low-income families were excluded from the normal housing processes, particularly in the black communities, but also in other communities. This led to :

- A serious backlog in the provision of housing, infrastructure, services, commercial and social facilities

- Public rental housing created the expectation of largely subsidized government housing on a rental basis. Where people considered ownership, their perceptions were influenced by public rental rates, which were unrealistic with regard to the appropriate costs. This had an impact on private sector involvement, and the community's acceptance of housing developments which

were dominated by ownership opportunities (Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 12 [no. 9]).

An equally important observation is that no planning provision has been made for the "invisible" black people who are resident in previously white municipal areas (cf. Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 33 [no.2]). Domestic workers and gardeners form a large percentage of the urban employment force, yet, very little provision has been made for their housing needs and most of them are forced to live on their own, detached from their families. This is causing family break-down and the collapse of a whole society.

One of the initiatives of the National Housing Department is a focus on urban densification. R525-million has been allocated to housing for this purpose. This program aims to

> increase the efficiency of urban areas by providing centrally located housing, social and economic opportunities to the lower-income groups.

> (The Pretoria News, 10 October 1996, p.16)

This national policy of higher-density housing, is especially aiming to accommodate the poor.

Urban Foundation (1990/1 : 33 [no.9]) has also suggested higher-density living as one of the strategies. They suggested that higher-density living is more desirable in central areas of cities (inner cities), such as Hillbrow, Sunnyside, Burgerspark, where the infra-structure and social facilities are such that it could provide viable and livable communities although it might be high-density living. The central areas of cities provide families with a built-in "escape" from the pressures of high-density accommodation. It needs to be clarified that high-density living does not necessarily mean high-rise accommodation, although it could include this type of accommodation.

Furthermore, locating high-density developments close to a range of existing social and commercial facilities is

> the most cost-effective way of providing large numbers of people with viable living environments.

> (Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 33)

The Urban Foundation (1990/1 : 33) did not disagree with high-density developments in urban townships, but suggested that it would be more viable in inner city areas.

> Therefore, while the Urban Foundation supports the increasing of densities in the township layouts for the low-income housing developments, it submits that significant increases in densities, through medium-and high-rise developments, are most appropriately provided in inner-city locations.

I will return to these suggestions of the National Department of Housing as well as the Urban Foundation again.

In conclusion it will suffice to say that the priority of dealing with issues of urban poverty and social housing, cannot be overemphasised. Ann Bernstein (1991 : 23) said it so clearly :

> South Africa's keynote politics are the politics of the city. Our dominantly urban economy cannot escape the effects of urban disorder. By the same token, however, our future prosperity also hinges on the management and development of our cities.

### 3.3    Informal Settlements

The socio-economic realities of South Africa and the housing backlogs are such that the majority of the urban poor cannot afford the most basic formal structure. Even with the support of government housing subsidies this remains a problem. Informal housing provides  an alternative housing delivery system in this regard (cf. Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 29 [no.2]).

In 1991 it was estimated by the Urban Foundation that 7 million urban people lived in informal housing circumstances. Of these 2,5 million lived in the area previously known as the PWV (Gauteng) and 1,7 million in Greater Durban (Urban Foundation 1990/1 : 8 [no.2]).

In the past informal settlements were concentrating on the urban periphery and on the fringes of urban townships. With the political changes in the country, informal housing has become an every day reality in many inner city areas (cf. Durban, Johannesburg & Pretoria).

Available land and easier access to economic opportunities need to be balanced in a strategy to house the poorest of the poor. In Marabastad, on the edge of the Pretoria CBD, a growing number of people build their informal houses, seeking access to jobs and using the unutilised space to come as close as possible to where the perceived opportunities are. It remains to be seen how the city is going to respond to the presence of informal residents at the edge of the CBD. Would there be the will to integrate these people effectively into a restructured inner city ?

### 3.4    Inner City Dynamics

The Urban Foundation warned in 1991 that a healthy, vibrant, urban environment will require effective and appropriate management. The inner city in particular will need special attention by city managers. It is important to prevent decline through official neglect, by a very intentional process of creative and positive intervention to secure the health of the inner city.

In identifying key urbanisation trends in South Africa, minister Mthembi-Mahanyele  (cf.

The Pretoria News, 10 October 1996 : 16) has highlighted inner city changes as some of the key concerns. People move from rural areas to cities in search for job and social opportunities, they move from the urban periphery closer to their places of work, thus placing additional pressure on inner city services and housing infrastructure, as well as inner city decay causing chronic shortages of shelter and basic services. Some of the realities of inner city transition include the following :

- *Disinvestment* from inner city areas by formal business, churches, banks, and so forth.

- Inner city residential facilities experience *racial transition*, which cause many white people - those who have the resources - to move out, seeking exclusively white neighbourhoods to live in. This so-called white flight has been followed in the United States by a second flight, i.e. the flight of the black middle-class. In the inner city of Johannesburg that has already happened in many buildings, while signs of a black middle-class exodus are evident in certain inner city buildings in Pretoria already.

  Do inner cities need the middle-class ? The real issue is the exodus of resources, professional skills, and civic leadership which need to be replaced by longer-term inner city residents. This requires a well-managed and intentional strategy and process.

- Property owners and managing agents often *lack the capacity to manage transition*. Cities change and so do the populations of inner city residential buildings. It requires specialised skills to manage this transition effectively.

- Political changes have sparked a dramatic *influx of people* into the inner city, and urbanisation in its current form has not been known to Pretoria's inner city before. This process of influx has led to larger numbers of poor and unemployed people coming into the city, increased numbers of homeless people on the streets, and the emergence of informal settlements in and around inner city areas. In formal housing facilities overcrowding has become a general trend.

- Many of the problems faced by inner city communities can be attributed to the so-called *self-fulfilled prophecies* of urban stakeholders. The media will report weekly how a community is turning into a slum. Residents will believe it and put their properties in the market; business will move out; banks will redline an area and not provide mortgage loans any longer. The media prophecies over inner city communities, and those with the resources, do the right things to make the prophecies come true (disinvestment, withdrawal, etc.).

- Hand in hand with the self-fulfilled prophecies go the *negative perceptions and myths* about inner city areas. This is perpetuated by articles in newspapers, letters to the press, suburban (and uninformed) talk about the city, inner city churches withdrawing from the city, and so forth. Underlying some of these

sophisticated analyses of inner city areas, are often blatant racist tendencies. Negative perceptions, when stripped from its sophisticated oratory, are often nothing more than prejudice based on racial transition in inner city areas.

■    On the other side of the spectrum is the processes of *urban renewal* that are initiated in inner cities. These renewal projects take different shapes and forms, but too often they do not really address the fundamental issues of social decay, urban poverty, and so forth. The renewal that is facilitated is often nothing more than a superficial facade-lift.

■    *Inner city partnerships* such as the Pretoria Inner City Partnership, have the potential to become more than a renewal agent, as they endeavour to involve all stakeholders, including the poor and those on the margins of inner city society. Only when these groups are also involved can urban renewal processes lead to real transformation of the city.

■    *Gentrification* has been known in this country in the slum clearance programs (the nice word) or forced removal programs. However, these processes have not necessarily led to upgrading of the area and in places such as District Six and Marabastad the area has remained largely underdeveloped and unutilised since removals took place.

     As of late there are signs of gentrification emerging in some areas of inner cities, leading to the relocation of the poor through market forces, and like elsewhere in the world, not necessarily contributing to the transformation of the city itself.

■    The inner cities of today accommodate and attract *different kinds of role players*.

     Through partnerships key stakeholders are able to share resources and enter into win-win relationships. The Central Johannesburg Partnership and the Pretoria Inner City Partnership are two examples of broad-based formal partnership initiatives to revitalise inner city areas. Usually the majority of such partnerships is made up of people with some investment in the inner city, but they are not residing in the inner city; the inner city is therefore not their home.

     A second group of people are people with their roots even deeper than mere capital investment. They are in the city, either because they cannot or do not want to go anywhere else and they are long-term residents, or because they have made a firm "moral" commitment to remain in the city (churches, NGO's, certain businesses). *I am of the opinion that these are the key groups to mobilise for transformative inner city development.*

     A third group is the so-called "fly by nights". They are often found in the church community, as pastors set up new churches and disappear again a few months later, or Christians set up welfare ministries just to withdraw after a year or two. In partnership exercises, "fly by night" people often participate initially, not for

the common good, but to market themselves, hoping that they can draw quick resources to their own initiatives only. They often cannot sustain either their involvement in the partnership or in the city in general.

■ *Inner city slum formation* is one of the greatest challenges to be dealt with. Slums are formal housing which is deteriorating or of substandard quality. In the South African context slum formation is a tendency in inner city communities such as Hillbrow in Johannesburg. Overcrowding and the neglect of landlords to maintain physical facilities, are amongst the factors contributing to slum formation. A steady process of inner city decay will eventually lead to inner city slums. This needs to be reversed through bold partnerships and integrated intervention programs.

> The word slum - just like native, pagan or squatter - has a bad history. In the South African situation communities such as Sophiatown and Marabastad were considered to be slums and people have been forcefully removed form these areas. The word conveys a lot of negative experiences. However, there is not an alternative sociological term suitable to describe the permanent, formal communities which are deteriorating.

> (De Beer 1998 : 33)

It is important to say that slum formation in inner cities is a complex process, to which landlords, local government, banks, property agents, and residents contribute (negatively or positively). One-sided blame-shifting to the residents or the poor cannot be justified.

> In the South African context there is a grave misconception that slums form where black people move in. Neither the black people who moved in nor the existing infra-structure are in themselves causing the formation of slums. A variety of other political, economic and social factors, often based on racial and economic prejudice, doom communities to become slums, however.
>
> (De Beer 1998 : 33)

## 3.5 Urban Land, Slum Clearance & Urban Renewal (or Gentrification)

Slum clearance programmes, urban renewal programmes and the development of housing for the poor, all deal with the allocation and utilisation of urban land.

In South Africa slum clearance programs of the past, or rather forced removals, were similar to the urban renewal programs of the UK and the USA, but locally these programmes were rooted in the Apartheid policy of the government.

> As the home of predominantly poor people, District Six developed a reputation for violence, vice, crime, physical dilapidation and overcrowding. While understandable from the perspective of outsiders, such an image was subject to exaggeration on the part of city authorities, motivated by fear of threat to European health and safety (the so-called 'sanitation syndrome') which provoked slum clearance well before the Group Areas Act provided a more effective means of moving 'non-White' people.
>
> (Smith 1994 : 255)

And,

> In February 1966 most of District Six was proclaimed an area for White residence, under the terms of the Group Areas Act. Its officially enumerated population of 33 500 were given a year to prepare for removal to new Coloured areas. In addition to the apartheid fixation with residential segregation, this was seen as an opportunity to get rid of people not classified as White living close to the city centre (perceived as a threat to social order if not sanitation), and to turn valuable land to more remunerative uses.
>
> The material costs imposed on those forced to move could be considerable. Property owners did not necessarily receive compensation at full market value, and relocation to the periphery of the city entailed commuting costs as well as, for some, higher rentals in new accommodation than in the old run-down neighbourhood. Housing conditions may have been improved for many families, but in the Cape Flats human relations were more impersonal, social deprivation more evident and personal safety less secure than in the traditional Coloured parts of Cape Town (Western 1981).
>
> (Smith 1994 : 256)

Forced removals, or relocation through urban renewal, were much more than a physical process. Hart (1988) refers to forced removals, saying

> The inconvenience occasioned by the physical wrenching of people from long-time homes pales in the face of the more prolonged and damaging psychological distress.

Especially in areas or buildings where a sense of community has emerged, relocation is traumatic. The sense of community might be strange to understand for the outsider, but these places were home to the insiders.

> One place might be like another, but one community is never like another. A community is not just a place where you live. It is not just another locality... It is much more than that. It is alive. A community is our home.
>
> (Rive 1986 : 159)

Smith says that places merge with a broader sense of identity. Bakke (1997 : 60-67) speaks of a "theology of place". Places are important in giving identity and meaning to people, even though middle-class views might write a place off as a slum and a health hazard. On the other hand, places could also represent certain repressive connotations (see Maluleke chapter 2; 2.2.2 [ii], p.43). After relocation a new place can also be liberating, providing the space for a new way of living,

> and even possibly forgiving past injustices which may have deprived people of their original place.
>
> (Smith 1994 : 253)

It is important for the church to understand the "place" and "places" in which they minister, as well as the "places" from where their people are coming.

In the South African experience, emotional connotations to District Six, Sophiatown and Marabastad, can never be erased. That the processes which occurred here were unjust and inhumane could not really be argued. And yet, social justice would need a vision of transformation, compensating those who were exploited, and developing these areas symbolically to rectify past injustices.

It is important to reflect on the issue of "place" against the broader context of urban land in the quantitative sense, but also of the concept of land in a qualitative sense.

Smith (1994 : 231) is of the opinion that the land question in South Africa, past, present and future, could hardly be exaggerated. Land remains as a source of power, of communal well-being, and so forth. The fundamental African relationship to land used to be more than an economic relationship. Bundy (1979 : 21) said that members of society depended on land for subsistence but also for recognition as members of the specific social group. African traditional religion linked people to their past through burials of their ancestors, which also motivated the close association between people and their land. Sachs (1990 : 14) speaks about land, saying

> Farming is more than just a productive activity, it is an act of culture, the centre of social existence and the place where personal identity is forged.

Obviously these traditional affinities have been seriously challenged through apartheid processes of dislocation, forced removals and 'homeland' developments. The current processes of urbanisation also challenge these traditional values and relationships. The concept of individual property rights has, in a large sense, replaced land as a communal asset of people who belong together (Smith 1994 : 232). In dense inner city communities creative reflection is required to integrate traditional African values and relationships within the process of inner city development (e.g. housing development).

It was the former State President F.W. de Klerk (Smith 1994 : 231) that had to recognise :

> Of all the processes which have brought about the inequitable distribution of wealth and power that characterises present day South Africa, none has been more decisive and more immediately important to most black South Africans than the dispossession of land. To an agrarian community whose entire economic and social structure is based on the distribution of land, dispossession is an act akin to national destruction.

Currently our cities are still in need of radical restructuring and fundamental transformation.

Land to house the poor, compensation for those who lost their land through forced removals, and so on, remain challenges of our present day. The distribution of land will have to be done carefully and creatively to facilitate transformation, social justice and sustainable development, all at the same time.

...any resolution of the urban land issue must relate distribution or compensation to broader issues of land use and planning. There is an enormous shortage of low-cost housing in South Africa, reflected in the emergence of vast informal or 'shack' settlements, estimated to accommodate over 7 million people or one in four of the African population and one in two in the major cities (Cooper, et al 1993, p. 215). Low-income (usually African) residential areas, formal or informal, tend to be on the fringe of the cities, adding high commuting costs and limited access to central services to the various other penalties of race under apartheid. Attention is now being given to the identification of closer land, and its development for affordable housing in a process referred to as 'inward urbanization' as opposed to the dispersal of the apartheid city. As well as providing more convenient places for people to live, this strategy makes more efficient use of the urban infrastructure.

(Smith 1994 : 240)

*The so-called inward urbanisation will be dealt with in practical terms when I reflect on ministry in the inner city and when I suggest a transformed praxis, which will include housing as a church-based ministry.*

Smith (1994 : 240) continues to say that one of the problems is that land suitable for this kind of restructured city is not always in the right hands. And even when it is in the hands of local or provincial government, there is not always the will to allocate it to serve the housing needs of poorer communities and people. Champions are needed to represent the marginal groups on every level of society, but the champions are still absent on many levels.

I will briefly reflect on Marabastad as a case study to highlight some of these issues.

Marabastad was a mixed-race community on the edge of the Pretoria CBD. Through forced removals in the late 1940's and 1950's residents have been relocated to Eersterust, Atteridgeville and Laudium. This process continued until 1975. Churches have been demolished with the houses, and formal business could not own property in the area. This has been considered a slum clearance programme and it paved the way for an intensification of racially segregated communities in Pretoria. Prime land in and around the CBD was to be reserved for white ownership.

Ironically, the land in the area of Marabastad has never been developed since the time of forced removals. Gentrification, in the sense of middle-class upgrading, never happened. Today there are land claims by those who lost property during this time, but at the same time there is an urgent need for the revitalisation of Marabastad, including the pressing issue of more than 1000 homeless people living in informal housing within the boundaries of Marabastad.

The land affected by land claims cannot be allocated for development purposes or for housing the poor. The land claims issue first need to be resolved properly. There are vast pieces of land around Marabastad, not affected by land claims, and yet not earmarked for development purposes either at the present moment. There are rumours that the land not affected by land claims directly might be used as part of the compensation package to those who have lost property through forced removals. The issue is whether available land will be distributed to previously exploited Indian groups, who are in general part of a privileged middle-class today; or will it be allocated to address the needs of the informal residents of Marabastad; or will a combination of land uses be sought as part of a comprehensive redevelopment plan for the area.

Marabastad, if looked at pro-actively, could facilitate the launch of a restructuring process for Pretoria, developing social housing options combined with commercial and small industrial developments closer to the CBD. It could do so whilst respecting the land claims process and recovering the spirit of community that was so vibrant and alive before.

For creative and transformational development to happen in Marabastad, the crucial issue would be the way in which people think about land, whether human agents can shape market forces, and whether there will be the political will to champion a development as inclusive as possible. I suggest that the role of the human agent and of community organisation would be able to determine the outcome of this process. For social justice to be achieved in Marabastad, as a sign of hope for the whole of Pretoria, those concerned with the poor and with issues of social justice, need to intensify their own involvement in the Marabastad debate.

## 4. Pretoria : A Broad Perspective

### 4.1 Urbanisation in Pretoria

The population of the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Area was estimated at about 1,7 million people (1 678 799) in 1995 (CDE 1998 : 13).

The Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council is subdivided into three substructures, being the Central Pretoria Substructure (including Pretoria, Mamelodi, Atteridgeville, Eersterust) the Northern Substructure (including Tswaing - the former Akasia - and Soshanguve) and the Southern Substructure (Centurion).

Of the 1,7 million people approximately 67% of the total population is accommodated

by the Central Substructure, 25% by the Northern Substructure and 8% by the Southern Substructure.

Plan Associates Town and Regional Planners have drawn up the projected population for the year 2000 and this is expected to be approximately 2,4 million people, an increment of 690 000 people between 1995 and the year 2000.

The following table indicates the growth, comparing the population in 1993, 1995 and 2000 (GPMC 1996).

| sub-structure | 1993 | % | 1995 | % | 2000 | & |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| soshanguve akasia | 37 500 19821 | | 400383 21773 | | 864000 27545 | |
| sub total | 394821 | 24.92 | 422156 | 25.15 | 891545 | 37.65 |
| pretoria atteridgeville mamelodi eersterus | 508115 194000 328352 29770 | | 521284 206710 357168 31905 | | 556360 242000 439410 37940 | |
| sub total | 1060237 | 66.93 | 1117067 | 66.54 | 1275710 | 53.87 |
| centurion laudium | 106762 22278 | | 116324 23252 | | 175095 25880 | |
| sub total | 129040 | 8.15 | 139576 | 8.31 | 200975 | 8.49 |
| **TOTAL** | **1584098** | **100.00** | **1678799** | **100.00** | **2368230** | **100.00** |

Urbanisation in Pretoria is only gaining momentum right now and all the estimates indicate an urban explosion in the next decade. Although this would be felt more intensely in the Northern Substructure and especially in Soshanguve, the inner city would not be unaffected by these changes. As the population increases more people will probably come to the inner city hoping to be as close as possible to the perceived job opportunities.

At present the estimated population for Pretoria's inner city (i.e. Berea, Burgerspark, Salvokop, Marabastad) is between 15 000 and 16 000 people. This figure excludes Sunnyside and Arcadia. It is important to note that the transient nature of the inner city makes it extremely difficult to arrive at exact figures. In the last census the informal residents of Marabastad and the homeless population were not included. At our transitional facilities in the inner city there were nobody to obtain information from people living there. The overcrowding happening in places like Salvokop and in some individual buildings are not necessarily reflected in the current official figures. There are buildings with a capacity to house 54 people that currently house in excess of 200 people.

### 4.2    Urban Poverty and Housing in Pretoria

Although Pretoria, in the heart of Gauteng, compares favourably with other cities and other provinces with regard to poverty, the effects of poverty are also felt and expressed.

Pretorius (reporting at the Metropolitan Development Summit : 24 May 1996) highlights the tremendous housing challenge Pretoria is faced with. At present the estimated housing backlog for Pretoria is about 45 000 units. At the projected growth rate the number of housing units required to accommodate the additional population is estimated at 121 000. The following table indicates the number of dwelling units required per population.

| Area | | Population | Number of Dwelling Units Required |
|---|---|---|---|
| Soshanguve | | 463617 | 77270 |
| Akasia | | 5772 | 1480 |
| | Subtotal | 469389 | 78750 |
| Mamelodi | | 82242 | 13707 |
| Pretoria | | 43739 | 9112 |
| Atteridgeville | | 35290 | 5881 |
| | Subtotal | 161271 | 28700 |
| Centurion | | 58511 | 13931 |
| Rantesig | | 260 | 62 |
| | Subtotal | 58771 | 13993 |
| **TOTAL** | | **689431** | **121443** |

Obviously this growth rate will challenge Pretoria tremendously at all levels. A city almost twice the size of Soshanguve (5 200 ha) is needed to accommodate the incremental population of 690 000 people (9 400 ha of land). This growth rate would challenge land to be developed for all kinds of land uses, i.e. roads, residential developments, schools, community facilities, recreational facilities, business and individual developments for job opportunities, and so forth.

It remains to be seen whether Pretoria will be able to cope with such a tremendous increase in population.

As urbanisation gained momentum and as political shifts have been made, an influx of poor people have started into the inner city of Pretoria and especially on its fringes this trend has become evident. The face of Pretoria's inner city is changing as Marabastad

to the northwest and the Station area towards the south have become home to many poor people.

Other people move into backyards in Salvokop, or live with friends or family in a small flat in town. Some facilities are overcrowded as four or five people are willing to share a small room, while they save money to purchase their own property. Slum landlords are too willing to provide accommodation in miserable conditions which they are profiting from. Vacant buildings are purchased by profiteers who turn it into budget hotels or residences, allowing under-aged girls to work here as child prostitutes, and dramatically affecting the surrounding neighbourhood. Even in sectional title buildings there are already signs of professional black people moving on again, this time to the suburbs, and leaving lower-income people behind. Problems with sectional title buildings lead to non-payment of levies, lack of maintenance, red lining by banks, and eventual slum formation.

The influx of poor people into the inner city is placing immense pressure on the limited housing options existing at present. A comprehensive and pro-active housing strategy is needed, which will contribute to the management of the so-called inward urbanisation process. A housing strategy will also do much more than only providing shelter, as it will enhance the over-all vision for inner city revitalisation.

Housing is more than a physical place of shelter. In poor communities housing also facilitates small production centres from where people can operate their small businesses. Housing stimulates employment as it contributes to people's dignity and stability. There are social and economic benefits which investment in housing can reap, directly and indirectly (cf. Abrams 1964 : 109). Crime rates can drop as there is a 24-hour presence of residents in areas that used to be empty.

Figures provided by Plan Associates (1995) indicate that a large percentage of Pretoria's residents are living in informal dwellings (11,8%) or in informal backyard dwellings (12,3%). Of the total population, 24,1% of Pretoria's residents, almost one out of four people, live in informal dwellings. This once again emphasises that everything is not fine with housing in this city. This figure also provides a reflection of people's educational and income levels.

## 5.    Power and the Inner City : Identifying the Powers and Systems Affecting the Inner City Poor

In this section I will not do a thorough critical reflection on power, but I will merely identify the major systems affecting the inner city of Pretoria in general, and the inner city poor in particular (see 7.1 - 7.5). I will illustrate these by drawing a power map, indicating the relative power of these systems and how they affect the inner city. This power analysis will form part of the broader community analysis (7.1 - 7.5).

I will also offer tentative reflections on the power map. In chapter 5 I will reflect more

thoroughly and theologically on the concept of power as it expresses itself in the inner city (also using the table on p.72).

Walter Wink (1984 : 5) writes extensively about power and states that God created power to be used for the well-being of people and society. Power is not negative in itself, although it often tends to corrupt and it gets corrupted. Power expresses itself in political, social, economic and religious spheres and the issues of political domination, social privilege, and economic interests are all issues related to power and how power is applied (cf. Van Jaarsveld 1985 : 252).

Gregory Pierce (1984 : 36) writes in his book about Christian activism and argues that the whole of urban society is about power. There are different methods for analysing power (cf. McAlpine 1991; De Beer 1998 : 80-92), as I will indicate in the following table:

---

A *Marxist perspective* on power would reflect on urban systems in terms of the exploitation of some people and communities by others who have access to and control of money, decision-making power and economic processes.

A *Capitalist analysis* would reflect on how systems contribute to the functionality, economic growth and well-being of the city.

A *Reformed analysis* would view urban systems as vehicles of power which are potentially carriers of God's grace, initially created as part of God's good creation, intended to serve humanity, but which can be distorted to become exploitative or abusive.

An *Anabaptist analysis* would emphasise the power of the gospel over against the power expressed in social systems and structures.

A *Third Wave or Charismatic perspective* understands power as an almost ahistorical and supernatural reality influencing urban systems, groups and individuals. Through divine intervention or exorcism freedom is proclaimed.

---

Let me briefly explain the power map that I will use in the community analysis. I have drawn from Pierce who has developed a power map to analyse communities in order for effective community organising to happen.

The power map consists of the following elements :

1. **Identification of Urban Systems**
The names of major role players - individuals or institutions - that affect the inner city in general or specific groups or decisions, are specified on the map. The local government, councillors, property owners, police, religious leaders, community organisations, and others, would be part of this group.

2. **Circles of Influence**
A circle would be drawn around each name and the size of the circle will be an indication of the relative strength of the particular system. This might be based on the perceived power of this institution or individual. Depending on the issue the power of a specific entity would also differ. One group might be strong on women's issues, but weak on housing.

3. **Relational Lines**
Lines will be drawn between the names, "indicating where relationships occur and what the nature of the relationship - both positive and negative -might be" (Pierce 1984 : 40). Some relationships will swing between positive and negative. In other cases it might be difficult to evaluate the nature of the relationship, because a relationship per se might be elusive between certain groups.

It might be difficult to evaluate the relationship between the Metropolitan Council and the homeless groups, for example. Theoretically the Metropolitan Council might argue for programs to assist the homeless, but in practical terms they haven't championed or contributed anything in this regard themselves. The homeless would not perceive this relationship as positive nor negative, but as *no relationship* at all. Would no relationship qualify as a negative?

In the illustration solid lines will denote positive relationships and the broken lines will indicate negative (or no) relationships.

The following is an example of a power map :
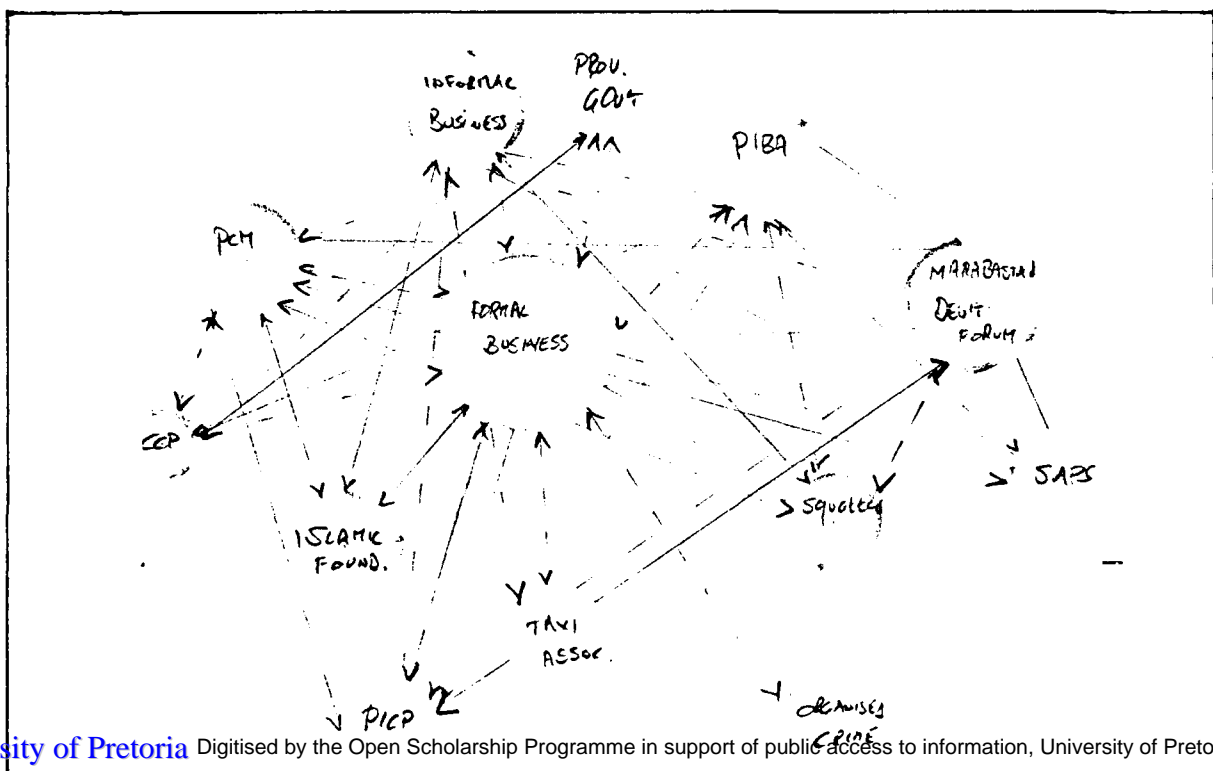
## 6. Community Analysis

The next few sections will be devoted to a more specific and detailed analysis of the inner city communities of Pretoria, already identified in chapter 3.

Davies & Herbert (1993 : 1) write about communities and explains the difficulty in defining the concept. The term "community" often produces opposite responses from different people.

> Many see 'community' in the same type of context as 'motherhood'. It conjures up positive feelings of belonging for some : even caring, sharing, safety, loyalty, rootedness and solidarity. These qualities contrast with opposing characteristics which can best be summarized in the term 'individualism', namely : loneliness, selfishness and indifference to one's neighbours. However, not all share an intrinsically positive attitude towards community. Life in many communities often entail the loss of personal freedom because of persuasiveness, intrusiveness and adherence to group mores. It can even be coercive if group norms are imposed upon individuals and the freedom to leave the community is withheld. This seems to be the case in many cults where the individual is reduced to an automaton subservient to the leader, or in repressive communalistic societies where the collective purpose is considered to be more important than the individual. Then individualism may be seen as positive, providing people with personal liberty.
>
> (Davies & Herbert 1993 : 2)

Davies and Herbert (1993 : 3) continue to discuss the ambiguities in meaning of this term :

> Ambiguity and elusiveness in meaning seem to be gross understatements when one attempts to understand the different ways in which the word 'community' has been used - whether by academics or in popular parlance - and this explains why so much confusion exists over its use. Hundreds of books and thousands of articles have been written on the topic within a number of different disciplinary areas. It seems that the term has been used in five different contexts, namely, community as association; as a community-of-interest area; as territorial units, whole or part; as ideal or utopia; as places or areas in cities.

Community as ideal or utopia is a more value-laden interpretation

> linked to a quest for some new moral or spiritual associations entailing an intimate relationship with other human beings.
>
> (Davies & Herbert 1993 : 5)

Community as we use it in this chapter is a more qualitative term, used to describe geographical places in the city (territorial areas; common interests : both association & place).

The way in which "community" is used here corresponds with another term, which has less ambiguity, namely "neighbourhood". Hallman (1984 : 34) speaks of "neighbourhood community", and describes it as :

> A people within a limited territory possessing shared values, common interests, and norms of conduct, engaging in social interaction and mutual aid, and having their own groups, associations, and institutions to help meet their basic needs.

Venter (1997 : 2) defines a neighbourhood as

> a particular, known **space** which includes a familiar combination of buildings, activities and people.

Neighbourhoods give us a sense of belonging, and

> apart from being a physical space, a neighbourhood is also a social world, created by individuals or groups.
>
> (Venter 1997 : 2)

For the purposes of this study I will analyse Salvokop, Berea, Marabastad and Schubartpark as distinct neighbourhoods, whilst also analysing specific buildings or street blocks within the context of their neighbourhood (e.g. Hofmeyr House, The Foundation, Oeverzicht, etc.).

Hallman (1984 : 94) identifies six different neighbourhood types according to their internal organisation, links amongst residents, links with the place around them or with outsiders, and so forth :

| • | *integral* | strong identity; close interaction; participation in local issues; linkage to outside |
|---|---|---|
| • | *parochial* | suburban neighbourhood which is not so connected |
| • | *diffuse* | working-class; although there is a significant amount of sharing, people maintain their privacy; rather cut off from the outside |
| • | *transitory* | neither interaction, nor identification |
| • | *stepping-stone* | changing, transient, no strong identification with the area |
| • | *anomic* | a lack of everything; little interaction, cut off from outside, etc. |

Urban sociologist Harry Gold (1981 : 112-115) adds to these types and suggest :

| ■ | *defended neighbourhoods* | protected and sealed off by residents who are hostile towards strangers; gangs, electronic entrances, or neighbourhood watches fend them off |
|---|---|---|
| ■ | *contrived neighbourhoods* | residential areas developed for a particular group, such as retirement villages, townhouse complexes, or mining towns |
| ■ | *stage neighbourhoods* | outsiders have greater control than insiders over community; the ongoing crisis inside this neighbourhood is used by outside agencies to act out possible solutions |

Venter (1997 : 15) narrows the neighbourhood types down and identify three types of neighbourhoods in present day South Africa, i.e. segregated, transitional or integrated neighbourhoods. His neighbourhood types are focussing more on the cultural make-up of neighbourhoods.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ | *segregated* | communities which are made up of predominantly one racial, religious or language group; segregated communities are formed either by free association of people, or by force (e.g. the Group Areas Act) |
| ▪ | *transitional* | undergoing major changes (culturally, language, religious, etc.); changes in types and ownership of businesses; stepping-stone community |
| ▪ | *integrated* | "two or more groups may live in the same area with their numbers remaining fairly stable "(Venter 1997:15);e.g. Yeoville, Woodstock,etc. |
| ▪ | *combination* | Venter suggests that all three patterns can exist even within one neighbourhood; within a small area some buildings or street blocks might be fairly segregated, others transitional and others more integrated (cf. 1997 : 15) |

As Pretoria changes the inner city changes. At present the inner city of Pretoria is very heterogeneous, reflecting the make-up of South African society. The process of transition is still underway, however, and the current situation might again change.

Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 164) speaks about neighbourhood changes and say that neighbourhoods are often heterogeneous during a time of transition. A measure of heterogeneity is even maintained when people remain in a neighbourhood despite the changes. Different factors might contribute to this, such as attachment to the locality, significant social ties in the neighbourhood, housing shortages elsewhere which make suitable alternatives difficult, and so forth (1992 : 164). On the other hand, the pendulum can also swing all the way so that predominantly white inner city areas can become predominantly black.

In studying the neighbourhood different methods could be applied. I will use a simple method, after doing a power map, mapping out the neighbourhood's boundaries, features, buildings and people, recording the condition of the buildings and the groups of people observed, and reflecting on the way in which urban systems effect the specific neighbourhood / community / building (cf. Venter 1997 : 19-31).

One of the dangers in analysing inner city communities, is to concentrate in a one-sided way on the needs of communities, without highlighting the latent or working resources already present in the community. John McKnight and John Kretzmann (1990 : 3-17), urban researchers and policy developers at Northwestern University in Illinois, developed visual maps that highlight both the neighbourhood needs, and the

neighbourhood resources (or assets or capacities).

They emphasise that the primary building blocks in neighbourhood development are the assets and capacities located inside the neighbourhood and controlled by the neighbourhood. Assets controlled by outsiders, or outside resources, might contribute towards neighbourhood revitalisation, but they are not the primary building blocks. In developing a strategy for church-based community development in the inner city, this needs to be remembered.

Their diagrams appear on the next two pages (Venter 1997 : 34-35).

Hallman (1984 : 256) writes about neighbourhoods and sets out as a goal for urban neighbourhoods the concept of *wholeness*. He suggests strategies for how we can achieve wholeness in neighbourhoods (cf. chapter 5 - the Biblical shalom).

> We should strive to achieve neighbourhood wholeness. By wholeness I am referring to several meanings of the word : complete, that is, all essential parts in place and working properly; functionally integrated, so that various parts reinforce each other; and healthy, with wounds healed, illnesses cured, and wellness maintained.

Hallman (1984 : 205-208) makes it clear, however, that he is not striving for the perfect neighbourhood or for wholeness, in isolation from the broader urban community. To explain it more, Hallman provides a list of ingredients or indicators for maintaining sound and healthy neighbourhoods.

| ■ Household Income | to be maintained at reasonable level |
|---|---|
| ■ Desire & Commitment | ownership of community for determining its own future |
| ■ Financing | sufficient supply of mortgage loans at affordable rates; also loans for housing improvements & commercial ventures |
| ■ Social Fabric | personal relationships within; interaction between institutions, groups, etc. |
| ■ Communication | adequate flow of information; sharing of common values; sharing of a common history |
| ■ Coping Mechanisms | the capacity to cope with change, to regulate and manage change, etc. |
| ■ Commercial Enterprises | to be maintained |
| ■ Community Services & Facilities | to maintain existing facilities; to adapt to change; involving residents of area in current and new services |
| ■ Regulations | regulatory powers of local government can contribute towards healthy communities if applied appropriately |
| ■ Partnerships | concerted action which brings together all stakeholders is essential; to be shaped into a working partnership |
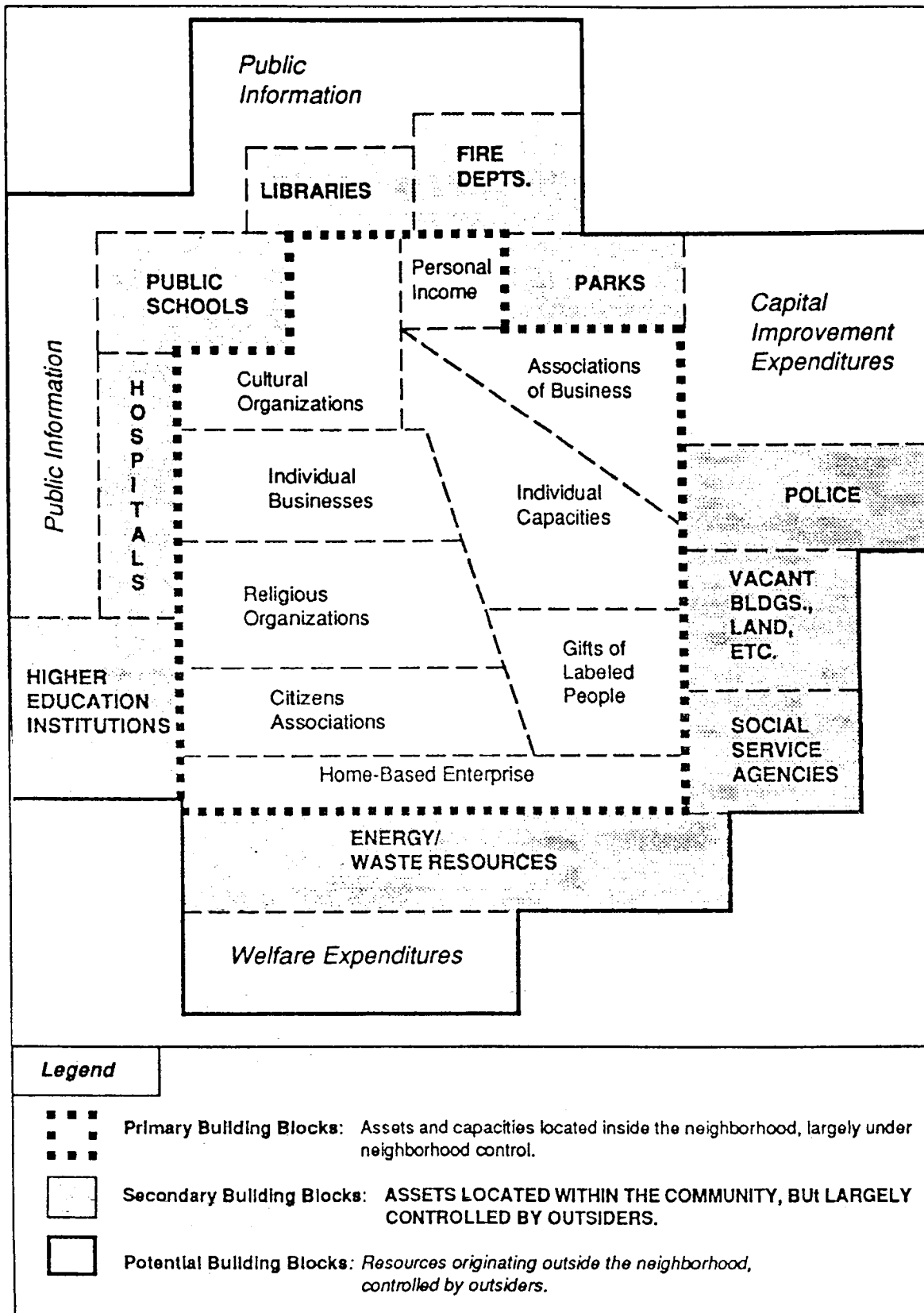
*Fig. 16: Neighbourhood resources diagram. (Source: McKnight & Kretzmann 1990).*
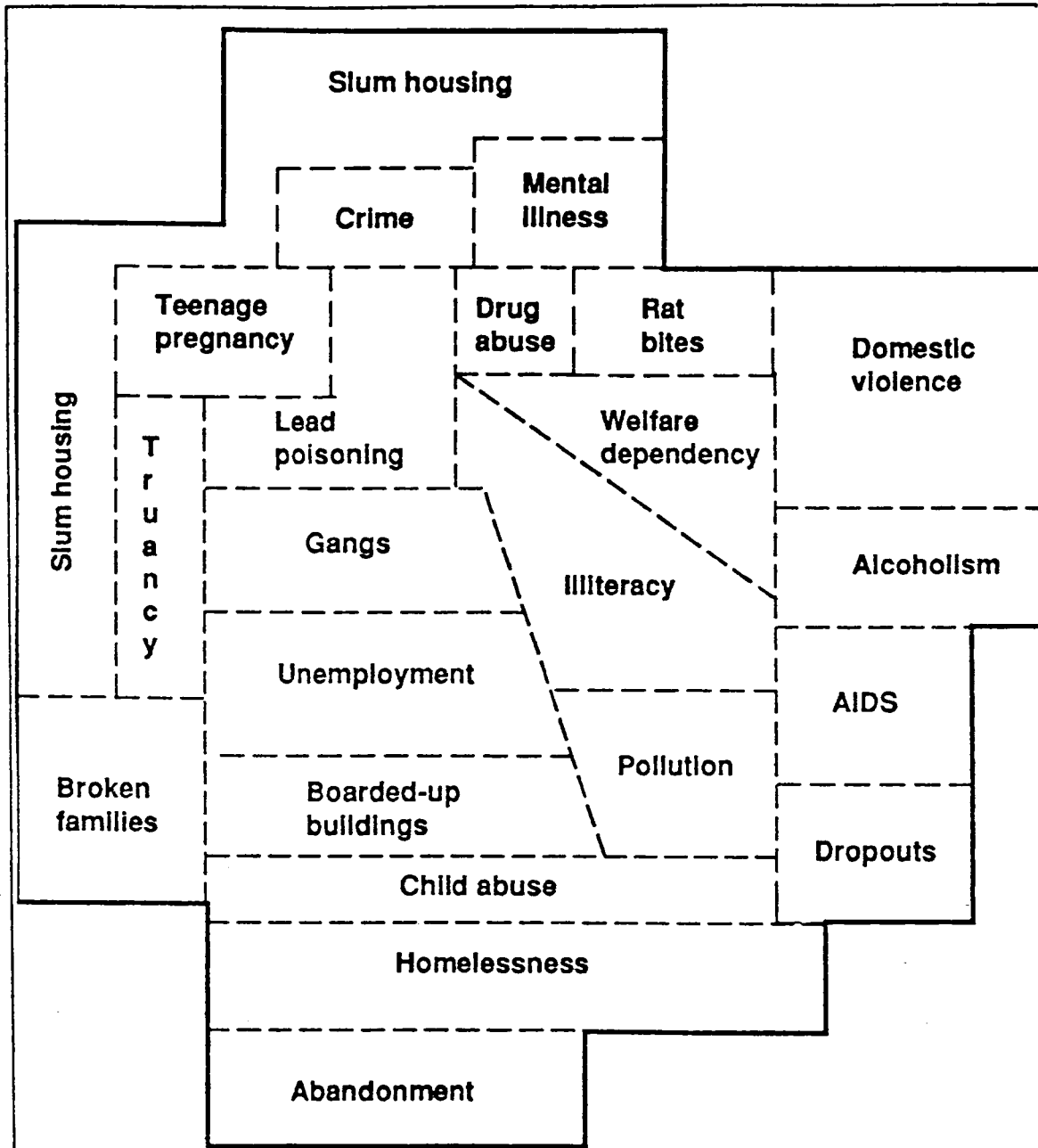
*Fig. 15: Neighbourhood needs diagram. (Source: McKnight & Kretzmann 1990).*

In analysing different inner city communities in Pretoria, Hallman's indicators will be used as yardsticks. His distinction between different community types will also be used, with those of Gold and Venter. It will be applied together with a reading of power and its effect on the inner city, as well as using the needs / resources diagram of McKnight & Kretzmann.

Much has been said already in chapter 3 about these different communities or buildings. In this section I will merely build on the previous descriptions. As was explained in chapter 3,1 it is necessary to refer to the calendar period in which the analysis was done, as it indicates the progression in research and also leaves space for future developments later in the study.

I will also include updates throughout the analysis, indicating how a situation has changed or progressed since the analysis has been done initially (e.g. *Update : November 1998*).

## 6.1    Inner City Decay : Whole Communities

### 6.1.1  Salvokop                                             (written : March 1998)

The major issue effecting Salvokop is the possible redevelopment of the area into a more upmarket residential area, which will out market the current residents, some of which are long-term residents of this area.

There are different options for redevelopment.

■    The area could be redeveloped into a middle-class neighbourhood, dislocating present residents, and renewing the face of Salvokop.

■    The present residents could be empowered to participate in the renewal process, and they could become the owners of rehabilitated housing units; this would not change the present lack of economic viability, though, as this has become quite a depressed community.

■    Another option would be to facilitate a mixed-income, mixed-use development, combining the present houses (current residents) with an in-fill development of townhouses (new residents) and even medium-rise buildings on the northern fringe of Salvokop. There are creative ways to facilitate a mixed-income development, and densification in itself (even without a real mix of income) could contribute to its economic viability. The residential component could be balanced with enterprise and small industrial developments. A way should also be found to link Salvokop better with Skanskop, the CBD and the Berea-Burgerspark area.

■    Ownership could take different forms.

-   the owner could remain Transnet;
-   Transnet could sell the land to a developer to do a development; or
-   by creative intervention a local community development corporation could be established, in which the local people, the school, and other partners could work together on revitalising the area, without relocating the present residents.

● **POWER MAP**
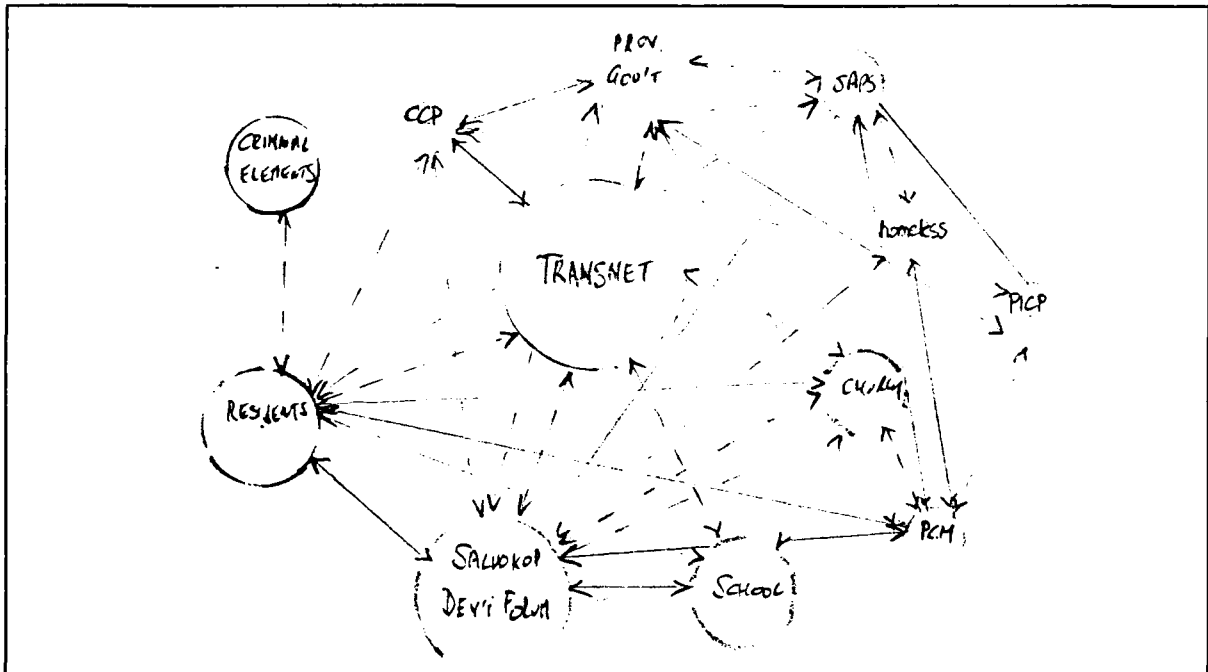


## Reflecting on the Power Map :

●   Transnet remains the most powerful role player at present, determining the future of Salvokop. Through wise organising this might be countered. Although Transnet is the landlord they have abandoned their responsibility to maintain their property almost entirely. They are driven by a profit-motif and the changes in Salvokop do not fit the paradigm which they understand well.

●   The Salvokop Development Forum has the potential to become a potent force in determining the future of this area through community organising. This Forum draws the residents, school and other concerned stakeholders together.

●   The residents form the basis of the Salvokop Development Forum and by taking responsibility for their area, they might change the envisaged plans for the area.

●   The school is an important institution, providing a safe place to the community, an educational service to the people of Salvokop (and the wider inner city) and intending to remain in the area.

●   The church in Salvokop has again decided to sell their property and withdraw from this area (March 1998). The potential role that they could play has never been developed, and they have been distant in the formation of the Salvokop Development Forum.

- Various other groups play smaller (but sometimes significant) roles. The SAPS, local and provincial government, the homeless and the Pretoria Inner City Partnership are all role players who are either currently involved or potential partners in the process of redeveloping Salvokop. Pretoria Community Ministries / Yeast City Housing plays a facilitating role in the process of community organising.

*Through creative organising it would be possible to achieve more than urban renewal in this area, forming partnerships that will facilitate true transformation, i.e. restructuring the inner city to allow low-cost housing (and ownership) closer to job opportunities, providing access to ownership for the lowest-income groups of Marabastad, and renewing the area without dislocating the current (and the poorest) residents of Salvokop.*

- **Community Map**

*The community map for Salvokop is on the next page.*

### Reflecting on the Community Map

- The bulk of the land in Salvokop is taken up by semi-detached or private houses in a fairly poor condition. Transnet, as the landlord, is supposed to maintain these properties, but have neglected their responsibility for some years now.

- A few of the houses are in an average condition, and do not need much work on it. The house and flatlet belonging to the church are still in a good condition, as is the church itself. The school is also in a good condition still.

- There are a few vacant and run-down facilities in the area which could, together with the open spaces, allow for new developments. Where the shop once was, is a vacant property which is of now use to the community currently.

- There is still substantial land available for developing new housing, and even small enterprises and light industries. On the fringes of Salvokop lies unutilised land which could be developed as part of the redevelopment process.

- The Translux Depot takes up a large piece of land in the southwestern corner of Salvokop (opposite the school). They also converted two semi-detached houses as offices for Translux (223 & 224, 5th Avenue). These houses could become a model for renovated houses in the area.

This community could easily be used by outside agents (stage neighbourhood; cf. Gold, ch.4 : 82) for their own purposes, but the residents of Salvokop have the potential to avoid this through creative and pro-active organising.

The transition in this community is still very recent and Salvokop will have to grow in terms of identity and linkages to the outside. At present it bears signs of a diffuse community (cf. Hallman) where there is strong interaction between members and a growing sense of identity. There are not close linkages to the outside, however, which would be vital for its transformation. As the Salvokop Development Forum grows in

Legend (rotated):
- Rental Housing: Poor
- Rental Housing: Average
- Rental Housing: High-quality
- Open Land
- Vacant Building
- Commercial
- Single-room accommodation

Map labels:
- Transnet Housing Offices
- Church
- Koch Street
- Skietpoort Ave
- Second Ave
- Third Ave
- Fourth Ave
- Fifth Ave
- Sixth Ave
- Second St.
- First St.
- Transnet Depot
- School
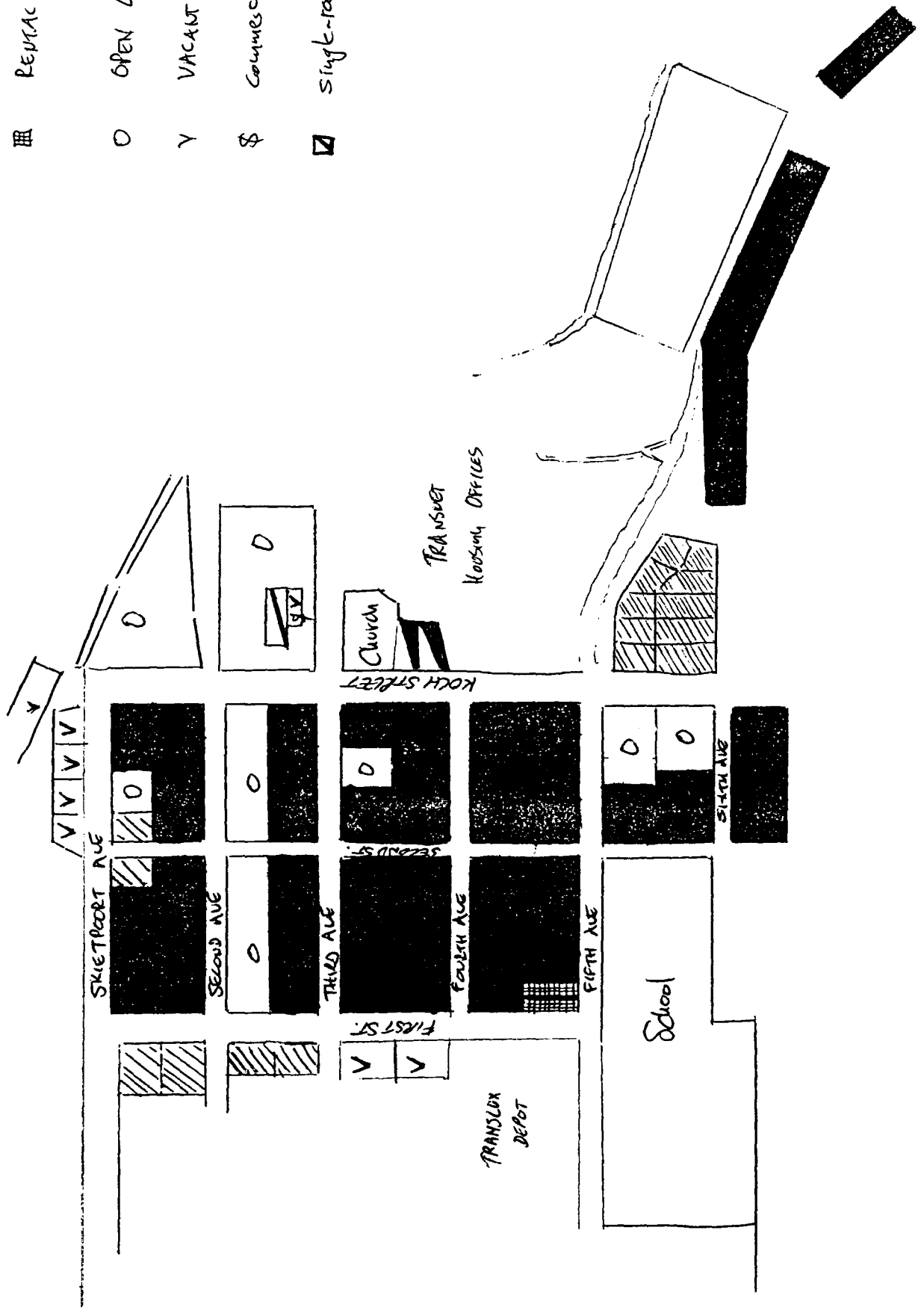
capacity and networks with outside agents, this community is moving from a diffuse community to an integral community (cf. Hallman). Culturally Salvokop has already changed from a segregated to a transitional to an integrated community.

Since the description of the situation in Salvokop in chapter 3, the whole process to re-develop the area has come to a virtual halt. The developer who has shown interest in the area has withdrawn, due to the delays in the process. The moratorium has not been lifted yet and Transnet is not taking any pro-active measures to take the matter a step further.

In a conversation with Mr. Peter Gabriel (interview on Tuesday 17 March 1998), chairperson of the Salvokop Development Forum, this state of affairs has become apparent. It also became clear that Mr. Gabriel was somewhat disillusioned and needed support to remobilise the Forum, and to take the whole issue a step forward.

He was of the opinion that the existing housing should be renovated and that current residents should be assisted to obtain ownership of their houses. He also suggested that the majority of the residents in Salvokop would like to purchase property here. Mr. Gabriel did not have any problem with additional housing being developed on vacant land in the area.

His views were shared by a young neighbour, Shaggy Mokoena (interview on Tuesday 17 March 1998). He voiced the fears of many residents that they could be asked to move any day. There was no security of tenure, and he actually wished for some kind of assurance that they would be able to stay and work towards becoming owners.

Transnet, at previous Forum meetings, made it clear that they would give an option to current residents to purchase property in the redeveloped Salvokop. At that time the affordability of such an option was questioned, however. Transnet has envisaged a more upmarket development. Since the developer has withdrawn from this project, Transnet has not taken any pro-active steps with regard to the redevelopment of the area, also in the light of the moratorium which hinders development from taking place here.

The church in Salvokop was not very involved in the process of the Forum. At present they are again considering selling their property and leaving the area. The fact that they are not as rooted in Salvokop any longer, make them a marginal role player in the process.

Yeast City Housing, the housing division of Pretoria Community Ministries, would like to envisage a mixed-use and mixed-income development, preventing the current residents from relocation, assisting them with ownership, and even working with them towards establishing a grass-roots community development corporation (on CDC's : cf. *Investigation of Community Development Structures for Urban Regeneration*; March 1998). This would be in line with the ecumenical church in the inner city embracing a holistic vision of bottom-up community development.

- **Neighbourhood Needs & Resources Maps**

| | |
|---|---|
| overcrowding | neglect of landlord |
| insecurity of tenure | poor housing conditions |
| crime, rape & police bribery | unhygienic water supply |
| general decay of neighbourhood | alcoholism & drug abuse |
| withdrawal of key institutions (or threats thereof) | unemployment |
| unattended & neglected open spaces | |

**Neighbourhood Need Map**

| |
|---|
| gifts of individual people |
| unity in diversity |
| community forum |
| religious groups |
| school |
| will of residents to take intiative & responsibility |
| police |
| vacant land & buildings for development |
| Pretoria Inner City *Partnership* Gauteng Dept of Dev't Planning... City Council of Pretoria |

**Neighbourhood Resources Map**

- **Conclusion**

The will of the residents, the availability of land in the area, the close proximity to the CBD, and potential co-operation with the Gauteng Department of Development Planning and Local Government in the establishment of a Community Development Corporation, as well as the institutional capacity of Yeast City Housing to facilitate this process, could all contribute to a redeveloped Salvokop, which embraces the current residents and embodies a restructured and socially just inner city community.

I am of the opinion that the resources available or latent in and for Salvokop, are adequate to overcome the needs and to ensure a viable and healthy inner city community, demonstrating the diversity of the South African population.

In terms of Hallman's indicators for assessing a healthy community, Salvokop's residents have the desire and commitment to determine their own future, the social fabric is currently strengthened through organising the community, and emerging partnerships could facilitate a secure and healthy neighbourhood for the future.

Immediate and on-going challenges would be to curb the withdrawal of the only remaining community service or facility, which is the school; to maintain the household incomes; to draw new investments into the area; and to access finance for property ownership, home improvements and commercial developments.

The economic fabric of the community is tentative at present, but the social integration, commitment of the residents, and emerging partnerships are indicators which could overcome the needs and draw resources for transformation.

**6.1.2 Berea** **(written : March 1998)**

The Berea-Burgerspark area is still relatively healthy in terms of the criteria of Hallman. Unlike Salvokop, which lacks the economic viability but demonstrates social integration and a commitment to determine its own future, Berea is economically stronger but the size and nature of the community prevents the same kind of social integration.

It is a mixed-income area, combining transitional housing facilities, low-cost rental units, rental apartment buildings, sectional title facilities, penthouses, upmarket retirement schemes, and 3-star hotels.

Yet, in some of the rental and even sectional title facilities problems arise, which need to be addressed. I will not deal with Berea in detail, but will provide a power map and community analysis, highlighting some of the problem areas. I will also describe the development of the Berea Development Forum and how this Forum hopes to contribute to the maintenance of healthy housing facilities.

Some of the major challenges for Berea, are the following :

- to maintain the mixed-income nature of the community

- to ensure additional transitional and low-income housing facilities for the area

- to maintain the sectional title facilities and to educate the community on sectional title ownership, and the rights and responsibilities that go with it

- to reverse the withdrawal from the area by investors, business, and so forth

- to address wrong perceptions about the nature of this community and decay in its housing stock

- to address the red lining by financial institutions and the threatened withdrawal by experienced property managers

- to fight slum conditions and address problems with emerging absentee landlords

- to strengthen the capacity of local, grass-roots institutions, to become significant role players in the housing arena in Berea

- **POWER MAP**
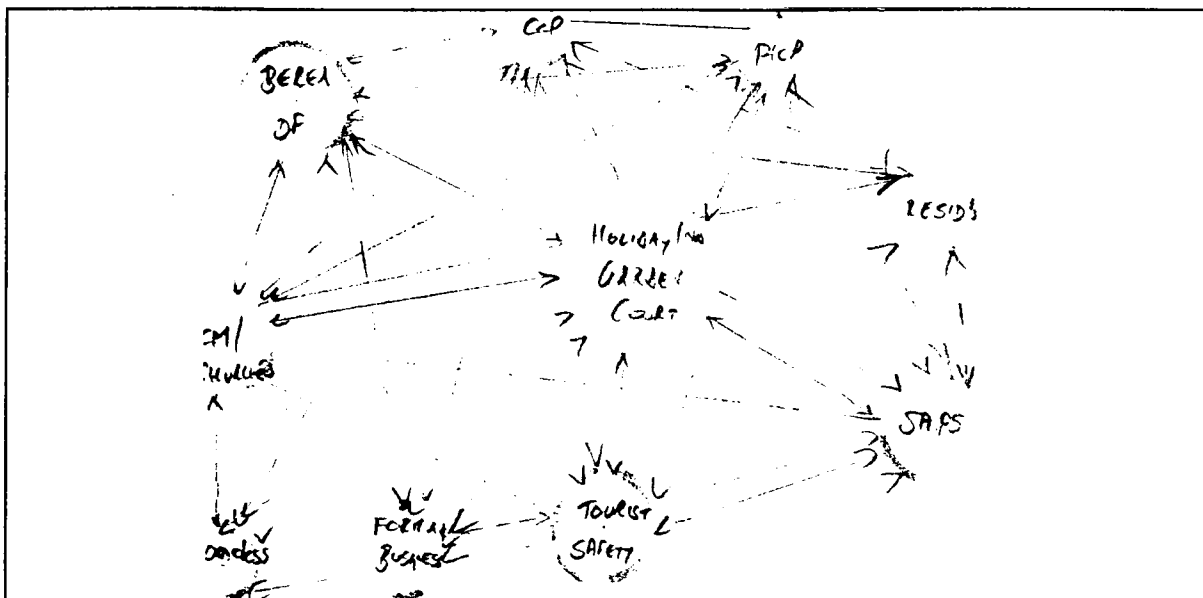


## Reflecting on the Power Map :

- The Holiday Inn Garden Court has taken in a central place in the Berea-Burgerspark area. As they work to protect their own interest in the area, they also affect the surrounding community. Its solidarity with crime prevention, social development and reversal of slum tendencies have assisted to win more battles than one.

- The Tourist Safety Forum has developed as an initiative driven by the hotel and the SAPS to protect tourists who have become very vulnerable. This Forum has also supported other community initiatives and is drawing a whole range of stakeholders to the table, leading to creative partnerships.

- The Berea Development Forum is made up largely of residents (tenants & owners), landlords, and the SAPS. This Forum is facilitating responses to crucial issues affecting the Berea community, and is growing in capacity. The Forum is working closely with Yeast City Housing on issues such as advocacy and property ownership. It has been able to address significant problems in three housing facilities over the past few months. The Forum is also putting pressure on the City Council to attend to maintenance problems in the area, and is advocating to close down a club in the area which shows no regard for surrounding residents, has become a concentration point for drug dealing (also to minors), and led to various cases of vandalism. Furthermore, the Berea Forum demonstrates sensitivity for the plight of homeless groups and is supporting the development of well-managed transitional housing facilities in the area. It is increasingly becoming an organised body who can impact Berea significantly.

- Pretoria Community Ministries / Yeast City Housing maintains good relationships with most of the strategic role players in this area and can contribute significantly towards the social and economic health and viability of this area in future. The individual churches are not always as strategic on their own, but organised they are quite significant. Pretoria Community Ministries (PCM) is a partnership of churches (3 of which are situated in the Berea area). PCM itself is situated in Berea and is working closely with other forums for the health of this community. Yeast City Housing, the housing company of PCM, will play an increasing role in Berea's housing situation.

- A range of other institutions impact on Berea, or have the potential to contribute to this community. This includes the formal business sector, the SAPS, homeless groups, the City Council, and the Pretoria Inner City Partnership.

- Unlike Salvokop, there is not the same kind of social integration in Berea, making representation in the Berea Forum a sensitive issue. A priority for this Forum is to increase resident participation in the Forum and in determining the future of Berea.


- **COMMUNITY ANALYSIS**

*The community map for Berea is on the next page.*


**Reflecting on the Community Map**

Berea is a transitory or stepping-stone neighbourhood, displaying less social integration and identification with the area, and more transition. The emerging black middle-class often uses this area as was done by young white people all along. They stay here until they have saved enough to purchase property in the suburbs and then they move on. They seldom identify clearly with Berea as their "home" and therefore the commitment to determine the future of the area is low.

There is a substantial group of people in Berea, who are not upwardly mobile, however, and they would probably stay here for a longer term. These people would be key people in unleashing the potential of the area and in organising towards a healthy community. They would not be the automatic leaders (that society would usually elect based on profession, income and external power), but their rootedness in the area would probably qualify them better to play a significant role in Berea. This implies the challenge of leadership development. Racially this area has gone through a significant transition, but it seemed to have stabilised to a point of healthy integration.

- The community map reflects the area west of the Apies River, south of Skinner Street, east of Paul Kruger Street and north of the Pretoria Station.

- The largest portion of this area is made up of residential property, contradicting the often held belief that there is a small residential sector in the central Pretoria area.

- Most of the residential facilities are sectional title facilities. They appear to be under severe pressure because of the irresponsible way in which government subsidies are allocated, the exploitation by estate agents and lack of involvement by certain banks in awarding mortgages, the lack of knowledge on the part of new sectional title owners with regard to sectional title ownership, the red lining of this area by banks, the inability of property administrators to deal with cultural change in these facilities, and the outstanding levies in certain blocks leading to neglect in maintenance of these buildings.

- A few blocks in this community are still rental blocks only, owned by private individuals. Interestingly, the majority of these blocks are still kept white, or are operating on a ratio-basis, which would not allow more than a certain percentage of the blocks to become black. There is a greater need even for this kind of housing in the inner city, i.e. rental accommodation (1-2 bedroom flats). With the sectional title boom, most rental apartment facilities have disappeared.

Museum

LITTLE THEATRE

RET  Civic

RET

Museum

BURGERSPARK LANE

VISAGIE ST

School

H

MINNAAR ST

VAN DER WALT ST

BURGERSPARK

VAN LENNEP ST

H

MINNAAR STREET

P

PRINSLOO ST

JACOB MARE ST.

Museum

RET

READ AVE.

SCHEIDING ST

LOOP ST

H

H

RAILWAY ST

STATION

TULLEKEN ST

BERG HOLLARD ST

CLARA ST.

BURGERS PARK CLUB

Bela City

ph  private house
RET  retirement
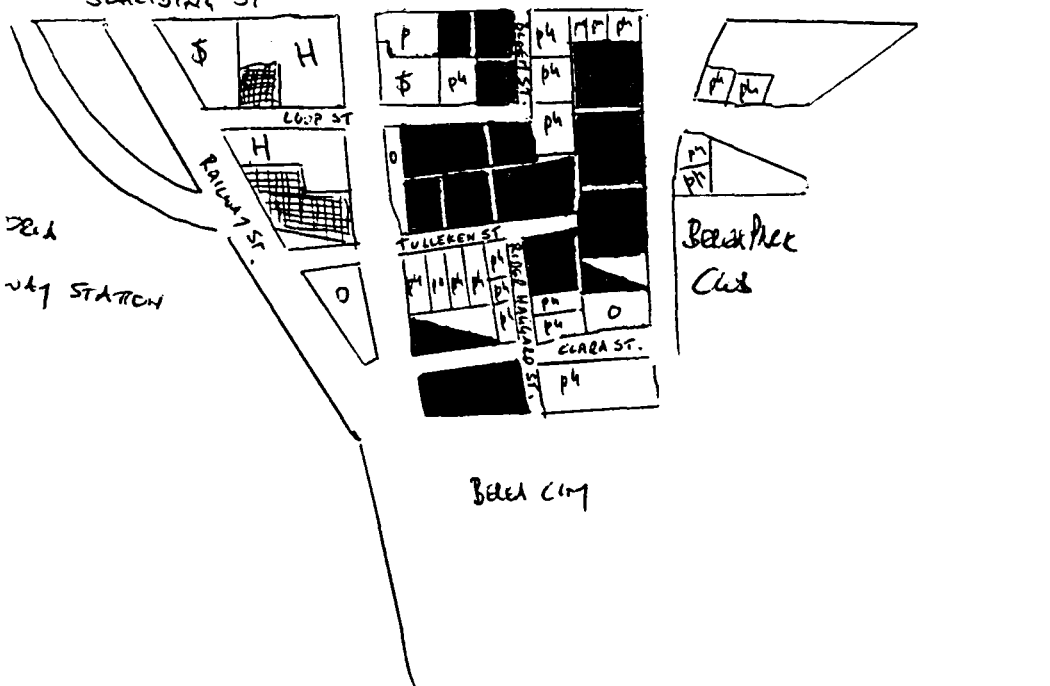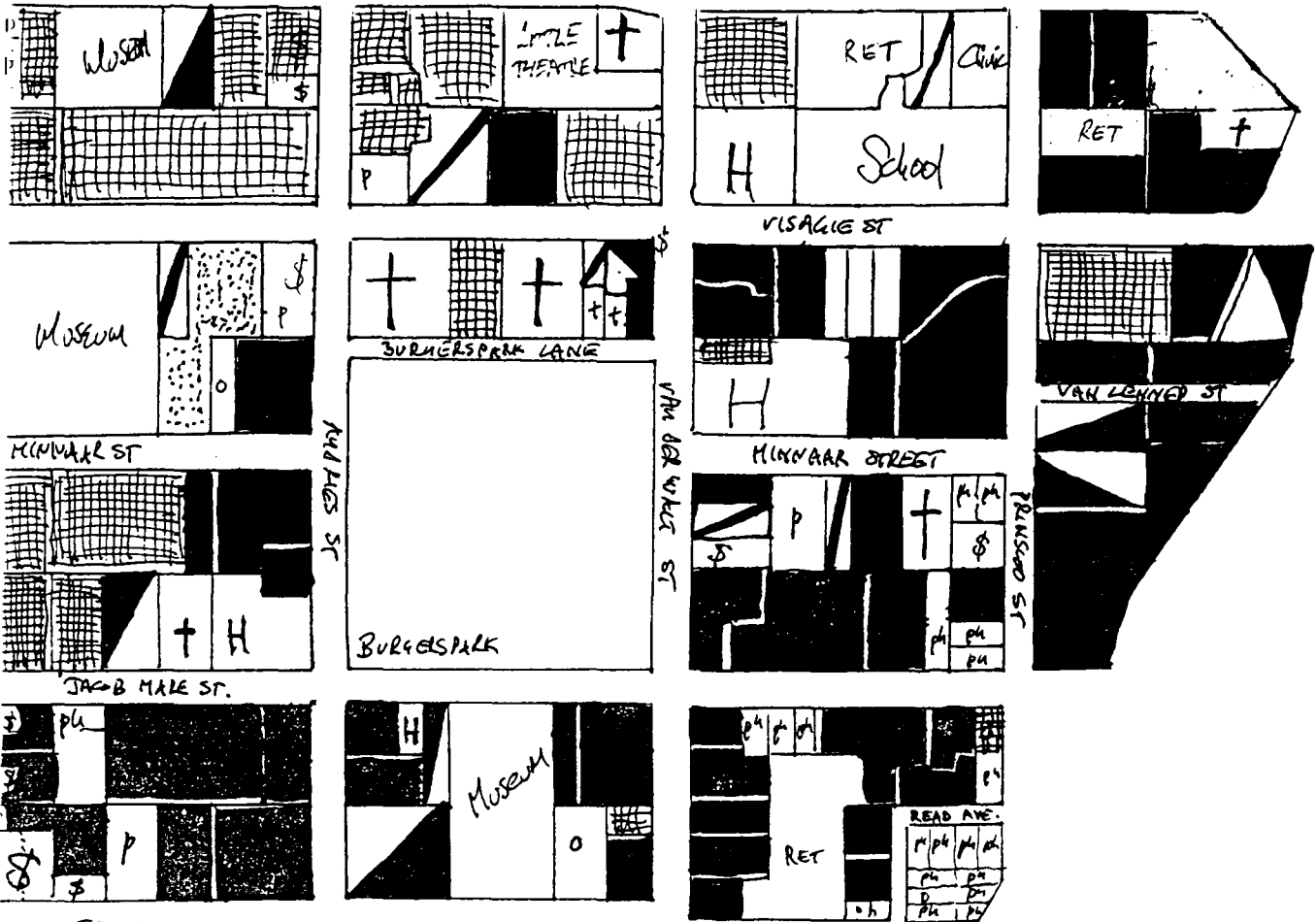
■ SECTIONAL TITLE-owned
◩ RENTAL ACCOMMODATION
◪ SINGLE ROOM ACCOMMODATION
▦ OFFICES
$ COMMERCIAL
† CHURCHES
H HOTEL

- There are only a limited number of SRO's (single room occupancy facilities), although there is a great need for this kind of accommodation, especially amongst the growing number of students in Berea, low-income people, pensioners, and so forth. This kind of facility needs to be safeguarded where they are still in existence, or they need to be established where there are possibilities.

- Berea is a mixed-use community, combining residential uses with office and commercial use. Especially towards the northwestern part of Berea, there is a greater concentration of office buildings.

  In the northern part of Berea (Skinner Street) there are a few vacant office buildings, which might contribute to the housing need of this area, especially with regard to rental accommodation (flats & single rooms).

  In Paul Kruger Street (south) there is a concentration of shops, but for the rest of this area the shops are isolated in different parts of Berea. Berea City, on the southern boundary of the area, does not seem to be viable, and one of the first businesses that has opened there, have already moved out to Centurion. Whether the businesses developed at Berea City were market-sensitive with regard to the surrounding residential area, is doubtful. Furthermore, its location on the edge of Berea, is putting it at a disadvantage as people still prefer to go to Sunnyside or the CBD for shopping.

- There are a few hotels in Berea, ranging from four-star hotels, to subculture accommodation, to guest houses. The Museum Park Development will run through the heart of Berea and could be a healthy injection for the area. It will link the different existing museums and new museums are also established. The direct economic benefit for the Berea community is still to be established, and whether unemployed and homeless people from this area would benefit, is not clear.

- There are still more than 30 private houses in the area, contributing to a sense of community and neighbourliness. However, most of these properties have business rights on them, and as people move away from the area, businesses tend to move in and purchase these properties. Although it might contribute economically to the value of property in the area, it creates more "ghost properties" at night, which is more conducive for crime. It also reduces the residential component of the area.

  The fact that these properties have business rights on them, also outprice them, and makes it increasingly difficult for small people, or church-based groups to invest in these properties for the purpose of community revitalisation.

- Churches and church-based organisations (as well as cults) occupy a fair amount of land in this area. This could contribute significantly to the healthy development of Berea in future, if the churches continue to grow in partnership and in their united witness and action in the community.

- There are 3 retirement centres in Berea, accommodating only white people.

- A few spaces are utilised for parking areas, and there are still open spaces belonging to different private individuals or organisations, which might be utilised to address some of the needs of the area, or to contribute to its economic viability.

- ## NEIGHBOURHOOD NEEDS & RESOURCES MAP

| | |
|---|---|
| homelessness | crime (esp. against tourists) |
| problems with sectional title ownership | withdrawal from formal business |
| emerging absentee landlords | red lining by banks |
| loss of individual property | |

**Neighbourhood Needs Map**

| |
|---|
| church involvement |
| professional skills |
| individual capacities & gifts |
| tourism |
| formal business |
| community organisation |
| social services |
| SAPS |
| schools |
| vacant land & buildings |
| libraries |
| health services |
| amenities |
| Pretoria Inner City Partnership City Council of Pretoria |

**Neighbourhood Resources Map**

- ## CONCLUSION

The fact that so many of the residents of Berea are property owners must count in favour of the sustained maintenance and well-being of this community. However, it requires intentional processes of community organising, property education, and so forth. Although people purchased property, it is as if they need to take on ownership of their buildings and their streets psychologically still.

The challenge for this community is to establish a broader-based commitment amongst residents to work for the future of Berea. Through institutions such as the Berea Development Forum, the churches, and others, the social fabric needs to be strengthened, to create a sense of identity within Berea.

Only as the social fabric and commitment are strengthened, would this community be able to cope with change, to address the threat of disinvestment by commercial enterprises, or red lining by banks. However, the withdrawal from certain institutions could also give creative opportunities for more community-based economic activity to fill the gaps in the market, and to ensure transformational development in Berea. Extensive organising would be required for such alternatives to replace the gaps left by those who have withdrawn.

The resources available (already or potentially) to Berea, can surely outweigh the needs, however. If organised and managed properly, there are a few strong stakeholders who have the interests of Berea at heart. In partnership they could ensure creative interventions and the maintenance of healthy community life in the Berea-Burgerspark area.

## 6.2 Inner City Decay : Apartment Buildings (written : March 1998)

In chapter 3 (1.2) the problem of decay in apartment buildings in Pretoria's inner city has been introduced. The problem of high-rise dwellings have also been touched upon earlier in this chapter (3.3). Yet, in a city-state such as Singapore, for example, the acute land shortage is an overriding factor. Lim, a Singaporean architect, is of the opinion that until appropriate design solutions for low-rise high-density housing are developed, a debate about the desirability of high-rise housing will remain academic. That there could be long-term psychological effects on dwellers of high-rise housing, should be considered, however (Lim 1990 : 75).

In the same way one could ask how to deal with existing inner city high-rise complexes, against the background of rising criticism. It is not realistic to expect that one can do away with all of these housing facilities, but it should rather be considered how these facilities could be made into decent and dignified housing complexes, even within the limitations of these complexes.

I would single out the Schubartpark complex in this study as this is also the high-rise complex with the largest concentration of people in the inner city of Pretoria.

### 6.2.1 Schubartpark

The major issue in this building is the perceived neglect in management by the Gauteng Department of Housing who is responsible for this complex. This neglect leads to various problems related to poor management. Currently a process is underway whereby the management of the complex will be transferred to the City Council of Pretoria. There are different options for the future of this complex :

- Long-term management of the complex by the City Council who lacks the capacity to manage such housing effectively

- Contracting the managerial function out to a property administrator or a social housing company in the inner city

- Assisting the local residents in establishing their own company to manage the facility, with the support of a social housing company such as Yeast City Housing (cf. Chapter 5 & 6)

- Assisting the local residents to establish a community development corporation (cf. Chapter 5 & 6 : Gauteng Department of Development Planning & Local Government), purchasing the complex from the government landlord (provincial or local) and converting it into sectional title units or communal ownership, while at the same time developing the commercial component of the complex to benefit the local residents more directly (profit-sharing, etc.)

● **POWER MAP**
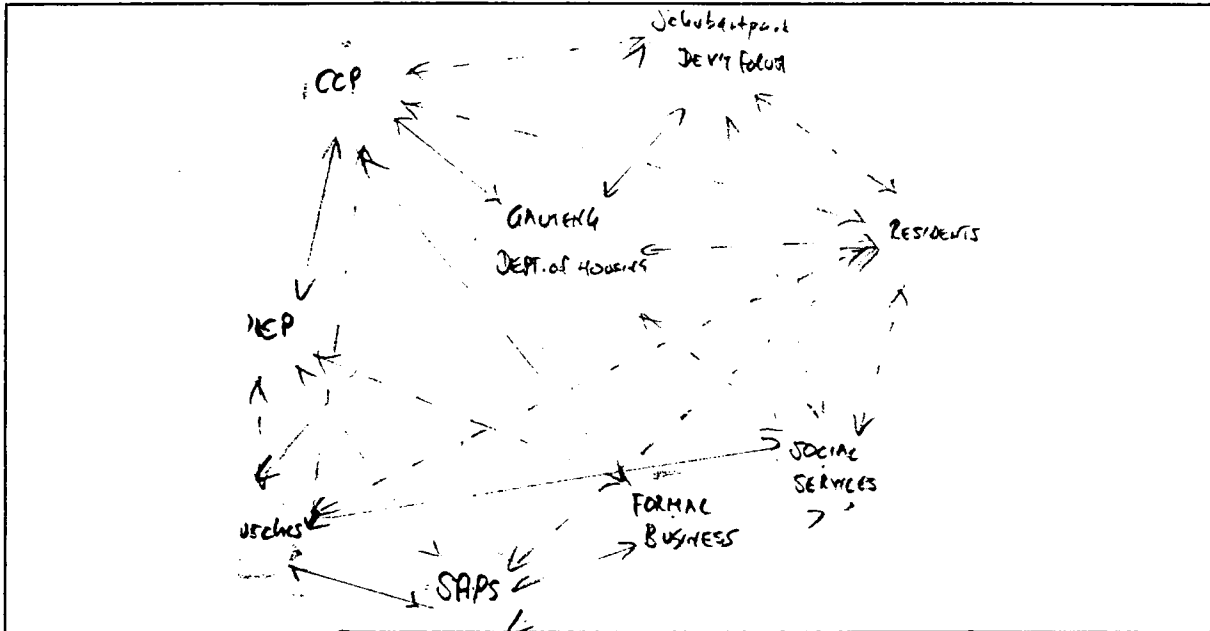


## Reflecting on the Power Map :

- The present landlord is the Gauteng Department of Housing. They are blamed for the neglect of the property and the poor management. Their perspective on the future of this facility is an important consideration. Because this complex is not as organised, the Department of Housing is the most significant power at the moment.

- The Schubartpark Development Forum could grow into an agent of change and transformation in this complex. A prerequisite would be the involvement of a larger number of residents and a different role for the social service organisations who are currently steering the process in Schubartpark. In my opinion, they should take the back seat and allow for local residents to own and steer the process. If not, it would remain a welfare forum for welfare people.

- The residents of Schubartpark could be a significant force in determining their own future. Their lack of social integration, racial tension, and disorganisation, hinder such an ownership role. The Schubartpark Forum has so far not assisted such a process either. To the contrary, this Forum is possibly perpetuating the dependency syndrome of this community even more.

- The City Council of Pretoria has played a negative role in the lives of the Schubartpark residents in the past, and is currently in the process of taking over the ownership of this complex from the provincial government. Their views on the future of this complex have not been made clear yet.

- Formal business, the SAPS, churches, and the Pretoria Inner City Partnership, are involved or could be made involved in different ways.

  Tension between small start-up churches, withdrawal by the traditional church, the growth of an African Pentecostal church, the lack of co-operation between the churches, and the lack of involvement with the issues of their direct community, almost disqualify the church to be an active and fruitful partner in this complex. Pretoria Community Ministries has been an observer so far in the process. We would probably engage more intentionally with the issues of Schubartpark on specific invitation of the residents, stakeholders or emerging Forum only.

There are a few established businesses in the complex, but there are probably still more opportunity for commercial developments. The existing businesses, besides providing accessible services, are not necessarily ploughing back more into this complex. The SAPS is not always popular with the residents of this complex, as they are not as visible as the residents would like them to be.

The Pretoria Inner City Partnership could be made a partner in this complex in future. That would depend on the internal organisation of the community and on their ability to engage the Partnership for the purposes of building a healthy community in the Schubartpark complex.

- ## COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

*The community map for this area is on the next page.*

## REFLECTING ON THE COMMUNITY MAP

Schubartpark is an example of a stage neighbourhood where outside agents will constantly come in to do things for the residents, having more control over the destiny of the community than the people staying there themselves. In another sense it is a diffuse neighbourhood where there is a certain amount of sharing, but still a high degree of privacy, and not much linkages with the outside world or the power brokers determining the environment in which this complex is situated. Many people also use it as a stepping-stone community.

- Schubartpark is west of Church Street in an area that has lacked significant investment and development over many decades.

- There are many open spaces and vacant buildings directly north, west and south of the Schubartpark complex. These spaces need creative investments and the area west of Church Square could be revitalised by mixed-income, mixed-use developments, which will combine small-scale commercial enterprises, light industry and a mix of housing types.

- The community surrounding this complex is a mixed-use community, with an isolated residential component, often hidden away between office and commercial facilities.

- In the neighbouring area, there are 3 apartment buildings that were sold as sectional title facilities. One of Schubartpark's direct neighbours is another high-rise complex, Krugerpark. Ten other apartment buildings provide rental accommodation. There are two large youth centres, accommodating predominantly young people in single rooms (and a few 1 and 2 bed roomed flats). There are a few private houses remaining in this area, among them the series of houses in the old Good Hope area, opposite Krugerpark.

- The rest of the property is made up of a combination of commercial and office uses. The SAPS Pretoria Central and the Courts are also in this part of the CBD.
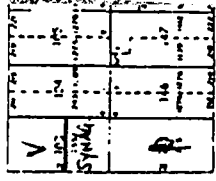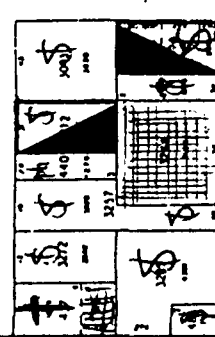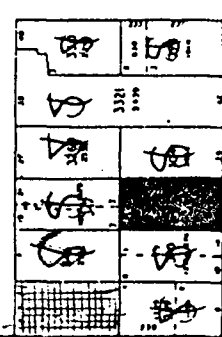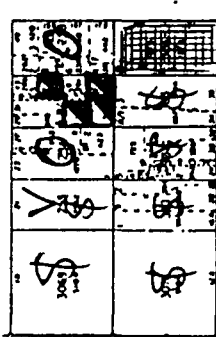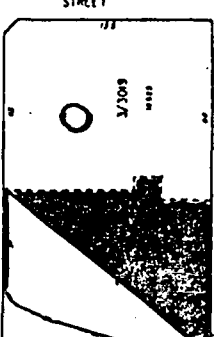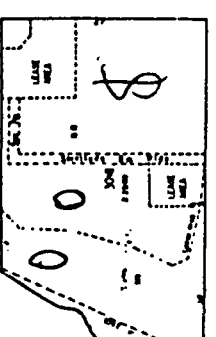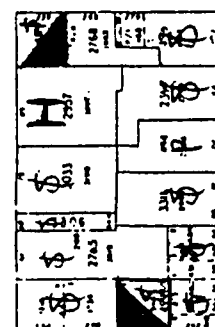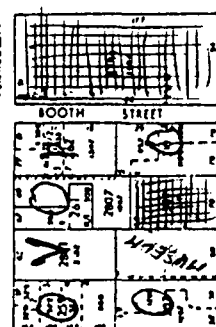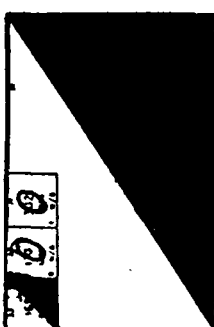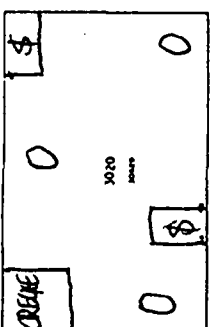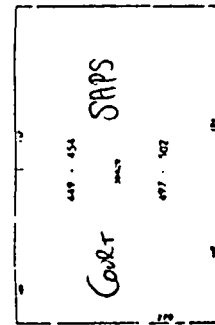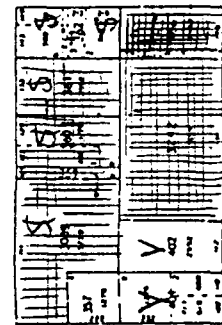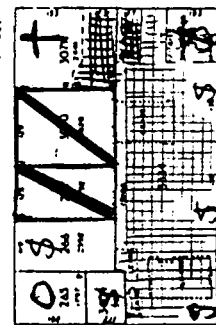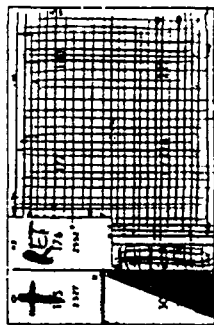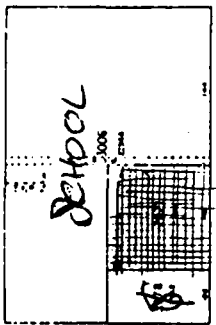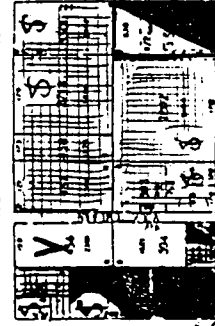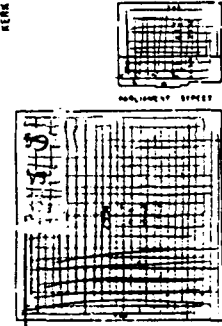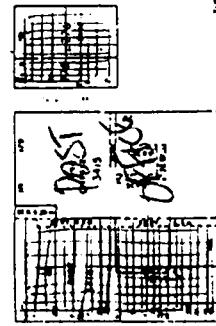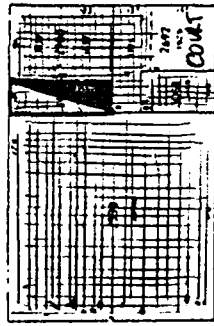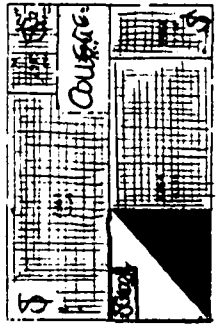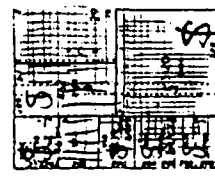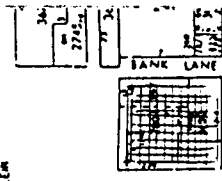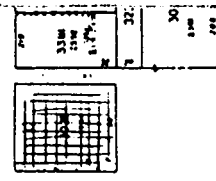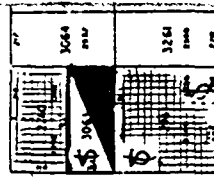
- ## NEIGHBOURHOOD NEEDS & RESOURCES MAP

| | | | |
|---|---|---|
| neglect of landlord | broken families |
| insecurity of tenure | alcoholism |
| gang-related problems | lack of child care |
| unemployment | prostitution |
| racial tension | child abuse |
| alleged corruption in housing management | conflict between & withdrawal of churches |

**Neighbourhood Needs Map**

| |
|---|
| individual capacities & gifts |
| community organisation |
| formal business |
| church presence |
| social services |
| school |
| SAPS |
| libraries |
| amenities |
| Pretoria Inner City Partnership Local & Provincial Gov't Structures |

**Neighbourhood Resources Map**

- ## CONCLUSION

One of the greatest challenges for the Schubartpark complex is to nurture a desire and commitment on the part of the residents to take ownership of the future developments of Schubartpark and even the surrounding neighbourhood. Through Forums and organising the social fabric must be strengthened. At the moment, the racial tension and transition in the complex, are factors hindering constructive social integration.

Depending on future decisions with regard to ownership in Schubartpark, financing might become more relevant (in the form of mortgage loans or government subsidies). Investments in the area surrounding Schubartpark would also be important to reverse the general perception of a run-down community.

The Schubartpark community is very cut off from the rest of the city and needs to find ways of connecting with developments that might affect this complex and its environment.

The open spaces surrounding the Schubartpark complex are very suitable for a range of small enterprise developments, community services and facilities, and other housing types to be developed. These spaces could also contribute to the process of urban re-structuring, i.e. allowing for housing closer to job opportunities, and creating a diversity of housing types and income ranges, within the same area.

Bold partnerships are needed to facilitate urban transformation in this area. Positive developments around Schubartpark could also have a positive effect on the Schubartpark complex itself.

### 6.2.2 Pretoria Station Area

In chapter 3 (1.2.2) specific buildings have been cited which became problematic in terms of neglect, crime-related problems, and so on. These buildings are indicated on the community map of Berea, and the Berea Development Forum has to attend to the problems in these buildings.

### 6.3 Single Room Occupancy (SRO)

These buildings have been introduced in chapter 3 (1.3). In the inner city of Pretoria these buildings have become the most at-risk housing facilities, due to a variety of factors.

- There seems to be a wide-spread managerial incapacity to manage the current changes in these buildings. The changes are mostly racially, but often they are accompanied by a transition from lower-middle income people to lower-income people, bringing about new challenges to the management of these buildings.

- Another trend is the emerging absentee landlords who make profit but neglect the proper management and maintenance of the building.

- Urban renewal projects and road developments also put these buildings at risk. When demolitions are essential for development to take place, lower-income housing is often affected first and most, without providing alternatives.

- In the Berea-Burgerspark area there are a few examples of properties that were rezoned, and single room facilities then had to make way for guest houses, offices, and so on.

### 6.3.1 YMCA Hofmeyr House                                 (written : April 1998)

The main issue with regard to this facility, is the residents' concern with the management of the facility. Matters such as security, on-going maintenance, hygiene, and a lack of communication between the management and the residents themselves, created tension and the residents were calling for decent accommodation at an affordable price.

I will start to analyse this building by mapping out the different systems affecting this building, their relative power and their relationships to each other.

- ### Power Map
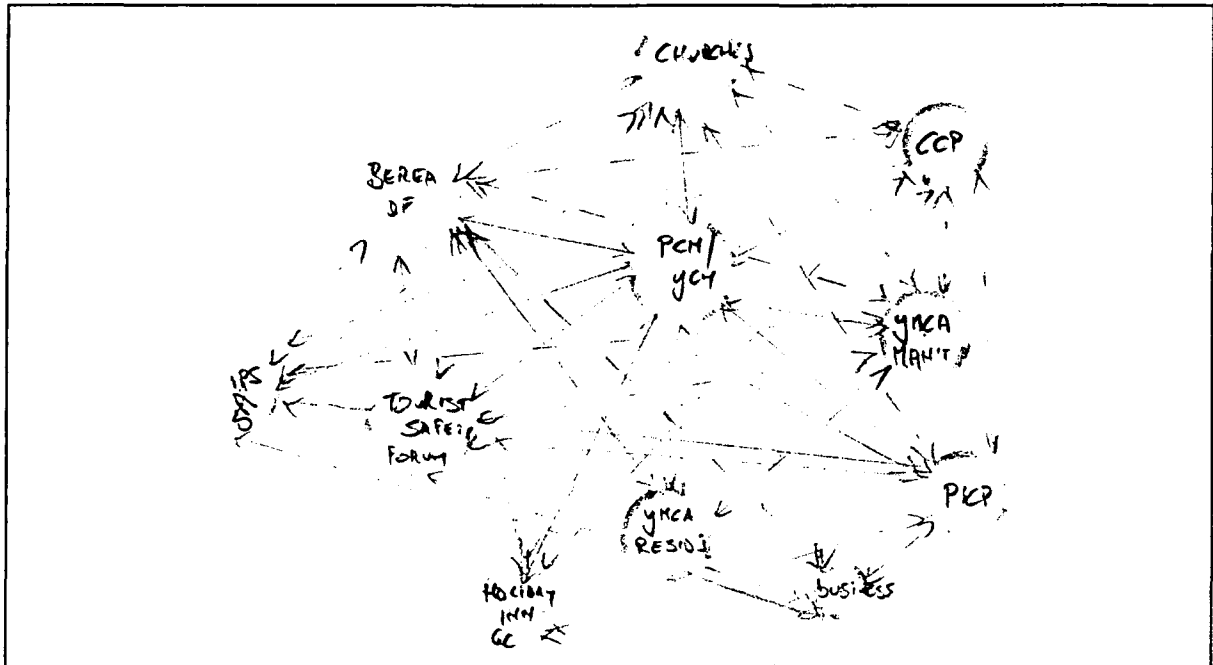


## Reflecting on the Power Map :

Different groups have played an important role in the past year in impacting upon the YMCA Hofmeyr House.

- Pretoria Community Ministries (Yeast City Housing) has been in dialogue with the YMCA for the past 5 years with regard to this facility. Yeast City Housing, PCM's housing company, would take on the role of managing agent in May 1998.

- The residents of the YMCA have organised themselves to put pressure on the existing YMCA management to improve conditions in the building. The residents would continue to play an important role in the on-going management and development of this facility.

- The YMCA itself in Pretoria is significant as they are the owners of the building and decisions on the future of the building lie with them. They are still uncertain as to whether they need to sell the property, or merely allow for PCM to manage it until it has recovered. The Pretoria YMCA is not completely autonomous, however, and was pressurised by the National YMCA not to sell this building, as it is strategically located in the centre of town.

- The Berea Development Forum has become important as a platform for the YMCA residents to voice their concerns and to be empowered for further action. The BDF has also written to the National YMCA, to express its concern.

- The churches of the city centre, as represented by the City Centre Churches Forum (CCCF), have also contributed to the pressure, writing to the National YMCA on the conditions and concerns with regard to the YCMA Hofmeyr House.

- The Tourist Safety Forum has added their voice to the pressure, and the SAPS and the Holiday Inn Garden Court, were two of the important stakeholders in this process.

- The City Council of Pretoria has met the YMCA halfway with regard to outstanding municipal expenses. Hopefully they would provide further incentives to Yeast City Housing, as YCH takes on the management of this facility. This could be in the form of municipal reductions, incentives with regards to bye-laws, and so forth.

- The Pretoria Inner City Partnership should be encouraged to be more involved in the renovation and recovery of facilities such as these.

- Formal business would be encouraged to engage in a partnership with Yeast City Housing and the Pretoria YMCA, in order to renovate and redevelop the YMCA Hofmeyr House.

These different role players should continue to engage with one another, as this could facilitate creative and transformative partnerships.

● **Neighbourhood Needs & Resources Maps**

| | |
|---|---|
| overcrowding | crime (insecure) |
| managerial neglect | noise |
| illegal refugees | lack of supervision |
| lack of a kitchen facility | |

**Neighbourhood (Building) Needs Map**

| |
|---|
| community organisations |
| church organisations |
| residential involvement |
| individual capacities & gifts |
| development opportunities |
| SAPS |
| Tourist Safety Forum |
| Libraries |
| Social Services |
| Higher Education Institutions |
| Amenities |
| City Council Pretoria Inner City Partnership GPMC |

**Neighbourhood (Building) Resources Map**

● **Community Analysis**

The YMCA Hofmeyr House is situated in Berea, and the same community map that was used for Berea will apply here.

The YMCA Hofmeyr House has changed in the past 4-5 years from accommodating only white people to being predominantly black. There are only two white disability pensioners residing here. The building is not segregated by definition, but circumstances have led to it becoming predominantly black.

As this building could not be seen as "a neighbourhood" we cannot really use the same classification system as suggested by people like Hallman, Gold, et al. Yet, looking narrowly at the building only, there

is a sense in which this building represents an integral community, with strong interaction between its residents, increased linkages with the surrounding community, and a growing sense of identity. With management which is intentional about strengthening the social integration of the building, this facility could become a sign of hope and a model for low-income housing in the inner city.

It is interesting that this building demonstrates a closely-knit community, more than surrounding sectional title or middle-class facilities.

*Reflecting on the surroundings and on the neighbourhood needs and resources maps, the following can be said of this building :*

- Yeast City Housing, the housing company of Pretoria Community Ministries, will establish its office at Hofmeyr House, thereby communicating the importance of this kind of housing in the city and focussing on the transformation of Hofmeyr House.

- Right opposite the park and within walking distance from shops, libraries, bus routes, offices, and churches, this is a prime venue for accommodation.

- In close proximity of access routes to higher education institutions, this is an important facility.

- Surrounded by sectional title facilities and a few metres away from the Holiday Inn Garden Court, this building is an integral part of Berea's mixed-income residential make-up, which is ideal and can work well.

- This building is located on the main tourist route, which runs along Van Der Walt Street, and borders on the Museum Park development, and as such it is very strategically located.

- The good relationships that have been established between the Holiday Inn Garden Court, Pretoria Community Ministries and the Forum in Berea, will contribute collectively to the successful transformation of this building.

- The residents themselves have gifts to offer and could go a long way to assist the new management in transforming this facility.

Since the description of the YMCA Hofmeyr House in chapter 3, there has been significant developments. The Pretoria YMCA first made an offer to Pretoria Community Ministries to sell the building at a very reasonable price. The National YMCA, not keen on losing this property, intervened. Pretoria Community Ministries was then asked to take over the management of this building, however (on 1 May 1998).

Towards the end of 1997 a concerted effort to put pressure on the previous management to address problem areas in the building, seemed to have been effective. The churches, the Tourist Safety Forum (including the SAPS and the Holiday Inn Garden Court), as well as the Berea Development Forum, all raised their concerns with the National YMCA. On-going pressure eventually gave way to a process of negotiations for either the purchase or the management of the building by Yeast City Housing, a church-based social housing company in the inner city.

The most pressing issue at present is to ensure proper management which will convert this building into a decent, affordable residential facility in the inner city. At present it is still affordable without always being decent. The building's capacity is to accommodate 60 people, but presently almost 200 people live in the facility. Only about

70% of the rentals are paid monthly and illegal immigrants also reside here. This building requires more than just physical management and maintenance, but its management style needs to incorporate social and human development processes.

The Pretoria YMCA has indicated that they only have two options left. One option would be to sell the property and the other option would be to contract the management of the facility out to a social housing company. At present they have opted for the second option, not to lose the property altogether, but to seek a way of recovering its dignity in the area.

As was indicated in a few paragraphs above, the views on this property are varied. The Pretoria YMCA would like to sell it, but the National YMCA would like to retain ownership. The first priority for the church-based company, Yeast City Housing, would be to ensure that this building is safeguarded for decent, affordable housing in the inner city. Although it would be easier if they (YCH) were to own the property, they have decided to enter into a management agreement with the YMCA, which means that Yeast City Housing will serve as managing agent on behalf of the owner, which is the YMCA Pretoria.

For the residents the first priority is a secure facility (without crime & invasion of people's privacy), and the next priority is the on-going maintenance of the facility in order to ensure decent and dignified living space.

The building itself, the courtyard, and the open space at the back of the building, provide wonderful opportunities for expansion and creative service to the community. A laundrette, a community kitchen, and tourist accommodation (for backpackers), could in time be developed to utilise the space and the property to its full potential.

Some of the key challenges in facilitating such a redevelopment process, would be to attract and secure financing, to be assisted by municipal regulations and not hindered, and to enter into creative partnerships with other community stakeholders.

### 6.3.2  The Foundation & The AJO                    (written : April 1998)

These two buildings were introduced in chapter 3 (1.3.2). Since the description in 1.3.2 nothing significantly changed to ensure that these two buildings will be maintained as decent inner city housing, and especially in the case of the AJO, conditions have deteriorated considerably.

The Berea Development Forum has already expressed its concerns over the AJO and would probably engage with the authorities at the Gauteng North Technikon to discuss conditions at the AJO and its effects on the surrounding environment. This has become a Technikon hostel, without providing all the necessary services and the infrastructure necessary to accommodate students properly.

Internal congregational changes have caused the Dutch Reformed Church Pretoria to transfer their management responsibilities for The Foundation to a suburban church. The ecumenical grouping in the inner city would probably enter into dialogue with the new management on the future of The Foundation, especially since this building could become much more significant still for the future of the church's ministry in the inner city of Pretoria. This building provides a substantial number of single room options to people in the city, that may not be lost for future residents of the city.

### 6.3.3 Rezoning

Rezoning has a major effect on single room housing in the inner city. This will be addressed again under *6.6 - Urban Renewal*.

### 6.4 Inner City Informal Settlements

### 6.4.1 Marabastad (written : April 1998)

There are many different issues in Marabastad as was indicated in chapter 3 and will also be shown in the Neighbourhood Needs Map here below. This study, however, would like to focus on how the poorest section of Marabastad's stakeholders, i.e. the squatters and homeless groups, could be integrated into the redevelopment plans and processes of Marabastad. Only if they are meaningfully and effectively integrated, after a comprehensive redevelopment process in Marabastad, would real transformation have occurred.

Obviously there are different options again :

- The squatter population could be removed to alternative land outside the inner city.

- Transitional housing facilities could be developed where the current squatter population can live until they have found long-term alternatives, jobs, and so forth.

- Formal housing could be developed which could include a large percentage of the current squatter population (in or around Marabastad or CBD).

- A more integrated process is advocated by Pretoria Community Ministries / Yeast City Housing. They suggest a combination of transitional housing, long-term care facilities (for the chronically ill, aged, etc.), formal low-cost housing developments, and relocation (for those who opt for that as an alternative). In close deliberations with the community such an integrated plan must be explored, developed and implemented.

● **Power Map**
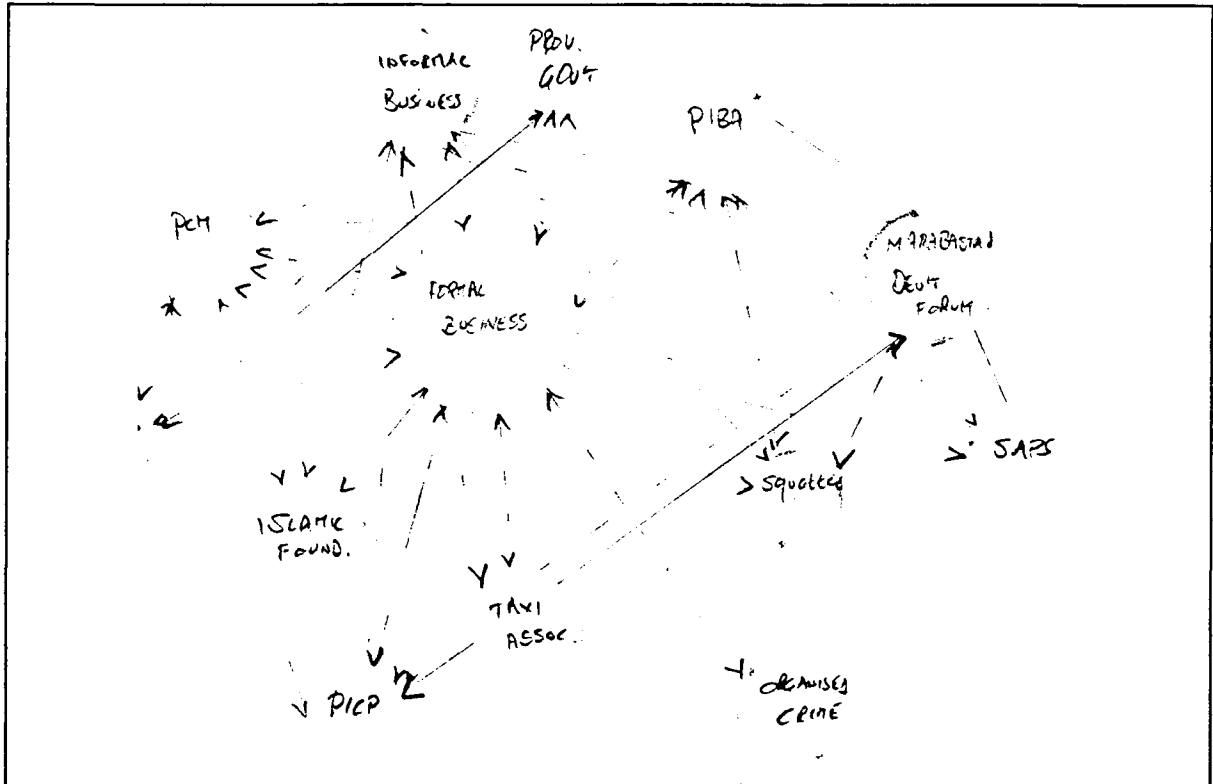


## Reflecting on the Power Map :

- The Commission for Land Claims is very significant since its activities determine to a great extent when the redevelopment of Marabastad could be initiated. Its activities would also indicate the nature of development that could be undertaken and on which land.

- Formal business is a significant group in Marabastad, driven by profit, and the primary beneficiaries in the compensation process for land claims. They have a rather "schizophrenic" relationship with the squatters. Baktawar, one of the Indian business people in Marabastad, verbalised it in an interview when he said that he doesn't mind land to be given to the squatters if it is properly serviced. As long as it is not land belonging to the Indians (Faling 1997 : 98). Van der Zel is of the opinion that the business community creates false impressions about crime in the area, to persuade the officials of the Council to remove the squatters and the informal traders (Faling 1997 : 98).

- The Marabastad Development Forum, although struggling to maintain its momentum and to reach consensus, has been an important role player in the past 3 years and could provide the necessary platform for integrated development processes to happen.

- The squatter population lives on the margins of Marabastad and different groups have different perspectives on how this group should be dealt with in the redevelopment process (as was indicated above). Presently the squatters are not united, but different factions work against each other which has the potential to do the case of the squatters and the homeless people in this area a lot of harm (cf. Faling 1997 : 96-97). The lack of co-operation results from political differences, personality clashes, and so on.

- The informal traders form a very significant group, previously represented by the Pretoria Informal Business Association (PIBA). Over the past months tension has arisen between PIBA and many informal traders (many from foreign countries), which further complicates matters in Marabastad (cf. also Faling 1997 : 87-88).

A whole range of other role players have an impact on Marabastad :

- The SAPS has contributed greatly to reduced crime rates, although certain business people dispute this strongly. Organised crime presents a great problem to shopkeepers in Marabastad and often the squatters are innocently implicated as co-workers with the crime syndicates.

- The taxi associations are active in Marabastad and they are also a forceful group that need to be considered in redevelopment processes. Taxi wars have become one of the many destabilising factors of this area (Faling 1997 : 68).

- Local government has long neglected their responsibility for Marabastad and would hopefully come to the party in the near future (cf. Faling 1997 : 89-93). Politicians manipulated the struggles of the poor in this area to win votes in the 1995 local government elections. City council officials have used inhumane methods to burn down shacks in the past (1996 - 1998). The possibility of this happening at the hand of city council officials is still denied (cf. Faling 1997 : 99).

  Through the Marabastad Development Forum and other initiatives and voices, this community has finally landed up firmly on the agenda of local government structures. Strengthened by a financial injection from the provincial government the Pretoria Inner City Partnership has initiated a participatory development process for the area in March of 1998. Whether this could be the turning point for the area, remains to be seen. The previous failures of similar processes to bring about clear strategies and transformative actions, might be a shadow on entering this new process.

- Organised religion can play an important role and has already played a role in preventing removals of squatters from this area. Pretoria Community Ministries, with the backing of the city centre churches, as well as the Islamic Dawah Movement, have challenged forced removals without viable alternatives and proper consultative processes.

The complicated nature of Marabastad increases the struggle for power and resources, and it is more difficult to establish clear partnerships around common goals, which will facilitate the distribution of power and resources in ways that are socially just. Informal traders and squatters, even when organised, lack the power to prevent large-scale removals. Other institutions need to enter into relationships of solidarity with these marginal groupings to ensure just distribution of resources, and inclusive redevelopment plans.

- **Community Analysis**

*The community map for Marabastad is on the next page.*

**Reflecting on the Community Map**

The classifications provided by Hallman and Gold (cf. ch.4,6) are not very helpful when

it comes to Marabastad. As the residential component of this community is predominantly informal, the characteristics differ from the rest of Pretoria's inner city which resembles more of a Western-European character.

Perhaps the reflections of Shorter (1991 : 45-47) on the "self-help city" in the African context will provide more relevant indicators as to the nature of this community. He identifies some characteristics distinctive of squatter areas :

- it possesses an own sub-culture with own structures, norms and values

- it is characterised by insecurity, impermanence, and illegality

- social problems such as unemployment, substance abuse, prostitution, sexually transmitted diseases, violence, and so forth, are common

- these are self-help cities, which are self-reliant systems initiating migrants to the city in viable and economic ways

Shorter (1991 : 54) emphasises that informal settlements are more than physical places providing housing or services (or a lack thereof).

> When a squatter village is bulldozed or burnt to the ground, a whole way of life and a whole system of meanings and symbols is destroyed.

What follows is some specific reflections on the community map :

- The bulk of the land is currently in the hands of local, provincial or national government. Local government is in the process of transferring all the land into their name, in order for them to manage the land and its future developments.

- There are land claims on most of the land pictured on the map. Strictly speaking no developments can be approved currently if it is on land affected by the land claims. Yet, a new shopping centre was recently developed and a large portion of land given to the Zionist Church by provincial government.

- Informal residents have occupied large portions of open land, north of Blood Street, illegally. This is not even indicated on the map in all details, since most of the open spaces are now occupied by "squatters".

- As far as we can establish, the land south of Struben Street, between Cowie Street and DF Malan Drive, does not have land claims affecting it. There is a creative project proposal for this land, suggesting a mixed-income, mixed-use development, that will combine residential, commercial and light industrial uses into one innovative inner city development project.

- Current indications by the project consultants for the re-development of Marabastad, are that a mixed-income, mixed-used community is envisaged. In other words, a new development might include significant housing development alongside commercial and other developments. Mr. Aziz Tayob, one of the consultants, seems to think that the current problem of informal residents could be overcome through the formal housing development.

- The Good Shepherd parish of the Anglican Church was located in Marabastad, before forced removals took place. The Anglican Diocese is also a land claimant, and their land holds great possibilities for inner city ministry purposes.

Different people have different views on the future of the area.

Lilian Shongwane was born in Marabastad. Her family was forcibly removed but she returned to Marabastad to live in the backyard of an Indian business. She still believes that formal housing is an alternative to the squatter problem and that the homeless of Marabastad should be integrated in redevelopment plans for the area. She suggests that formal housing should be developed which can also be accessible to the poorest of the poor in Marabastad. After redevelopment no new squatters should be allowed to settle here (interview on Tuesday 17 March 1998).

Although this is the dream that lives within Lilian, she is sceptical about the future of this area. She has given up on the participatory processes which lead to nothing (Faling 1997 : 73). She is also of the opinion that final evictions from Marabastad will happen as soon as the land claims process has been finalised (Faling 1997 : 62).

Dirk van der Zel, a community worker of Pretoria Community Ministries, views Marabastad as a natural transitional facility for the migrant poor who come to the city (cf. Faling 1997 : 83). In the absence of proper transitional facilities, this is a self-help transitional area where the poor gets a foothold in the city.

Johnny Coetzee (cf. unstructured interview with Mr. Coetzee on 20 March 1998), manager of the Pretoria Inner City Partnership, is quite optimistic about Marabastad. He compares the squatter situation of Marabastad to Hout Bay in the Cape, where 50 000 people live in an informal settlement. This leads him to suggest that Marabastad, comparatively, is not really such a huge problem. He is of the opinion that the necessary funds and good management could facilitate the integration of the current informal residents into inner city society. Alternatively, he envisages housing development elsewhere if viable and acceptable to the informal residents. The way in which the problem is downplayed might either be positive, indicating optimism and the will to resolve the issue of squatters in an integrated, creative and humane way; or it could be a sign that the real nature of the problem is not adequately understood.

The participatory process in Marabastad will determine the future of the squatter and homeless population. If the squatter population can be established as an integral part of Marabastad, and if viable strategies could be suggested for housing them as part of an integrated redevelopment plan, they might survive into the future. It would take extensive lobbying, advocacy and organising, as well as overcoming internal divisions amongst the squatters, to ensure their inclusion in future development plans.

In other words : from the perspective of the homeless people and their future, the way in which they can organise with their partners for a socially just alternative to the current situation, might determine the outcome of this process for them.

An important question to be asked is : What will weigh most ?

> the attributed land value of Marabastad and its surroundings;
> the social stature of the problem and the social costs of removing people from here;
> future benefits for the city when the squatters are removed; or
> possible costs for the city if the squatters are included in the re-development plan.

Only time will tell. In the meantime I am convinced that the church is called to be in solidarity with those who cannot speak for themselves, to facilitate and support their organisation and to assist them in voicing their concerns in ways that will be audible

and convincing.

*Update : November 1998*

Between April and November 1998 much has happened in Marabastad. The Marabastad Development Forum has been reorganised, an office has been established in Marabastad for the Forum, and a strategic process for the future development of the area is well underway. The key stakeholders are all participating constructively in this process.

In terms of housing the homeless, there is not much clarity. A representative of local government has announced that government will develop housing in Marabastad in their own way and that they would not allow private initiative in this process. The role of a community-based housing agency such as Yeast City Housing is therefore not clear.

- **Neighbourhood Needs & Resources Maps**

| | |
|---|---|
| lack of formal housing | child abuse |
| land claim delays | official neglect |
| lack of property ownership (business) | lack of proper infra-structure |
| unemployment | health problems |
| uncontrolled influx of people | AIDS |
| homelessness (squatting) | pollution |
| child prostitution | chronically ill / aged |
| prostitution (male & female) | alcoholism |
| illiteracy | lack of child care facilities |
| taxi violence | lack of accessible health care |
| crime | lack of community facilities |

**NEIGHBOURHOOD NEEDS MAP**

| |
|---|
| Community Organisations |
| individuals with capacities & gifts |
| innovative entrepreneurial spirit |
| informal enterprises |
| formal business |
| latent capital |
| religious organisations |
| SAPS |
| vacant land & buildings |
| social services |
| libraries |
| amenities |
| training centres |
| city council Gauteng Dept of Development Planning Pretoria Inner City Partnership GPMC |

## 6.5    Homelessness                                              (written : May 1998)

Homeless people are still "invisible" or "hidden" people, although most people see them almost on a daily basis. Perhaps they are more of an "ignored" or "neglected" group. Although homelessness is formally on the agenda of the Pretoria Inner City Partnership, the homeless people need to become more consciously and intentionally integrated into inner city society.

There are many stereotypes about homeless people and blanket statements classify homeless people as if they were a homogeneous group. One homeless person verbalised it saying : "The police must see us in the right way. We are homeless people, not tsotsis !" (Support group at PCM Street Centre, 18 March 1998). The public responds to homeless people in negative and condescending ways, marginalising them even more. Another person verbalises his frustrations, saying that people underestimate him (family, friends, trainers, potential employers, etc.). All he needs is a chance to prove himself. For many homeless people such a chance seems to be almost permanently elusive.

The real issue of this study with regard to the issue of homelessness, is to ensure that homelessness is on the agenda of the city, and to include a strategy for homelessness as part of an over all inner city housing and development strategy. Inner city transformation will not be achieved, if homeless people are further marginalised, and excluded from inner city development processes.

As part and parcel of such a strategy public stereotypes about homelessness will have to be addressed in ways that will facilitate solidarity and pro-active involvement to address this challenging issue.

### 6.5.1  Differentiation of Homeless Categories

It would be completely wrong to generalise about homelessness, as if homeless people were a homogeneous group. Seltser and Miller (1993 : 7) refer to the words of Kathleen Hirsch saying that "there are no typical homeless people, only common suffering". In their book, *Paths to Homelessness*, Timmer, Eitzen and Talley (1994 : 13), also reject the notion that all homeless people suffer from chronic substance abuse or mental disability, and that these were the factors causing homelessness.

> This is a myth with damaging consequences.

Based on such a myth, we develop responses to homelessness which are often inappropriate and instead of liberating people to wholeness, we generate even greater dependencies.

Seltser and Miller (1993 : 9-12) makes a distinction between structural and individualistic theories that explain why people become homeless. While some people focus on wrong choices or irresponsible behaviour of individuals as the major reasons causing homelessness, others argue that the way in which society is structured causes homelessness.

Seltser and Miller (1993 : 11-12) call for a balanced approach, saying

> Although structural explanations check our dehumanizing inclination to blame individuals for becoming homeless, to deduce this problem simply to economic and cultural explanations is also dehumanizing because by doing so we fail to recognize the personal responsibility of individuals to choose and act. Stated differently, while social structural approaches avoid blaming the victim, they have the corresponding vice of denying the moral agency of the homeless person. Any approach to homelessness must hold these two perspectives in tension.

Although structural factors might often contribute to homelessness, Seltser and Miller (1993 : 13) want to stress that every person still continues to be responsible for his / her own life and future, notwithstanding the reasons for them being homeless.

On the other hand, Timmer, Eitzen and Talley (1994 :4-6), still stress that structural factors are the dominant contributors to homelessness. They refer to Elliot Liebow, saying that the only thing separating homeless people from other people, are money and social support. Homeless people cannot afford available housing and their family and friends can or will not help them (cf. Timmer, et al 1994 : 4). They continue to show that homeless people are made homeless, primarily "by socioeconomic trends and forces" (cf. Timmer, et al 1994 : 6).

Hartshorn (1992 : 245-247) identifies three broad categories of homeless people, namely the chronic, economic and situational homeless.

### 6.5.1.1 Chronic Homeless

The chronic homeless includes substance abusers and the mentally ill who often need long-term assistance and a supportive community. This is the most disoriented group of homeless people (cf. Hartshorn 1992 : 246). Substance abusers could hardly be helped unless they recognise their problem and make a conscious decision themselves to work on their problem. Some social scientists argue, however, that it is a myth to view their addiction as the primary cause of homelessness (cf. Seltser & Miller 1993 : 7-15; 112-115). Many middle-class and upper class people are also addicted, but their social class and economic situation prevent them from becoming homeless. This should challenge us to a fresh approach to the addicted homeless person, which should include access to affordable housing and jobs (structural), as well as affordable treatment facilities for rehabilitation (individual), and emotional care to help people overcome the problems that led to the addiction in the first place.

A program of deinstitutionalisation has been introduced in the United States and elsewhere to move mentally ill people from institutions and back into communities. This is currently being introduced in South Africa as well (cf. Mail & Guardian vol.14, no.20, May 22-28, 1998 : 11, 6-7). Ms.Margarie Viljoen, a social worker at the Weskoppies Hospital, says that more and more psychiatric patients end up on the streets after release from mental hospitals, because they have nowhere to go after being released, and they are categorised and stigmatised (Beeld, Monday 15 June 1998, p.8). She suggests that the private sector gets more involved in the establishment of additional

community group homes, and that businesses should be willing to employ people and even to create new job opportunities. A lack of affordable housing is another problem, since people on small disability pensions cannot afford market-related accommodation.

In the United States the number of homeless people has increased significantly as a result of the deinstitutionalisation programs (Dear & Wolch 1987 : 4). Most of these people have concentrated in inner city communities of transition. These communities became "home for society's marginal people" (Dear & Wolch 1987 : 14), offering cheap accommodation, services, and so forth. Deinstitutionalisation assumes community-based facilities (Dear & Wolch 1987 : 16); yet, communities and families are not always prepared to receive mentally ill people into their midst. Advocates of deinstitutionalisation considered this option tot be "more humane, more effective and less costly" (Dear & Wolch 1987 : 59). This remains an important goal, but without proper financial and institutional support to implement community-based programs, it is doomed to failure even before people are released from mental hospitals.

In many communities, prejudice and stereotypes keep people marginalised and force them to the streets (Dear & Wolch 1987 : 21). Dear and Wolch (1987 : 25) comment that inner city communities were generally more receptive than suburban communities, saying

> powerful (or suburban) jurisdictions have been very successful at excluding service-dependent groups and their facilities. Inner city neighbourhoods (more tolerant ? less powerful ?) have, in contrast, frequently ended up with more than their 'fair share' of facilities and service-dependent populations.

The problem is that inner city communities often lack the infrastructure and the financial resources to sustain this situation.

Many people believe that all homeless people are chronically homeless, and therefore investment in this area of need is seen as a waste of resources, rather to be used otherwise. Dear and Wolch (1987) emphasise in their work, *Landscapes of Despair*, that this is indeed a myth. Not all homeless people are chronic. Life on the streets itself, however, often perpetuates the original crisis of becoming homeless even further, to the extent that some people develop a sense of hopelessness and despair from which they cannot easily escape.

> ...the experience of homelessness itself perpetuates homelessness.

(Dear & Wolch 1987 : 201)

### 6.5.1.2    Economic Homeless

As was indicated by Timmer, Eitzen and Talley (1994 : 6), socio-economic factors contribute significantly to the homeless landscape. The economic homeless is probably the largest group of homeless people in the inner city of Pretoria, simply lacking the skills and access to employment, and therefore to decent housing. This group also increasingly includes families with children.

The lack of housing and economic opportunities and the costs of services and products are structural factors contributing to homelessness. In the American situation, 18 000 units of low-cost housing have been lost in Chicago between 1973 and 1987. In New York City 31 000 units have been lost between 1975 and 1981, as affordable housing has been replaced by luxury apartments. This has led to increasing numbers of low-income people becoming homeless, because of a lack of access to affordable housing.

Gentrification, urban renewal and slum landlords contributed to this problem, and renewal plans usually neglected the replacement of low-cost housing with new developments (cf. Timmer, et al 1994 : 21-24). Similar developments in Pretoria's inner city led to the decrease of the already very limited low-cost housing options in the inner city. Presently there are no new developments to facilitate the increasing demand. The pressure on single room facilities and affordable housing in the inner city are just too much, and this is a potential time bomb if not addressed urgently through additional housing developments.

As competitive as the low-cost housing market, is the low-wage employment market. People cannot find jobs and therefore do not have money for housing. Alternatively, people work for such low wages that they cannot compete for the limited housing options that are available.

Another problem is the high costs of services and products in the inner city. Child care, supermarkets and other services, are often much more expensive in the inner city, also due to the flight of large supermarkets to suburban areas. In New York City it was found that poor neighbourhoods pay 8,8% more for groceries than middle-class suburbs (Timmer, et al 1994 : 95). All these economic factors work together systematically to marginalise the urban poor to the point of being completely deprived of opportunity and access.

### 6.5.1.3     Situational homeless

These individuals or families are homeless because of a specific situation at a given time, or a multiplicity of problems together that led to homelessness. Sexual or physical abuse, domestic violence, release from prison or rehabilitation centres without an address, social disorganisation, and so forth, might lead to homelessness (cf. Hartshorne, et al 19   : 246).

All these groups are also present amongst the homeless people in Pretoria's inner city.

An increasing problem in the cities of South Africa is the number of refugees from all over Africa that turn to our cities for refuge. In Pretoria's inner city people from Rwanda, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and elsewhere, find themselves homeless as they seek for political asylum. A growing number of Pakistani are also found, some of them working in the informal sector in Marabastad. Some refugees are political or religious refugees, but many people run from a lack of economic opportunity to seek

opportunities in South Africa.

### 6.5.1.4 "Near homeless"

The authors of *Paths to Homelessness* (Timmer, et al 1994 : 12, 69-70), indicate that the actual numbers of homeless people are underplayed

> ...because so many of the urban poor are on the brink of homelessness and many who lack housing are hidden by doubling or tripling up with relatives of friends.

They suggested, referring to a figure presented by Jonathan Kozol, that there were as many as 3 million hidden homeless people in the United States, and 300 000 in New York City alone (cf. Timmer, et al 1994 : 12).

Dear and Wolch (1987 : 199) relate to the same phenomenon and this could be equally applicable to the South African scenario :

> ...the inner city landscape is one in which a rapidly increasing demand for assistance is met by a diminished capacity to supply both shelter and services. The population at risk in this system must be regarded as 'potentially homeless'. The subsequent experience of a single adverse event is sufficient to tip the marginalised population into homelessness.

People doubling up in slum (or overcrowded) housing, people in mental hospitals on the verge of being released, and single mothers with dependents who are at risk of losing their child allowances or disability pensions (according to inputs at a workshop on homelessness in Pretoria's inner city : 25 May 1998), are all the "near homeless" : at risk of becoming homeless if any additional "adverse event" occurs, as suggested by Dear and Wolch (1987 : 199).

### ● POWER MAP (BY HOMELESS PEOPLE)

I have drawn this map, using the power maps drawn by homeless people in a support group at the PCM Street Centre on 18 March 1998. I have combined their different inputs into one map.
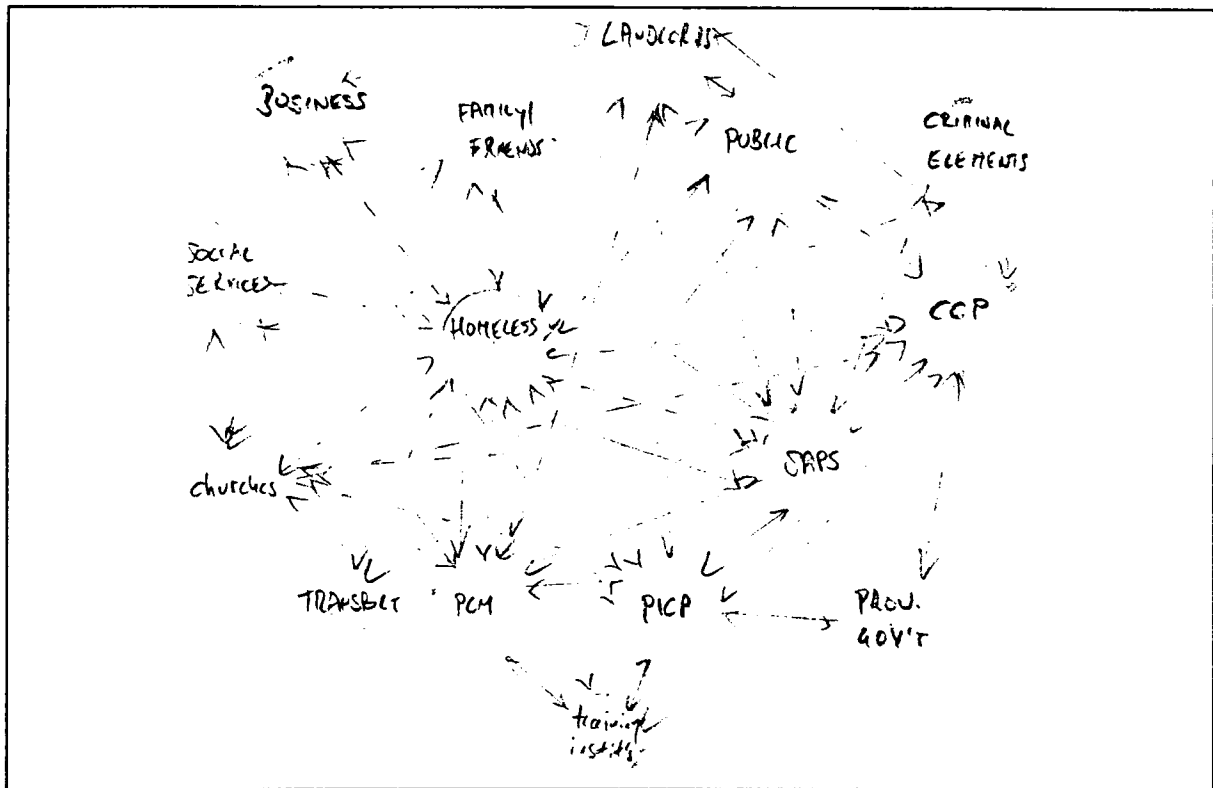
## Reflecting on the Power Map :

Various groups affect homeless people in different ways.

- Social service agencies are ineffective and often create unhealthy dependencies

- Churches are not always supportive and do not provide practical assistance

- Formal business has the potential to impact positively on the homeless situation, and an example is the employment of 7 homeless women by the Holiday Inn Garden Court in March 1998. Partnerships with local businesses need to be developed more

- Family and friends often don't understand the problem of homeless people, and their rejection further contribute to people's struggle on the streets

- Landlords of inner city buildings use all kinds of methods to remove people from their pavements

- The general public has stereotyped homeless people and marginalised them even more, without ever speaking or listening to them

- Criminal elements harass and endanger the lives of homeless people

- The City Council of Pretoria has never taken responsibility for the problem of homelessness

- Elements within the South African Police Services often harass homeless people and use force with them, although the leadership of Pretoria Central SAPS is starting to play a more constructive role, and is even participating in a strategic process to alleviate homelessness in

the inner city of Pretoria.

- Provincial government can play a more pro-active role in addressing homelessness and in the funding of projects

- Inner city training institutions have the resources to impact on the problems of homeless people through training in job-related skills (e.g. Pretoria College)

- Transport is cited as a major problem for homeless people as they often lack basic finances to get from one place to another, to arrive in time for job interviews, and so on

- Pretoria Community Ministries can play a more significant role in addressing homelessness. Although it offers a Street Centre and practical assistance, as well as transitional housing for women, and low-cost housing facilities, it needs to be more aggressive in establishing a transitional facility for men, affordable housing units, and job creation programmes

- **Community Analysis**

*The community analysis is on the next page.*

**Reflecting on the Community Analysis**

This analysis will give a rough idea of where homeless people congregate, especially at night. In some places, such as Marabastad, the same people are to be found around the clock.

*The Number of Homeless People in Pretoria's Inner City*
This is difficult to assess. A research process is underway in which different stakeholders, including the homeless people themselves, are participating, to analyse the extent and nature of the problem in Pretoria's inner city and to develop an implementable strategy to address homelessness. The Pretoria Inner City Partnership has appointed the Pretoria Homeless Consortium to steer this research process and the Partnership is awaiting a research report by the end of June 1998.

*Marabastad* is by far the greatest concentration point of homeless people in the inner city. In Marabastad an estimate of 250 families was documented in 1996 (see p.102). In the homeless research project, homeless leaders of the area estimated that there were between 650 and 1 000 people living there. My own estimate would be closer to 1 500 people, as there are between 400 and 500 informal structures and in many of these there are two or three people living. Besides, there are other people living on pavements and in backyards.

There are currently about 170-200 people living in inner city shelters or transitional housing (hosted by Pretoria Community Ministries, Love of Jesus Ministries & Repairer of the Bridge Ministries).

On the night of 17 March 1998 I went with two street outreach workers and counted people in the following areas (excluding Sunnyside) :

| AREA | NUMBERS | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|---|
| Pretoria Station | 120 | -Christina Street opposite the Station<br>-northern pavement of Scheiding Street opposite the Station<br>-at bus station next to Pretoria Station (southwest) |
| Fountains Valley | 40 | -next to Greentrees Restaurant (between Restaurant and Fountains) |
| Burgerspark | 30 | - |
| HSRC | 40 | -opposite the Pretoria Central Police Station, on the pavement of the HSRC building |
| Struben Street | 20 | -between Potgieter & Schubart Streets |
| Strydom Square | 15 | - |
| Princess Park | 20 | -between Schoeman & Skinner Streets |
| Salvokop | 60 | -in backyards & open erven |

A conservative estimate of homeless people living on the streets or in transitional housing facilities in the geographical areas of focus, can therefore be in the region of 1 500 - 2 000 people (including Marabastad, the areas identified above and the sheltered accommodation). I suspect that there are closer to 2 000 people, however, based on the uncertainty of the Marabastad figure.

There are many more people who are actually without a permanent shelter of their own, but they are living temporarily with relatives or friends in inner city housing. It has not been possible, due to a lack of time and resources, to determine an exact figure for this group, or even an estimate. And the "near homeless" living in housing all over town, or people released from institutions, increase the housing challenge for inner city role players even more.

*Views on homelessness*

The *Pretoria Inner City Partnership* has included homelessness in 1997 as one of their five areas of focus. The budget of the Pretoria Inner City Partnership (PICP) is also reflecting a growing concern about and commitment to homeless issues. They have agreed to a research project to investigate homelessness in the inner city and to recommend strategies to address the problem.

The *City Council of Pretoria*, however, after agreeing to contribute a small budget amount of R 48 000 for homeless programmes of the PICP in the 1997-1998 financial period, has gone back on their word and decided not to release these funds anymore without any apparent reason. This will obviously affect

the allocation to the 1998-1999 budget of the PICP as well. Furthermore, the promise of making land or facilities available for a non-racial inner city shelter for men, made by the mayor of the Pretoria City Council at a public protest meeting on 9 September 1997, has not been honoured either. Since that time no progress has been made in establishing such a facility.

*Pretoria Community Ministries*, the agency established by inner city churches, argues that homeless people should be integrated into inner city society through programs that will go beyond charity. Homelessness should be central on the agenda of the city, as the empowerment of the most vulnerable groups in the city are the real determining factor for how successful urban renewal or development is. Yeast City Housing, the social housing company of the churches, is an example of an approach to homelessness that integrates marginal people to the point of becoming inner city citizens who make an equal contribution to inner city society and the economy.

*Mduduzi Mthembu* used to be homeless himself. He got involved with the "Homeless Talk" newspaper in Pretoria and initiated the *"Homeless Association"*. Now on staff with a church-based community development group in Pretoria's inner city, Mduduzi is very clear about his vision on homeless issues (unstructured interview on 7 July 1998). He is concerned about the lack of interest from government as well as the media, who is reporting on everything but on the plight of homeless people. He believes land and adequate shelter is the first priority in reintegrating homeless people back into society. Employers are hesitant to employ people directly from the streets. "You can't give your everything when you live on the streets", Mduduzi asserts. A shelter would provide people with basic dignity, on the basis of which they could enter into employment and get back on their feet. He is also saying that employment is a very serious problem, but insists that the first priority is dignified shelter. Mduduzi feels strongly that the government cannot expect people to be relocated to land, if the affected people are not in agreement that the allocated land is indeed viable for their long-term-needs.

Elizabeth Delport is a street outreach worker and counsellor with homeless people. She echoes the concerns of Mduduzi (unstructured interview on 7 July 1998). She expresses concern over the abuse at shelters, the lack of proper management, corruption, untrained staff, and so on. She is not arguing for any kind of transitional housing, but emphasises the need for well-managed and well-structured transitional facilities. She is currently preparing an inventory of empty buildings in the inner city, saying that hundreds of people are homeless whilst buildings stand empty by the dozens.

*Update :     November 1998*

The Pretoria Homeless Consortium has facilitated an extensive participatory research process, including homeless people, service providers and other stakeholders, which culminated in a research report, concrete proposals for intervention and a business plan for certain key projects to be implemented. An amount of R 1 million has been approved for homeless projects by the Executive Committee of the Pretoria City Council, which is a major breakthrough when compared to the previous financial year.

Attached is an executive summary of the research document submitted by the Pretoria Homeless Consortium, as well as proposed strategies and projects (Addendum 2). Some of the key projects that have been identified were core homeless support centres, a transitional facility for homeless people, a low-cost housing strategy, ablution blocks and storage space, and the mechanisms to ensure that intervention programmes are managed in a professional and efficient manner (cf. PHC 1998 : iv).

- ## Neighbourhood Needs & Resources Map

| | |
|---|---|
| lack of shelter | ineffective welfare system |
| lack of opportunity | unemployment |
| negligence of community to be supportive | illiteracy |
| wrong perceptions of public | police abuse |
| society is structured in an unjust way | lack of motivation |
| small pension | lack of self-determination |
| lack of government support | negative family relationships |
| lack of private sector involvement | underestimation of people |
| lack of security on the streets | life partners unsupportive / not understanding |
| public's harassment | transport problems to job interviews |
| churches not supportive | alcoholism |
| intimidation by criminal elements | |

**Neighbourhood Needs Map**

| |
|---|
| churches |
| businesses in the community |
| individual capacities & gifts |
| training opportunities |
| support groups |
| homeless newspaper |
| vacant land & buildings |
| social services |
| libraries |
| SAPS |
| higher educatrion institutions |
| Pretoria Inner City Partnership local & provincial gov't |

**Neighbourhood Resources Map**

## 6.6    Urban Renewal                                          (written : May 1998)

It has already been indicated that urban renewal often leads to a decrease in available low-income housing units in the inner city. This has also become a reality in the inner city of Pretoria.

### 6.6.1  Loss of Housing

Oeverzicht, both the Skinner Street and Edward Street extensions, the Berea City development, and the proposed Lake Project, have all led to the loss of affordable housing units, and these developments were done without proper consultation and participation of local residential communities whatsoever. This has been briefly introduced in Chapter 3 (paragraph 1.6). Architect, Schalk le Roux (1990, 1991) reported on older inner city buildings for the City Council of Pretoria. It seems as if his reports were filed without due consideration. Le Roux (1991 : 107) commented on the Coliseum, a block of flats that has been rezoned and is now converted into an upmarket

hotel, saying :

> It is also, as a large residential complex, important within the future planning of Pretoria as a human-centred city; and it is situated at the axis of the lively Sunnyside and the - hopefully in future - similarly lively inner city (*loosely translated from Afrikaans*)

Instead of an emerging human-centred inner city with diversified housing options, planning is often focussing on upmarket developments and suburban comfort at the expense of inner city dwellers. New hotels aiming at business guests and tourists, road extensions, and commercial developments that neglect to consult with the local community, are the order of the day.

Between 950 and 1000 affordable housing units were lost between 1990 and 1998. The bulk of these units were lost in the past two to three years. Although this does not seem to be of major significance, the replacement of 1000 housing units in the inner city is. And nothing has been done up to date to replace either these housing units, or the care centre and the creche, that were all in the way of developments. These essential human and social services were taken from the inner city communities without any compensation to them, and with benefits predominantly to the privileged who use their own private transport.

Furthermore, no alternative policies have been implemented yet, to prevent the further elimination of affordable housing units.

A few examples of residential facilities that were either demolished or rezoned for alternatives uses, include :

| PROPERTY | ADDRESS |
|---|---|
| Sher Court | Skinner St (c.o. Andries) |
| Care Centre for the Aged | 238 Skinner St |
| Garforth House | Prinsloo St (c.o. Skinner) |
| Skinner Flats | 352 Skinner St |
| Constantia Court | Skinner St (c.o. Van der Bijl) |
| residential houses | 230 Skinner St (creche); 282 & 284 Skinner St; 332 Skinner St; 326, 346 & 358 Skinner St; 379 Skinner St |
| Palmira Mansions | Edward St |
| Shops & Block of Flats | Jacob Mare St (c.o.Van Boeschoten) |
| Lievaardtgebou | 388 Du Toit St (corner of Visagie & Esselen) |
| residential houses | 625, 629, 632, 636, 640 Van der Walt St<br>18, 22, 26, 28, 34, 36, 40 Rhodes St<br>309, 311, 315, 321, 323, 325, 327, 329 Scheiding St |
| residential houses | 65 & 69 Meintje St 460 & 462 Skinner St (east) |
| residential houses (rezoned) | Gerhard Moerdyk St & Van Boeschoten Ave (25 houses) |
| Colliseum (rezoned) | Schoeman St (c.o. Du Toit) |
| AJO (rezoned) | Visagie St |
| Frozeno Residence (rezoned) | Jacob Mare St (c.o. Andries St) |

Against the background of an increased influx into the inner city and increasing pressure on low-income facilities, the rezoning or demolition of previously low-income buildings without either consultation with the local community, or consideration of the inner city's macro-context, cannot be maintained any longer.

- As was indicated in paragraph 5.2, the central area of Pretoria (excluding Mamelodi-Atteridgeville) required 9 112 additional housing units in 1996, just to accommodate the need in terms of backlogs in Pretoria at that stage. This figure did not take into account the awesome expected growth rate of Pretoria's population. Obviously all 9 112 units cannot be erected in the inner city areas, but in and around the inner city - especially towards the western area of the inner city - there is scope for creative housing development to bring down the backlog and to create access to decent, affordable housing opportunities.

- This very obvious housing need coupled with increased levels of urbanisation, a growing demand for inner city housing, and the increased numbers of people

entering inner city areas living with families, friends or on pavements, are all reasons to consider a proper inner city housing strategy very urgently.

- The objectives of the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council as well as the Pretoria Inner City Partnership, both indicate the strategic importance of inner city densification.

- Developments on prime property (or available land), often where housing was demolished, should be used in more creative, innovative and responsible ways, than what is the current trend. On prime property on the corner of Skinner and Prinsloo Streets, where housing was demolished, a single-storey commercial development was built. A similar development was the Berea City complex between Andries and Van der Walt Streets, or the commercial development on Potgieter Street, between Proes and Struben Streets. All three developments remind of American suburban shopping centres, now erected in the inner city of Pretoria. All these developments could have facilitated very creative 2-3 storied mixed-use facilities, combining commercial usage, with light industrial and residential use (there are probably enough empty office space). The first floor could be used commercially, whilst the second and third floors could be a combination of light industrial and residential (on the top floor).

On the southwestern corner of Schoeman and Prinsloo Streets, the larger part of Impala Court stands empty now for the last 2-3 years. The owners are waiting on tenants that will pay a market-related rent, and whilst waiting they lost rental income for the past 36 months. This is a good example of a facility that could have been used creatively for alternative uses, accommodating lower-rental tenants, such as upcoming businesses, or converting it for residential use. Although the owner's monthly income would be lower than what is required currently, at least there will be a considerable income monthly, and a specific need in the market would have been catered for.

- It is my view that local government interventions are necessary and essential to ensure affordable and decent inner city housing. Such interventions could take different forms:

  * It could prevent the already limited housing stock (especially in the low-income market) from being altered to another use, through zoning restrictions. Zoning that would allow businesses to operate which are destructive and insensitive for the community-at-large, needs to be challenged. Community Policing Forums, Community Development Forums, and other community-based forums that have the concerns of the community at heart, should be recognised in applications for rezoning.

  * On the other hand, affirmative interventions from local government is required, to facilitate new housing developments through the conversion of vacant office blocks, and in the creation of small, micro and medium enterprises that will be conducive for local economic development. Unnecessary red-tape needs to be removed, in order for transformative community initiatives to be implemented (provided that it would not be detrimental to the community in other ways, but part of an integrated strategy for the area).

*Update : November 1998*

Since my suggestion was made in April 1998, Impala Court on the corner of Schoeman and Prinsloo Streets *has* been converted into bachelor flats (now to be known as *Prinsman Place*). This is the first conversion of its kind in the inner city of Pretoria and an important indicator and affirmation of a possible way ahead. The challenge will now be to manage the converted facility - Prinsman Place- as a decent, affordable housing facility that will stimulate more similar developments.

### 6.6.2 Town Planning : From a Suburban Agenda to an Integrated, Community-Based Praxis

In chapter 3 (par. 1.6) it has been indicated how town planning praxis has been dominated in the past by a suburban agenda. That has not changed dramatically in the inner city of Pretoria, and town planners still rely mostly on the insights of suburban consultants and "experts" to lead the way in terms of inner city developments. It remains a struggle for local communities to engage with local government in ways that are constructive, seriously participatory, and addressing the real concerns of the local constituency.

Unless this suburban agenda is exchanged for an inclusive agenda that will be serious about integrating local inputs, concerns, initiatives and capacities, the planning of inner city areas will still result in renewal at the expense of people, instead of true transformation with the people. Town planners need to view inner city communities through the eyes of inner city people and forums, developing a community-based praxis where participatory planning with the local community is central in the process.

Towers (1995 : 205) speaks of the so-called "third way" in community architecture, as a response to the failure of both Marxism and the market to transform inner city areas. This approach focussed on community action, involving communities that are small enough to be self-identified and democratically managed (Towers 1995 : 205). The basis of a community-based approach is the assumption that local communities must have a say in the decisions that affect them. The principles of co-operation, open debate and participatory democracy became the cornerstone of the community architecture movement (Towers 1995 : 242). I would argue that these same elements should be vital in planning that will transform inner cities. Towers (1995) suggests that a community-based approach to planning, housing and architecture is fundamentally about building an inclusive democracy, as close to the ground as possible, where local inner city people will have access to decision-making processes.

Unfortunately, many so-called participatory processes still largely exclude the "real" inner city dwellers, and suburbanites still dominate the agenda and the outcomes of planning. Business people with money power dictate urban renewal processes, at the expense of the inner city residential sector who might have large issues of a different

nature, often completely neglected. *A truly integrated, community-based approach, from the perspective of this study, will affirm the most vulnerable groups of inner city society as yardstick to measure the success of development processes.*

Inner city renewal that lead to a loss of housing and employment, and do not address increased levels of homelessness and inner city decay, have not done anything at all.

*Town planners should be assisted in the process of making an epistemological shift, towards a human-centred, contextual, and holistic approach, that will view the city from the bottom-up.*

## 7.    The Church in Pretoria's Inner City : Responding to Poverty and Change in Its Communities

**(written : May 1998)**

In the next chapter I will reflect more globally on the church in response to the inner city. In this section I would merely analyse the situation of the church in Pretoria's inner city.

I use the term *analysis* in this study to define the third phase of my theological method. I do not use the term in a positivistic sense or to refer to exact facts and figures (necessarily). In the context of this study it refers to a more specific description than the initial description of insertion, exploring the questions that emerged from the initial description of insertion more fundamentally. Especially in my analysis of the inner city churches, I offer a rather subjective analysis which is reflecting my own contextual theological assumptions.

The church analysis presented here is limited to the geographical area that was used for the rest of the analysis in the previous paragraphs. It is the geographical area north of the Fountains and the Railway Station (including Salvokop), south of the Pretoria Zoo (including Marabastad), east of DF Malan Road, and west of the Apies River (Du Toit Street).

### 7.1    The Changing Scenario

In 1993 there were 11 churches in this area, mainly from the more traditional institutional churches, with the exception of one start-up church in the Schubartpark complex.

Today, in 1998 there are 23 active churches in this area, representing a wide variety of church traditions. Of the 23, only 11 are denominational churches, i.e. member churches of a larger denomination. The central cells of Hatfield Christian Church are described here as a church on its own, and the Immanuel Christian Church is affiliated with the Grace Bible Churches that originated in Soweto. The rest of the churches are either loosely affiliated to another group, or not affiliated at all.

The greater diversity of 1998 allows for people to opt for the church where they feel at home, where their needs are met, and where they could make a contribution. Churches differ in style, tradition, focus and spirituality, and different people tend to be drawn to different churches. In that sense diversity is positive then.

Ray Bakke (1987 : 110), in his book *The Urban Christian*, says

> The church will usually need a variety of pastoral styles if it is to reach all the varied elements in its neighbourhood. A practical assumption is that people join churches where some of their needs are met.

In this analysis I'd like to discern whether the current churches are indeed addressing the variety of pastoral needs of their neighbourhoods, and whether their response to the inner city is contributing to the real and holistic transformation of communities.

## 7.2    Church Types

The following churches are currently active in the geographical area of focus (as of 1 May 1998) :

Calvary
Charity and Faith Mission
Christian Faith Ministries
Christelik Gereformeerde Kerk Pretoria Sentraal (Christian Reformed)   *
Gereformeerde Kerk Pretoria (Reformed Church)          *
Hatfield Christian Church (central cells)
Immanuel Christian Church
International Church of Pretoria (Francophone)
Love of Jesus Ministries
Liberty Fellowship
Melodi ya Tshwane Uniting Reformed Church
Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk Burgerspark (Dutch Reformed) *
Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk Pretoria (Dutch Reformed)        *
Nederduits Hervormde Kerk Pretoria      *
Repairer of the Bridge Ministries
Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Cathedral          *
Schubartpark Christelike Kerk   *
Seed of Redemption Ministries
St.Alban's Anglican Cathedral   *
St.Andrew's Presbyterian Church          *
St.Peter's Evangelical-Lutheran Church *
Tower of Grace
Wesley Methodist Church        *

*       *churches already intentionally active in our defined geographical area in 1993*

These churches differ in history, tradition, spirituality, and focus. To analyse them briefly, I will refer to the typologies developed by Bakke (1987), Dudley and Johnson (1993), and Roozen, McKinney and Carroll (1984). I will also refer to the analysis of Linthicum (1991b), describing urban churches in terms of how they position themselves with regard to the city, adding my own category.

Ray Bakke identifies different types of urban churches.

- Cathedrals are highly visible and symbolic places.

  > Its theological starting point may be the lordship and transcendence of Christ over all his creation, including the business and politics of the city.

  > (Bakke 1987 : 130)

  St.Alban's and Sacred Heart are examples of cathedrals in the inner city of Pretoria.

- Immigrant churches are another type of church. Currently the International Church of Pretoria, representing 11 nationalities, are the only church focussing on immigrants, accommodating French-speaking people.

  Bakke also mentions the so-called international churches serving expatriate communities. The Francophone church mentioned above would also fall in this category, as its name even states.

- House churches become more common in urban situations and this model takes different forms.

Although Hatfield Christian Church is a large macro-church, it is organised in smaller cell groups, and in the inner city there are a number of cells connected to Hatfield.

- Multi-language churches, in Bakke's definition, feature several different language groups meeting separately in one building. This is the case in the old church on the corner of Bosman and Vermeulen Streets, where an Afrikaans congregation (DRC Pretoria) meets at 09h00, a multi-lingual service of the Uniting Reformed Church is at 10h00, and the French service of the International Church is at 11h30.

  Within the one service of the Uniting Reformed Church between 3 and 4 languages are used in the liturgy and music on any given Sunday.

  At the Presbyterian Church there are services in both English and Afrikaans.

- Parish churches "functions as chaplains to their neighbourhoods as well as to their congregation". Wesley Methodist Church is becoming more of a parish church, as is even indicated by the name change that they have undergone recently. They are now known as the Wesley Methodist Mission, with an emphasis on its outreach in and engagement with the surrounding neighbourhood.

- Superchurches are rare in the inner city, and although Hatfield Christian Church has a presence, it is in the form of various smaller cells. A church such as Charity and Faith Mission seems to have the ingredients, vision, leadership and structure to become a rather big church in the city.

- Task churches organise urban projects and attract activists who want to make a difference through their faith, also socio-politically.

- I might add a few other urban church types, such as the multi-congregational churches, urban base communities, storefront churches, ethnic churches, multi-cultural churches (intentional), intentional communities, and so forth.

Dudley and Johnson (1993, in Venter 1997 : 24-25) provides five dominant images as tool to analyse the identity of congregations.

- Survivor congregations are reactive as they merely survive from one crisis to another.

- Prophetic congregations are pro-active as they challenge injustices and are committed to ministry in the public arena.

- Servant congregations focus on meeting the needs of individuals through pastoral care.

- Pillar congregations are usually very visible and draw prominent people as members. They use their resources to strengthen their communities

- Pilgrim congregations nurture the faith and culture of a particular group, which they walk with and care for.

Roozen, McKinney and Carroll (1984) refer in their work to the "mission orientations" of congregations, i.e. the ways in which congregations respond to their contexts through their programmes (cf. also Venter 1997 : 33). Congregations respond to the context in either a this-worldly or an other-worldly way (Roozen, et al 1984; cf. also Venter 1997 : 33-34). The diagram on the next page will explain this more.

Roozen and his co-workers suggest four mission orientations :

- Activist congregations see the reign of God in this world, and they involve themselves with social issues, seeking for justice and transformation in public structures. Conflict and controversy are elements which are not foreign to these congregations (cf. Carroll, et al 1986 : 29; Venter 1997 : 33).

- Civic congregations respond to public issues. Existing civic structures must be shaped to work well. Therefore civic congregations are engaged not necessarily as congregation but via individual members in the socio-economic and political arenas (cf. Carroll, et al 1986 : 29-30; Venter 1997 : 33).

- Evangelistic congregations emphasise personal salvation, eternal life and church membership. The world hereafter is often the focus rather than the present world (cf. Carroll, et al 1986 : 30; Venter 1997 : 33).

- Sanctuary congregations are places of withdrawal or retreat. Often these congregations sharply distinguish between what is sacred and what is secular (cf. Carroll, et al 1986 : 30; Venter 1997 : 33).

Robert Linthicum (1991b : 21-26) speaks about urban churches and the way in which they position themselves in relation to the city. The style and programmes of churches speak about the way in which they are related to their environment. Linthicum distinguishes between churches ministering in the city, churches ministering to the city, and churches ministering with the city. I would like to add a fourth category for analysis, namely churches escaping from the city.

- Churches escaping from the city are churches that physically relocate to other communities, leaving broken urban communities behind; churches who close their doors not to open again elsewhere; churches who psychologically escape from urban realities, by adopting an otherworldly agenda without any connectedness to the struggles of their immediate environment.

  In the United States and Britain the so-called white flight which accompanied inner city change and transition, also affected churches and - instead of being different to the world - the church became part of the urban flight. One sign of urban flight is the relocation of inner city pastors to middle-class, suburban neighbourhoods, leaving their flock behind to fend for themselves in the city.

- Churches in the city are churches that are located in the inner city (often those who have escaped psychologically), but the inner city is not on their agenda at all. These are suburban congregations who just happen to be in the inner city. Most of the members are commuting from outside, and inner city people, strangers or people from other cultures than the congregation's dominant culture, do not always feel at home. The program of such congregations focusses on their own members and the way in which they plan for the future is based on the analysis of members.

- Churches to the city are churches that are exposed to inner city realities; these might be inner city churches who start to take their own context seriously, or suburban churches that view the inner city as a place of mission. Churches to the city often tend to do ministry "from above", developing programmes for people without asking people what they need, labelling people in condescending ways, and providing leadership that is paternalistic. Many ministries of compassion are done by churches who minister "to" the city, creating dependencies as they

never walk with people towards people's own liberation and empowerment.

- Churches with the city are churches that embrace their context and develop incarnational ministry. They seek to walk with the people of the inner city, to understand their struggles and aspirations, and to struggle and aspire with them. They are slower to develop programs, and are deeply involved in processes of community organising, justice, and so forth. They make the inner city their home, and strive to do ministry "from below", "with the people".

The inner city churches in Pretoria could be analysed in terms of these typologies. Typologies often tend to stereotype, but they are useful as an analytical tool, i.e. to understand the nature of congregations and the way in which they interact with the world. Some congregations might view my interpretation of them as harsh. Obviously I would read and interpret congregations subjectively from my own biassed position. The idea is not to judge congregations through this analysis, but rather to explore the identity of the inner city church. My interpretations are not the final word. What is important, also, is that congregations are dynamic organisms that always change.

**For example :** Some of the churches that seemed like escapist churches two or three years ago, are now civic churches in close solidarity with the inner city and its people. Other churches, who used to be activist churches, have changed into churches with suburban agendas. Prophetic churches become survivor churches, or survivor churches move beyond survival and become servant churches. Other churches combine the best of different images to become exciting models of transformed urban congregations.

## 7.3 The Inner City Church in Pretoria : Analysis, Types & Transformation

Congregational analysis has become a field of study on its own with people like Carl Dudley and Jackson Carroll in the United States pioneering in this area. Locally Dawid Venter and Jurgens Hendriks have both contributed significantly to congregational studies and understanding. I could have analysed the different congregations in greater detail. I have decided, however, to analyse them only rather briefly in terms of the focus of my study, which is the role of the church with regard to the transformation of the inner city. In other words, how do the inner city churches of Pretoria currently contribute to the transformation of inner city communities ?

In this section I will reflect on the Congregational Table that follows on the next page. This table will use the typologies as introduced in 8.2.

### 7.3.1 History

Ten of the twenty-three churches in the table were started only after 1993. Most of these new churches are independent churches, not affiliated with a larger denominational body.

Two of the churches in the table older than 1993, only really became part of the inner

city scenario after 1993. Melodi ya Tshwane has moved into the inner city in 1993, and the central cells of Hatfield Christian Church have gone through a process of transition and now growth and a growing identification with the inner city.

Two churches have recently relocated. The Dutch Reformed Church Pretoria, who is the oldest congregation in Pretoria, retains its name, but combined with another congregation in Arcadia, whilst the centre of the church would also be in the Arcadia building. Besides a morning service in the old church, there is not much of a pastoral ministry retained. The focus has shifted to Arcadia.

The "Christelike Gereformeerde Kerk Pretoria Sentraal" has also decided to relocate to Centurion, which is more central to most of their current members. In the process they have sold their building in the inner city and they left Salvokop, the inner city area where they were for many years. They have demonstrated a will not to completely abandon the city, however, by selling the church facilities at a much reduced price to a Christian ministry (Pretoria Community Ministries). It means that the Christian presence could be retained in Salvokop.

The "Schubartpark Christelike Kerk" has initially developed a unique model in the Schubartpark high-rise complex. The pastor of the church lives in Schubartpark with his family, and through relationships with local residents he planted a church in the complex before 1993. Unfortunately, due to conflicts with other independent groups in the same complex, as well as his isolation from other inner city churches, it seems as if this congregation has fallen into the trap of becoming a survivor church.

The other 8 churches in the table are traditional, mainline churches that operated in the inner city for many years. Three of them are very isolated and never participated in the forum of city centre churches since its inception in 1992. The other five churches, all of them older churches that have been in the city centre for more than fifty years (or some even more than a century), have decided very consciously to remain in the city centre and to seek ways in which to relate more intentionally with the inner city and its struggles.

### 7.3.2  Identity

One way of analysing a congregation's identity is by describing it in terms of its dominant image (cf. p.107 - 8.2 & 8.3; Dudley & Johnson 1993).

A number of inner city congregations could be identified as *survivor congregations* who are merely seeing it through to the end. Although this sounds very negative, this has become a reality in some congregations with dwindling membership and funds, a lack of clear vision, and the inability to adjust to the changing context in which the church is situated. If something significant does not happen, such congregations will in time close down as the cultural make-up of the community changes, older membership leaves the church, and they are not replaced by new members. The Gereformeerde

Kerk Pretoria, the Dutch Reformed Church Burgerspark, and the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk Pretoria are all sharing this currently. Sadly, it means that the Afrikaans churches have not been able to facilitate transition that accommodated the new diversity of the city. These congregations do not contribute to transformed inner city communities at all.

As was indicated already in 8.3.1 the Schubartpark Christelike Kerk, which is still a rather new church, is fighting the same battle. Part of its problem was probably the internal politics between different pastors working in Schubartpark. Although the pastor of this church wants to make an impact in the Schubartpark complex, there seems to be factors working against that. Potentially this congregation at some point has shown signs of hope in terms of contributing to real change in the Schubartpark complex. Seed of Redemption International Church is a new church who is struggling to root itself in the inner city with an own identity. The pastor is committed to serve the city, and to develop an inner city pastorate that will facilitate healing and multi-cultural interaction. Hopefully, this church will grow from survival taking its rightful place in the city.

Both the St.Andrew's Presbyterian Church and the St.Peter's Lutheran Church have certain traits of survivor churches. Their commitment to the city and urban ministry, however, and the way in which especially St.Andrew's make its facilities available for the city, have been instrumental in taking them through a survival mode to a servant mode. St.Andrew's is grappling very seriously with the question of how to be an inner city church. St.Peter's is slowly coming to terms with the realities of the inner city around them, and the increasing number of black Lutherans that participate at St.Peter's in worship, also force them to struggle with the issues of change. Their involvement in the partnership of inner city churches are helping them to remain connected and would probably, in time, facilitate their transition into becoming an inner city church.

Besides St.Andrew's and St.Peter's, various other churches could be identified as *servant churches*, assisting people in the city through pastoral care. Not all of these servant churches necessarily cross the barriers of their churches into the streets, and often the kind of pastorate is rather narrow in terms of people's spiritual needs and personal salvation only. Although people are transformed spiritually, this transformation does not necessarily get translated into practical life-changing and life-giving ministry in hurting inner city communities. Some churches *are* developing more holistic and transformative models of being urban church, however (cf. Repairer of the Bridge, Wesley Methodist Church, etc.).

A number of churches could be described as *pilgrim congregations*, journeying with a specific group of people, sustaining their faith and even culture. Melodi ya Tshwane has traditionally been a pilgrim church for domestic workers, as well as for white members who longed for a multi-cultural (or non-racial) expression of worship. St.Alban's Anglican Cathedral is journeying especially with emerging black leaders and professional people. Churches like Immanuel Christian Church and Charity and Faith

Mission are journeying with young people (predominantly black) in the city, either young professionals or students. And the International Church of Pretoria is a pilgrim church welcoming people from Francophone African countries. In Marabastad a Christian faith community is emerging that does not belong to any denomination and it is journeying with the homeless community of Marabastad, almost in the form of a base ecclesial community.

St.Alban's Anglican Cathedral was known as a *prophetic congregation* in the time of apartheid. It almost seems as if the changes in the country and in the church have also affected the prophetic witness of the Cathedral to the point of the cathedral becoming rather distant from contextual issues. It probably has do with the transition within the Cathedral, searching to establish its identity in a new era. Melodi ya Tshwane wants to be a prophetic church and its intentional endeavour to establish a multi-cultural congregation in the city as well as its solidarity with domestic workers, are prophetic signs. However, it seems as if the prophetic witness of the inner city church is strongest where it stands together collectively. Although the body of Christ in Pretoria's inner city needs to grow much more towards a wise, consistent, united and sustainable prophetic witness, it has started to act upon certain issues collectively in the past year or two.

Cathedrals, in one sense, could always be seen as *pillar churches*. In the definition of Dudley and Johnson that is not necessarily true of the two inner city cathedrals in Pretoria. According to Dudley and Johnson (1993) pillar congregations use their resources "to strengthen all aspects of its surrounding geographical community...". This is not happening at present. What is true is the prominency of many members belonging to St.Alban's Cathedral. Potentially this Cathedral could still make a very significant contribution to the inner city of Pretoria, as could Sacred Heart.

The Cathedrals draw people from all over Pretoria and not only from the inner city. In fact, the Anglican Cathedral is drawing a large percentage of black professional people who now reside in the previously white suburbs. Their children go to private schools and they occupy prominent positions in society. At Sacred Heart there is a greater diversity of inner city and suburban people, as well as greater cultural and economic diversity.

The energy and growth of an emerging congregation such as Charity and Faith Mission suggests that this could become a pillar church. However, it remains a question as to how rooted they are in the inner city. Their agenda seems to focus more on evangelism and church growth generally, than on the inner city communities specifically. They might even move from the inner city if they acquire a more suitable venue to accommodate their expanding ministry. The same could be said of Hatfield Christian Church. As a large macro-congregation with members and cell groups spread all over the city, their cells in the inner city are growing and becoming more vibrant. They could become a pillar of hope in the city, depending on the agenda that they opt for.

Although these are dominant images in these congregations, congregations are also diverse within themselves, accommodating members who have different gifts and share different visions. Ideally, I would say, all congregations need to move from being

survivor congregations, to becoming prophets, servants, pilgrims-with-others, and pillars in the community.

### 7.3.3 Programme

I will briefly analyse the programmes of the inner city congregations, in terms of their mission orientations (cf. 8.2; p.107).

A number of congregations are *sanctuary congregations* (e.g. Gereformeerde Kerk Pretoria, Ned.Herv.Kerk, etc.). They are seen as places of withdrawal, offering a safe haven to their people, sometimes in isolation from the rest of the world and even other Christians (cultural churches / "volkskerk"), and often maintaining a sharp distinction between sacred and secular realms. Unless the find ways to cross these created dichotomies, they cannot really have an impact on their surrounding communities.

Most of the new churches are *evangelistic congregations*, emphasizing salvation and church membership (e.g. Charity & Faith Mission, Tower of Grace). They tend to be otherworldly, neglecting the struggles of the present reality and focussing on the world to come. In one or two churches the pastors might be more evangelistic, but the congregations are still predominantly sanctuary congregations.

In a number of cases congregations tend to combine *evangelistic and civic orientations* to their context, evangelising and drawing new church members, whilst at the same time involving themselves more with public issues as well (cf. Love of Jesus Ministries, Repairer of the Bridge Ministries).

Melodi ya Tshwane, as well as the St.Alban's Cathedral, used to be comfortable with an *activist role*. Both congregations seem to have lost their collective activist orientation, but maintained its *civic orientation*, and individual members (as well as preaching) often focus on public issues. The combined ministry of inner city churches (as consolidated in Pretoria Community Ministries) is the only place where the activist orientation towards the inner city context could be identified. The program of this joint ministry is very activist in nature. Not one of the congregations on their own is vocal with regard to issues of social justice and transformation. Some congregations do support collective actions and efforts, however.

The Wesley Methodist Mission seems to combine some of these orientations within the one congregation. Some of the older members regard this as a sanctuary congregation still, whilst a greater evangelistic and civic orientation has been developing in recent times. The pastor himself is also very involved in the collective activist actions of the church in the public arena.

Churches have different mission orientations and gifts. In the inner city this diversity is positive, as long as it does not lead to isolation or separation. The different gifts together form the wonderful mosaic of the body of Christ, and only when the different

gifts are developed and activated could the kingdom purposes be established. The different congregations should also support one another. Ideally, every congregation should be able to combine elements of being evangelistic, civic and activist congregations (while being stronger on certain aspects), depending on specific situations, contextual demands, and so forth. Congregations could even be sanctuary congregations in the positive sense of the word, providing a place of retreat where God's people could be refreshed and empowered before they engage again.

### 7.3.4 Ecumenism in the Inner City of Pretoria

The City Centre Churches Forum (CCCF) has been established in 1992 as a forum drawing Christian workers (clergy and laity) together in the inner city. Twelve (12) of the churches are very involved in this Forum. Five (5) of the churches have never been involved and two (2) of the churches have left the inner city. The other four (4) churches are at different places in terms of their relationship with the Forum, either loosely relating to the Forum, or withdrawing themselves for specific reasons.

Seven churches in the inner city have together formed the Pretoria Community Ministries Charitable Trust, who is responsible for Christian community development and social action in the inner city. This Trust and organisation was launched in 1993. Even with the churches participating in the Trust, the levels of partnership vary, depending on their internal situations, transition within congregations, and so forth. The Trust is open to all churches in the inner city and some of the newer churches are currently considering joining the Trust.

Pretoria Community Ministries has also established Yeast City Housing as a social housing company, incorporated in terms of section 21 of the Companies Act. This company, although launched and owned by the churches, is also drawing representatives from the inner city community to be represented on the Board of Directors. Housing initiatives are undertaken in close relationship with the local inner city communities, and staff of the company is drawn from within the community as well.

Although there is a sense of cooperation and joint action by the churches, there is always room to grow and to deepen these relationships. The relationship between mainline and independent churches need to be established on a firmer footing, and the new churches need to be drawn closer into the vision of Christian community development in the inner city. The deeply rooted suspicion between black and white pastors in the city is another challenge to be worked with intentionally and consistently.

A very disturbing factor is the tendency of some of the new churches to work in isolation, which is dividing the Christian witness (evangelistic) and the Christian voice (social) in the city. Unfortunately the existing churches are not necessarily going out of their way to meet the new churches where they are at. The city centre churches have not been able to resolve this issue (tradition and race) yet.

*Update :* *November 1998*

After this analysis has been done, at least three new churches have come to our attention (between May and October 1998). A French-speaking church has been initiated by a pastor from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Doksa Deo (AFM) has taken over the ministry of Love of Jesus Ministries and is now very active in the inner city, and the Holiness Unity Church gathers at the old Transvaal Museum on Sundays.

### 7.3.5 Summary : The Church in Relationship to its Surrounding Context

As was indicated earlier, some churches *escape* from the realities of the inner city, while others are *in* the city but the inner city is not on their agenda. "Churches in the city" are often merely surviving or they offer sanctuary to certain groups of people, while ignoring the masses of inner city dwellers with their unique struggles and aspirations.

A number of churches have adopted an evangelistic agenda, especially the newer start-up congregations. They are "churches to the city", often proclaiming Jesus as the answer without having asked what the questions of the inner city and its people are. These churches are not necessarily contributing to the transformation of the inner city in a holistic sense, but only to the transformation of individuals at a spiritual level. They often assume that spiritual transformation of individuals would automatically result in the transformation of society. This, however, is a myth to be dispelled.

There are single examples of churches that started to minister to the city, not only spiritually but also socially. Often they tend to do so paternalistically, still maintaining the old biases against those they now want to serve. They have not been transformed themselves, and therefore their actions to the city are not necessarily transformative, but merely maintaining the status quo.

A number of churches are seeking to go beyond merely servant churches from above, and venture into incarnational models of being "church with the city", journeying with people as they struggle in the city. This is the most costly model and therefore churches are going through slow and painful processes of incarnating themselves into the realities of the city. This, in my mind, seems to be the only model that would facilitate transformation in the city, both spiritually and socially.

The joint ministry of the churches - Pretoria Community Ministries - is intentional about establishing incarnational communities in the city, encouraging its staff and community members to live in the inner city and, as residents, to work with fellow residents for the shalom of the city. Although there are signs of hope and incarnation in this joint ministry of the churches, there are also signs of failure and a reluctance to incarnate to the point of dying to ourselves. But in this ministry the theme of transformation have become real and at least there is the effort to engage local churches in joining the process of inner city transformation in the name of Christ.

In the next chapter this theme would be discussed at greater length as I will reflect theologically on the church as an agent of inner city transformation.

| Congregations | Linthicum | Roozen, et al | Dudley & Johnson |
|---|---|---|---|
| Calvary | to / with | evangelistic / civic | servant |
| Charity & Faith Mission | to | evangelistic | servant / pilgrim > pillar |
| Christian Faith Ministries | to | evangelistic | servant |
| Christelik Gereformeerde Kerk Pretoria Sentraal | escape | evangelistic | - |
| Gereformeerde Kerk Pretoria | in | sanctuary | survivor |
| Hatfield Christian Church (central cells) | to (> with ?) | evangelistic | servant (> pillar) |
| Immanuel Christian Church | to | evangelistic (civic ?) | pilgrim |
| International Church of Pretoria (Francophone) | with | evangelistic / civic | pilgrim |
| Love of Jesus Ministries | to | evangelistic / civic | servant |
| Liberty Christian Fellowship | to / with | evangelistic / civic (activist ?) | servant |
| Melodi ya Tshwane Uniting Reformed Church | with | (activist >) civic / evangelistic | pilgrim / prophet |
| Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk Burgerspark | in | sanctuary | survivor |
| Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk Pretoria | escape | servant > sanctuary | - |
| Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk Pretoria | in | sanctuary | survivor |
| Repairer of the Bridge Ministries | to / with | evangelistic / civic | servant |
| Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Cathedral | in / to | sanctuary | pillar (?) |
| Schubartpark Christelike Kerk | with | evangelistic | servant > survivor |
| Seed of Redemption Ministries | to | evangelistic / civic | survivor ? |
| St.Alban's Anglican Cathedral | with > in (?) | sanctuary / civic | prophet > pilgrim / pillar ? |
| St.Andrew's Presbyterian Church | in > with | sanctuary | survivor > servant |
| St.Peter's Evangelical-Lutheran Church | to | sanctuary | survivor > servant |
| Tower of Grace | to / with | evangelistic | servant |
| Wesley Methodist Mission | in > with | civic / evangelistic / (activist / sanctuary?) | servant |

## 8.    The Institutional Response to the Inner City of Pretoria, with Specific Reference to Poverty and Housing

### 8.1    The Government                                            (written :    August 1998)

*National government* is aware of the challenge of the inner city, as was also indicated in some of the proposals of the National Minister of Housing (cf. Chapter 4; 3.4). Yet, para-state departments have recently moved from the inner city of Pretoria to join the suburban explosion to the east of Pretoria. What makes this even more negative, is the fact that an undertaking was given by government departments not to leave the inner city. The para-state departments need to be included in this agreement. Currently they continued to relocate, joining thereby the white and the middle-class flight to the suburbs.

With regard to certain vital issues such as inner city homelessness, the National Department of Welfare has indicated that they do not even have a policy document on this crucial issue.

The *provincial government* is not necessarily doing much better, although there are mixed results. The first government housing subsidy for the inner city of Pretoria has been approved fairly recently for a project of the church-based housing company, Yeast City Housing. This, however, is the result of a two year process. This process is way too slow if a real partnership between the Gauteng Department of Housing and local inner city initiatives is to be developed. The emphasis seems to be in the Johannesburg inner city. Whilst this makes sense in terms of the decay in areas such as Hillbrow, Bertrams and Joubert Park, funding for the prevention of similar trends in Pretoria's inner city seems to make sense as well. It might be a cheaper option to prevent slum formation and decay now, rather than attempting to turn "bad buildings" around at a later stage at higher costs (both financially and socially).

With the move of provincial government after 1994 to Johannesburg, many government buildings stand empty and unutilised in the inner city of Pretoria. This means the loss of substantial income per month, and the availability of infrastructure that could be put to good alternative use, instead.

The provincial Departments of Welfare and Health have been involved in significant ways in the past few years in certain inner city issues, such as funding and support services for children-at-risk, a mobile basic health care service in Marabastad, and so forth.

At the local level, the *Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council (GPMC)* has facilitated a participatory process to establish an integrated development plan for Pretoria and its different sectors. Some of the development objectives that emerged from this process,

include :

- the need for a strategy to curb uncontrolled urban sprawl and decentralisation
- the need for a strategy to reverse the imbalanced urban structure, where the poorest have to cover the largest travelling distances to get to work and back
- the need to develop residential facilities closer to the concentration of job opportunities, e.g. utilising the 10km radius from the city centre for medium- and high-density residential development
- the need of densification, i.e. providing formal housing opportunities in and around the CBD

(GPMC; February 1997)

It still remains to be seen how the GPMC envisages the implementation of these objectives, especially in the inner city. Currently there is a process of negotiations with the GPMC, to use one of their vacant office buildings for conversion into 76 residential units for the lower-income market. This might spark a process of social housing development in which the GPMC will play a greater role.

The *Pretoria City Council* does not have a good record when it comes to the poorest people of the inner city. Their security personnel are harassing homeless people to the point of destroying their belongings and burning down their shacks, after clear resolutions have been taken not to do so. The Council has indicated that homelessness is not on their agenda.

The *Pretoria Inner City Partnership (PICP)* has been initiated by the Council, however, as a very positive step in the direction of revitalising the inner city. In the first two years of its existence, the Partnership has paid more lip service to social and poverty issues than anything else. The real focus of the Partnership in this time was on keeping people in the city that have no real interest to stay, to prevent crime through substantial financial injections, and on developing frameworks for economic development, spatial development, and so forth.

It often felt as if the PICP is practising the so-called **politics of co-optation** (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 180-187). Theoretically this implies a kind of exchange between patron (officials of the council) and client (partners). More power, economic resources and higher status, lie with the patron. There are numerous clients to sustain its status (1992 : 181). The notion of a broad-based partnership is projected. Yet, the danger of such a patron-client relationship is that the client could become a dependent of the patron, sucked in and compromised in terms of its values and objectives.

Initially homelessness was not on the agenda of the Partnership at all. Through extensive lobbying the Partnership has then voted to include homelessness as part of its agenda. The lack of formal housing options, the decay in existing low-cost housing facilities in the inner city, and the absence of well-managed transitional housing facilities, are not yet important enough on the Partnership's agenda, however. Social

housing is being thrown around from one Working Group to the other, without anybody taking responsibility to drive this process.

On the positive side, the original list of objectives for the inner city, included densification of the city and conversion of office buildings for residential purposes. Hopefully these items would become higher priorities of the Partnership in time. Presently it is not clear how they envisage the implementation of these rather vague objectives.

*Update :      November 1998*

- On the basis of research done by the Pretoria Homeless Consortium, a new decision has been taken by the Executive Committee of the Pretoria City Council to support a budget of R1 million for homeless projects. This still had to be rectified by the full council.

- After repeated incidents of harassment of the homeless at the hands of security people of the Pretoria City Council, an internal investigation has been launched by the Council, which has to be translated into a policy document and guidelines for future actions.

- The Eloff Building is affected by internal politics as both the GPMC and the Pretoria City Council now claim it to be their property. No concrete progress has been made in this regard.

- The Pretoria Inner City Partnership has tasked the Capital Consortium to develop an inner city housing strategy to be implemented in the next 5 years.

## 8.2    The Private Sector

The private sector is not active from the perspective of the poor. With the exception of one or two business executives from the hotel industry, the private sector is guarding their self-interest without investing outside of their own constituency. In the process of gain, they might lose their investment, as the inner city changes and also needs creative investments in *social* development projects to maintain its vitality and health. There is a great exodus from traditional business from the inner city, and they are not always replaced by new, upcoming entrepreneurs.

In the city centre itself business people are taking joint responsibility for their immediate surroundings in the Church Street Chamber of Commerce, as well as the formation of so-called Business Improvement Districts (BID's), all over the city centre. The idea of these joint ventures is that the private sector supplements local government funding in the initiation of projects that deal with pressing problems in their areas. Unfortunately,

these initiatives focus very narrowly on their own interests, without any bearing whatsoever on the inner city residential sector or the socially and economically marginalised.

A creative Tourism Safety Forum has drawn various role players into creation of tourist safety mechanisms. Certain private sector role players have been significant in this process, and indirectly this process has been one of the most positive for the residential sector of the inner city as well.

In the housing market there is the threat of large property administrators to abandon the inner city due to serious problems emerging in the property sector. A pilot project has been launched between one such a property administrator and a local community development forum, to implement mechanisms that could intervene in situations of housing decay and / or conflict.

There is great potential to develop creative partnerships between public and private sector, as well as community-based groups, for the sake of the inner city poor and diversified inner city housing options. Much more will have to be done to mobilise strategic and long-term partnerships.

It has been noted that financial institutions are withdrawing from the residential sector of the inner city, and thereby contributing greatly to its deterioration and economic vulnerability. Mechanisms will have to be found to retain the bank's constructive involvement in the inner city, especially with regard to the residential sector.

## 8.3    Inner City Residents

Inner city residents have been very passive in the past. There is a slow process of awakening, especially in the face of increasing insecurity. The Community Forums in Marabastad, Salvokop and Berea, are making contributions to a new culture in the city, speaking about inner city development issues from the bottom-up, and forcing their issues to the agenda of the city. There is a need for more intensive and intentional capacity-building in these forums, however, before they will reach their full potential. More people in these communities will have to be mobilised, and the communities need to become more assertive still in terms of what they envisage for their own future.

The homeless community of the inner city is still struggling to get itself organised into a well-structured and well-represented forum. People are often very apathetic, or alternatively many internal problems lead to internal divisions. An attempt to unify homeless people was made with the initiation of a "Homeless Association". The Pretoria Homeless Consortium was recently formed to research homelessness in the inner city on behalf of the Pretoria Inner City Partnership. These two initiatives might want to work together on a strategy for an organised homeless lobby / action group.

## 8.4    The Church

In the previous section the church and its role in the inner city was analysed. More attention will be given to this in the last two chapters. It is obviously the assumption of this study that the church can play a significant role in the transformation of the inner city, by re-integrating the poor into society and by facilitating the establishment of diverse, decent and affordable housing options in close partnership with the inner city poor.

The *City Centre Churches Forum* is a loose network of inner city churches, meeting monthly and facilitating joint actions by the churches. *Its first objective is to be the conscience of the city.* Although it has grown in this area, the churches still need to develop more in terms of its united voice to the powers that be. The church will also have to be sure that it has disentangled itself from the issues that it advocates against.

*Pretoria Community Ministries* was introduced as an inner city community development organisation, formed by a partnership of different inner city churches. *Yeast City Housing* is a social housing company, initiated and owned by the churches, and developed in partnership with inner city people and communities. Its main aim is to ensure decent, affordable housing for and with the inner city poor and at-risk groups.

The *Jesuit Refugee Service*, located in the inner city, is a Roman Catholic-based organisation focussing on the needs of refugees in the Greater Pretoria area, including the inner city.

Jesus is Love Ministries and Repairer of the Bridge Ministries are two independent groups, with loose affiliations, who are also focussing on the inner city poor. The first group is unfortunately distancing itself from the church networks in the inner city, working in isolation.

*Update :     November 1998*

Love of Jesus Ministries have been taken over by Doksa Deo AFM and they participate in the City Centre Churches Forum.

## 8.5    Summary

The inner city needs institutions with a clear vision for and commitment to the inner city. The next two chapters would explore the role of the church more specifically with regard to inner city transformation. The church has the potential to facilitate the development of grass-roots institutions in the city that could become agents of social justice and transformation. The church could also play a prophetic role towards the

public and private sector, in terms of how they use their political power and financial resources. Furthermore, the church could engage in creative partnerships for transformation, not as the leader necessarily, but as the servant of the inner city.

In communities, and in solidarity with the poor, the church could play an empowering function, supporting communities and people to take responsibility for their own lives and future, and working with them towards a truly democratic city.

*In order for the church to become servant and healer, humanising dehumanised inner city communities, it needs to develop a public theology and language to :*

- *address inner city institutions,*
- *strengthen its own institutional capacity, and*
- *- if possible - generate its own grass-roots institutions that will be agents of change.*

*SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 4*

1.     *In this chapter I have concluded that theology, development studies and urban studies have experienced similar epistemological shifts in becoming more contextual, human-centred, holistic, and so forth (cf. 1.3). I would apply the insights of this analysis to the rest of the study.*

2.     *I have also concluded that there are viable alternatives to displacement of the poor from inner cities, and I will build on that as a basic assumption in the rest of the study (cf. 2.5.3.5).*

3.     *I have introduced some of the key challenges that we are faced with in managing cities and urbanisation, such as broader participation by all sectors, an intentional focus on forgottten or deteriorating urban areas, grass-root integration of cultures and classes, and the restructuring of current land arrangements, offering the poor greater access to diverse opportunities (cf. 3.1.4).*

4.     *In my detailed analysis of Pretoria's inner city I have concentrated on specific communities (Salvokop & Berea), apartment buildings, single room facilities, and an inner city informal settlement (Marabastad). I have also given a brief introduction to homelessness in Pretoria's inner city, and I analysed some of the consequences of current urban renewal and town planning practices (cf. 6.1 - 6.6.2).*

       *Each of the communities that were analysed have certain needs and certain resources. Through appropriate interventions, proper community organising and a human-centred, contextual and holistic approach to planning and development, these communities have great potential to be healthy environments for inner city people to live in.*

       *I have suggested a shift in town planning practices from a suburban agenda to a more integrated, community-based praxis that will plan the inner city through the eyes of inner city people and in close partnership to the diverse inner city stakeholders.*

5.     *On the basis of a fairly subjective analysis of churches in the inner city, I concluded that churches will only facilitate transformation in the city if they develop incarnational models of being "church with the city" (cf. 7.3.5). It is rather impossible to effect real transformation from a distance or from above. I have indicated that some churches are quite intentional in their journey towards becoming churches of the inner city, journeying with inner city people and communities.*

6.     *Lastly, I analysed the way in which institutions contribute to the eradication of poverty and the provision of housing in Pretoria's inner city. I suggested that the church has the challenge to address inner city institutions prophetically, to strengthen its own institutional capacity, and - if possible - to generate either church-based or community-based institutions that will be agents of change (cf. 8.5). In chapters 6 and 7 these thoughts will be translated in a framework for ministry and in practical proposals for a transformed ministry praxis.*

# CHAPTER 5
# THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

## Towards a Framework for a Theology of Inner City Transformation

# THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION :

# TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR A THEOLOGY OF INNER CITY TRANSFORMATION

## 1.    Introduction

In chapter 2 the relationship of the church to development and to the city has been explored historically, and certain suggestions have been made with regard to where this study positions itself.

- **The Church and Development**

It has been indicated how the church and theology in the past decades have reacted against reigning developmental approaches that maintained the status quo, that conformed with modernism and progress, and that were equated with economic growth (chapter 2; 1).

This study moves away from this approach to embrace a transformational model of development in the inner city. This will be done within the framework of contextual theology, doing theology "from below", assuming a commitment to the poor, working with struggling people towards change, focussing on the praxis of the church in the city, and working towards a transformed praxis of ministry that will lead to transformed inner city people and communities (chapter 2; 1.3).

- **The Church and the City**

In the next two chapters the conclusion of chapter 2 will be explored to the point of practical suggestions for a transformed praxis. It has been concluded, namely, that the inner city church should move beyond being church *in* the city, to a place of solidarity *with* inner city people and communities (chapter 2; 2.2.4). This would require a fundamental ecclesiological transformation, prior to the church being able to be an agent of transformation.

- **The Church and the Inner City Poor**

The inner city poor is the vantage point from which this study is done. Only when the poor has been empowered, can we say that signs of inner city transformation are appearing. The poor, in this context, would be seen in a slightly broader sense, including those who have become victims of absolute poverty, as well as those (the relatively poor) who are affected because of a lack of power, or exclusion from certain vital decision-making processes. In this study the inner city poor would be the focal anthropological vantage point, and on the basis of this category a theology of community will be suggested.

● **The Challenge of this Chapter**

The challenge of this chapter is to reflect on the church, poverty and development in the inner city, and to suggest a framework for a theology of inner city transformation. In the next chapter this framework would be fleshed out in more concrete terms, as suggestions will be made for a transformed praxis of inner city ministry.

## 2. Theological Reflection

I briefly remind you of my working definition for a contextual practical theology.

> ...it is the process of critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the Word of God, our social context, our church tradition, our spirituality, and our personal journey.

(cf. chapter 2; 3.2.3)

In this chapter I will focus on bringing the various sources for reflection into play (cf. chapter 2; 3.3), applying them specifically to the information gathered in the previous phases of insertion (chapter 3) and analysis (chapter 4). The sources which can help to inform our theology and praxis and which I will draw from, are the Word of God, the social context (introduced in chapter 3 & 4), church tradition, spirituality, and personal life and background (cf. chapter 2; 3.3).

The goal of this chapter is to reflect in such a way that a framework for a theology of inner city transformation will emerge from it.

## 3. Inner City Transformation : Contextual Paradigm, Theories & Praxis

I remind you of the over all purpose of this study, which is a transformed praxis of ministry that will lead to transformed inner city communities and people (cf. chapter 2; summary). We need to do theology in such a way, however, that transformation would be facilitated.

In order to develop a transformed praxis, different approaches could be followed. The one approach would be to make a distinction between different types of practical theological theories, namely meta-theories, base theories and praxis-theories (Pieterse 1993 : 51-52). **Meta-theories** are broader theories spelling out scientific assumptions and vantage points which are shared by other disciplines. In this study, chapter 2 and chapter 3 have indicated how meta-theories in theology, urban planning and development studies, have shown parallel epistemological shifts in recent years.

**Base theories** are subject-related theories developed within a specific subject for the purposes of that subject (cf. Pieterse 1993 : 51). These base theories function within

the broader framework of the meta-theory, e.g. an ecclesiology of transformation, a public theology, and so forth.

**Praxis-theories ("praktykteorieë")** are designed for each of the different operational fields of the church, e.g. the church's dialogue with the state, preparation for preaching, music in the worship service, a ministry to homeless women in the church's community, and so forth (cf. Pieterse 1993 : 52).

Müller (1996 : 1, 16) recognises the functional value of such a distinction, but warns against the dualism of theory and praxis which might still emerge from this approach. Müller (1996 : 1) himself opts for an approach based on **practical theological wisdom** (cf. also Browning 1991 : 34). This is an integrated, circular model, similar to the hermeneutic cycle that I used throughout this study (chapter 2; 3.3). In such an approach there is a more continuous interaction between theory and praxis, instead of the application of abstract theories to concrete situations (cf. Müller 1996 : 1; Browning 1991 : 39). It is rather a value-oriented discussion that takes place in the interaction between practical experiences and existing theories (Müller 1996 : 1; Browning 1991 : 139).

This study moves from a contextual insertion and analysis of the inner city (chapters 3 and 4) to a transformed praxis (chapters 6 and 7). In the process practical theological theories are generated (cf. Müller 1996 : 2; Browning 1991 : 2; Heitink 1993 : 151). It is a typical praxis-theory-praxis approach (Muller 1996 : 2).

Heyns and Pieterse (1990 : 29) define a practical theological theory "as a discussion and reflection upon the ecclesial and faith praxis and planning for the ecclesial and faith praxis" (my translation from the Afrikaans). For a transformed praxis, the interaction between the current praxis, contextual demands and evidence, and critical reflection, will have to result in transformed practical theological theories.

Being a contextual theological study, the current praxis of the church and the social context of the inner city will help shape these theories. There is a continuous interaction between theory and praxis in the generation of new theories and a transformed praxis. Furthermore, these theories are not suggested as the ultimate in a theological framework for the inner city. That would not be in line with contextual theology, which advocates theology as an on-going activity with people, always under scrutiny and always rethinking its assumptions, and transforming its praxis.

Although I fully agree with Muller's approach of practical theological wisdom, seeking to overcome the theory-praxis dualisms, I will still refer to the three sections of this chapter as three base theories for the sake of functionality. I deal with the three themes on the basis of my contextual description (chapters 3 and 4), and continue to relate practical experiences, case studies and narratives. I cannot escape from the on-going interaction between theory and praxis, and even in this chapter theory and praxis will be in dialogue. This chapter remains just one element in the integrated cycle of my practical theological method.

To move towards a theology of inner city transformation (meta-theory), I suggest three base theories as frameworks for reflection, spirituality and praxis. Together, these three theories will feed into a broader theological framework (meta-theory) for inner city transformation. Each of these theories in themselves will focus on the transformation of a specific field of operation. In chapter 7 I will go one step further, suggesting a specific pastoral plan for a transformed praxis (praxis-theory).

The reflections of chapter 5 will be done from within a contextual theological paradigm, trying to look at reality from below, with a vision of a transformed reality. However, elements of Muller's narrative approach (cf. 1996 : 3-5; chapter 2; 3.3) within a eco-hermeneutic paradigm (Muller 1996 : 7-17) can also be traced throughout the study and also in this chapter. The focus on a listening and participating presence, the priority of the context, the search for wholeness, and the stories emerging from the context, are all resembling something of Muller's approach. Listening to Gerkin's definition (1986 : 54; cf. chapter 2; 3.3) of "narrative practical theology", the similarities with my approach are clear. His approach is namely an ongoing hermeneutical process focussing on the immediate context and envisioning creative possibilities of transformation.

Three base theories will emerge from my critical reflection in chapter 5 (cf. chapter 1; 4.4 - 4.5).

- the church as servant community (ecclesiological)
- a theology of community (anthropological)
- a public theology (social)

All three base theories are developed within the context of the South African inner city. The following table summarises the content of this chapter.

| field of study | base theory | imperative : spirituality | requirement | outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ecclesiology | church as servant community | to walk humbly with God | conversion to God transformation of the church | servant communities working for transformation |
| anthropology | theology of community | to love tenderly | conversion to people transformation of human relationships | humanisation in community |
| social | public theology | to act justly | conversion to public arena transformation of urban systems | shalom in the city |
| to die into the city ||||| 
| resurrection of inner city churches, people and communities |||||
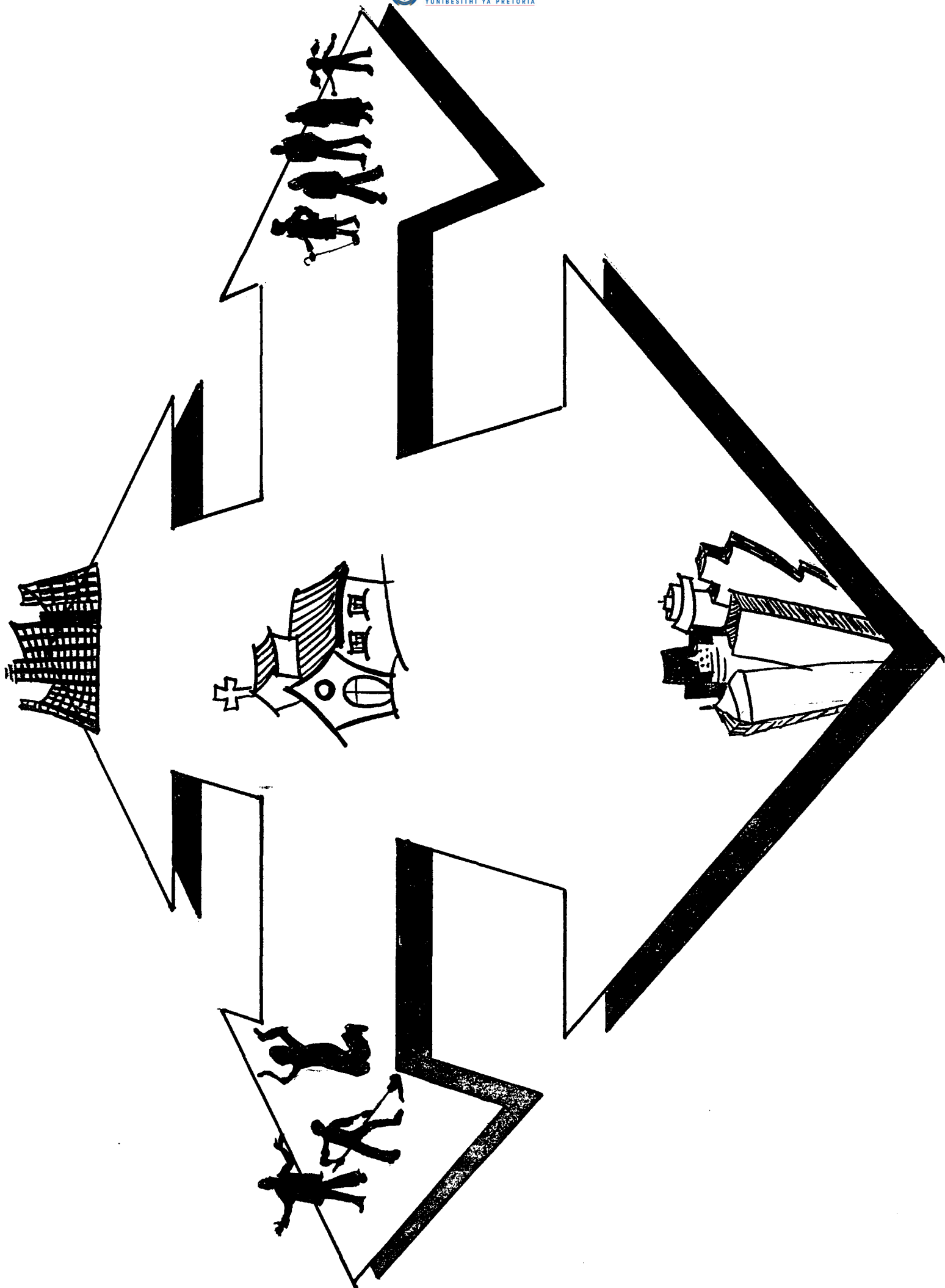
The three foci for reflection correspond with the three operational fields of practical theology as identified by Gerben Heitink (1993 : 231), namely humanity and religion, church and faith, religion and society. In line with this, he has developed three base theories, namely a practical theological anthropology, a practical theological ecclesiology, and a practical theological diaconology. It also corresponds with Luther's so-called three estates, i.e. oeconomia (economy and family), ecclesia (church), and politia (politics). He argued that God's will is for the sanctification of humanity in each of these three estates (cf. Moila 1990 : 21).

The whole chapter is rooted in the gospel dialectic of death and resurrection, and it is suggested that this same dialectic is at work in the inner city.

The table on the next page indicates the relationship between the three themes, i.e. the church as servant community, a theology of community, and a public theology. It shows that the church's engagement is always extending itself to a wider audience, moving centrifugally from the church itself to the public arena, and to the margins.

## 4.     Imagining the New City

This study imagines the transformation of the inner city. To develop a framework for a theology of inner city transformation, it is important to imagine the new city that we want to work for. *What are the aspects that the city must be liberated from, and what would a transformed city look like ?*

The fundamental problem is that we have probably lost the art of imagination in society and in church to a large extent. As we marginalised the arts from the liturgy, and as our rituals became rigid formalities or symbols of current-day ideology, without their necessary liberating power, and as we entrenched strong sacred-secular divides, the art of imagination have also been stolen from the heart of the church.

We should always be living between the vision and reality. Although we are rooted in reality, it is the vision that will draw us into a new tomorrow. Without such a vision, we wil perish. We need to discover God's vision for inner city communities and places, to sustain us in the present and to inform the actions of the church in the contemporary city. We know, overcome by realism, that the perfect city would not be ushered in by ourselves. But even though we know that, we also know that we are called to build a city in the vision of God, here and now, as far as we possibly can.

This section would endeavour to discover such a vision. The next chapter would seek to suggest a praxis for ministry that could, in some ways, facilitate the expression of this vision in our earthly cities.

### 4.1 An Alternative Imagination : *from a royal consciousness to an alternative, prophetic consciousness*

Overwhelmed by the harsh realities of the city, by its corruption, injustice and abuse, we are called to be church. Yet, without a clear vision of the city as intended by God, we cannot really develop sustainable and transformative ministry in the city. The problem is that the church has often been absorbed by the realities of urban life, to the extent that it condones the status quo without any criticisms, that the church itself has become so one with urban reality, that it is not able to discern God's truth any longer.

Jim Wallis (1994 : 44) is of the opinion that we lack imagination. We lack vision, and therefore we are perishing (Proverbs 29 : 18). Wallis (1994 : 44) says "our future depends upon fresh imagination". If we cannot imagine a new city with new possibilities and new kinds of relationships, we will indeed perish. Wallis (1994 : 45) explains it by saying that vision depends on imagination :

> the ability to see what cannot be seen in the present and, indeed, the capacity to picture a new reality.

Harvey Cox (1969) takes this even further in his excellent book, *The Feast of Fools*. He calls us to recover the notions of fantasy and festivity in modern society. Cox (1969 : 59) suggests fantasy as the capacity of human beings to go beyond the current world of the here and now.

> In it (human beings) man not only relives and anticipates, he remakes the past and creates wholly new futures.

Social change depends on dreamers and visionaries, according to Cox (1969 : 61).We cannot work for a transformed city, without having clear dreams and visions of what that city should look like. Imagination is the power that open doors normally closed to us - also the door to a transformed city. But fantasy is even more than imagination. Fantasy is '"advanced imagination"' (Cox 1969 : 62). There are no boundaries in fantasy, but one can imagine something completely new which is not confined to the rules of social conduct or the structures of current realities.

> ...in fantasy there is an element of art and conscious creativity. (Cox 1969 : 62)

Cox (1969 : 63) suggests the world of fantasy as "a source of renewal in the fact world". Is it possible for the urban church to recover a sense of fantasy, to integrate fantasy or imagination as a source of renewal within our liturgies and actions, to develop the capacity to imagine a new city ? Cox (1969 : 86) phrases similar questions, when he asks how to re-ignite our capacity for fantasy, as well as how these fantasies could be introduced into the political (or public) arena without them being diluted. We desperately need to explore the same questions in our current urban reality.

Cox (1969 : 82) also speaks of political fantasy or vision. This goes beyond political imagination that considers adjustments of current societal patterns and relationships only. It is about the radical transformation of the public sphere.

> It envisions new forms of social existence and it operates without first asking whether they are "possible".

Political fantasy is not too concerned about feasibility, since feasibility assumes that a future should grow out of present realities, facts and resources. For Cox (1969 : 84) feasibility studies discourage the hopes or aspirations for something really alternative, and limit the possibilities in political planning, social reconstruction, and cultural innovation.

> It is the ideology of an inert society.                                  (Cox 1969 : 84)

Brueggemann would agree with this when he suggests the need for an alternative consciousness. An alternative consciousness is **not** about practicality, or viability, or realism. These are still categories of the royal consciousness, of the present reality. These are not the right questions to ask. What we really need to ask is this : is it imaginable ? (Brueggemann 1978 : 44). We need to think and dream about **what** we want without too many constraints of thinking about **how** we will get it (Cox 1969 : 86).

The power of an alternative imagination is often resisted by three factors : (1) Postponement of the vision to a time that never arrives; (2) Reducing the vision to feasible or more realistic dimensions, or (3) spiritualising, individualising, or relativising it, so that it becomes socially trivial (cf. Cox 1969 : 87). We, in response to these factors, need to resist efforts to quench an alternative imagination.

Walter Brueggemann speaks about the art of imagination in almost all his work. In his book entitled **Prophetic Imagination** (1978), Brueggemann contrasts the royal consciousness with an alternative consciousness. The royal consciousness is the way in which establishment society is structured, their values and internal relationships, and the way in which they think about life. The royal consciousness pretends that nothing is wrong and wants to carry immortality into every situation. In churches we do the same by offering a gospel without a cross and "a future well-being without a present anguish" (Brueggemann 1978 : 49). Denial of reality serves the king well, because he thinks he is still in control. He tells himself that everything goes according to plan.

Brueggemann (1978 : 46) indicates how the royal consciousness nurtures a numbness that kills the imagination of a new, more hopeful reality. This numbness is real especially because the royal consciousness is an elitist consciousness shaped by powerful people, often at the expense of the powerless. For the royal consciousness to survive it almost needs this numbness.

> *The royal consciousness leads people to numbness, especially to numbness about death. It is the task of the prophetic ministry and imagination to bring people to engage their experiences of suffering to death.*
>
> (Brueggemann 1978 : 46)

In the South African situation the Kairos document gave expression to the royal consciousness in what they called a "State Theology" (1985 : 3) and a "Church Theology" (1985 : 8). A state theology

> ...blesses injustice, canonises the will of the powerful and reduces the poor to passivity, obedience and apathy.
>
> (The Kairos Document 1985 : 3)

Churches have been critical of apartheid in limited ways, but its lack of social analysis, political understanding and narrow spirituality, have left the church "in a state of near paralysis" (The Kairos Document 1985 : 14). The Kairos theologians referred to this dominant theology as a "Church Theology".

In response to these theologies, the Kairos theologians suggested a "Prophetic Theology" that is bold, incisive and unambiguous about the stand it takes (The Kairos Document 1985 : 15). Rooted in a proper and penetrating social analysis, it had to explore oppression in the Bible, tyranny in the Christian tradition and offer a message of hope, which corresponds to an alternative imagination as suggested in this study as well (The Kairos Document 1985 : 15-21).

- **Prophetic Imagination**

In response to such numbness, Brueggemann (1978 : 49) suggests the vital function of the prophet to address it, and to help people to be exposed to the death within themselves.

> The task of the prophetic imagination is to cut through this numbness, to penetrate the self-deception, so that the God of endings is confessed as Lord.

The prophets were consistent in announcing what needs to be dismantled, while at the same time offering radical alternatives, new visions of what God wants to give (e.g. Jer 1 : 10) (cf. Brueggemann 1994 : 91). It is the task of the prophet or of the prophetic church to criticise the royal consciousness, to expose current ideologies, and to offer an alternative consciousness or imagination, that will draw people to the new city.

The task of the prophet is to connect the claims of the tradition with the contextual situation. On the one hand the prophet is a child of the tradition, understanding and applying it, but also a child of the culture who can bring the two - tradition and culture - in creative and redemptive dialogue (cf. Brueggemann 1978 : 12).

> *The task of the prophetic ministry is to nurture, nourish, and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us.*
>
> (Brueggemann 1978 : 13).

It is about criticising the dominant consciousness, but also about energising people and communities with the promise of something new and alternative (Brueggemann 1978 : 13). The prophetic criticism is never criticism for the sake of criticism. It is calling society to the covenantal relationships that God has intended for it.

The key word in the exposition of Brueggemann is "alternative". Brueggemann (1978 : 15) proposes

> Moses as the paradigmatic prophet who sought to evoke in Israel an alternative consciousness.

He represented a radical break with the royal house of Pharaoh. In his leadership a new social reality emerged.

Jesus himself also represents the transformation of society into an alternative vision, as God intended it (cf. Borg 1995 : 44-45; Bosch 1991 : 33-35).

> Thus the Jesus movement is centred on the sharp and radical transformation of the human situation. While the visionary language permits alternative readings, there were no doubt political and economic dimensions to the faith of the Christian movement which were articulated especially by the disinherited.
>
> (Brueggemann 1977 : 168)

Luke 1 : 51-55 stands in the sign of radical new land arrangements and in sharp contrast with existing land arrangements. This specific text and the general ministry of Jesus always had social-economic-political implications (Brueggemann 1977 : 171). There was a continuous inversion in the teachings of Jesus, exalting the humble and humbling the proud. That is why Stringfellow (1973) speaks of the "upside-down kingdom". Jesus was rejecting "the world of grasping and (affirming) the world of gifts" (Brueggemann 1977 : 172). Even in his own life Jesus did not grasp equality with God, but became a human being for our sakes (Phil 2 : 5-11).

Jesus repeatedly intervened in situations of utter despair, and after healing the paralytic (Mk 2 : 11) and the demon-possessed (Mk 5 : 19) they were completely restored. Both were homeless, living by the roadside and among the tombs. Jesus transformed reality and not only were they healed but they were also reintegrated into society and reunited with their families. Jesus provided them with a radical alternative (Brueggemann 1977 : 173-174).

> Jesus' ministry is to restore the rejected to their rightful possession.
>
> (Brueggemann 1977 : 174)

This simple statement contains a radical vision for ministry in contemporary cities. It questions the way in which the church positions itself with regard to the powers that be, as well as the nature of the church's ministry and solidarity with those rejected by society.

The prophets and Jesus offer an alternative imagination of a world in which rejected people are integrated into the heart of society, and proud people humbled. Jesus came to level the playing fields.

## 4.2    Hope From the Bottom Up : agents of an alternative imagination

Who are the agents of an alternative imagination ? Who can liberate our cities from its royal consciousness to an alternative consciousness, working for a transformed city ? This is problematic, as both those who are endowed with power, as well as those who are the poor and marginalised, carry baggage that  might prevent them from being agents of change.

> Numb people to do not fear or discern death... despairing people do not anticipate or receive newness.
>
> (Brueggemann 1978 : 63)

Those who have embraced current values and who ride on the wave of success, are numbed by the very values that they advocate. Those who are desperate often surrendered to despair without the capacity to receive the gift of a new reality.

There are also those who become enemies of an alternative hope (Brueggemann 1987 : 87-89). Brueggemann mentions three such enemies, namely silence or repression, fulfilment or satiation, and technique (the capacity to solve problems, etc.). These enemies are drawn together "in a remarkable alliance" (Brueggemann 1987 : 90), sustaining those who benefit from the current societal arrangements. It includes the silent majority (the mute servants who repress the pain of reality), the affluent ones satiated by fulfilment, and the intellectuals (technique) sponsored by the royal house. Brueggemann (1987 : 90) suggests the paradoxical "power of hopelessness" as an essential resource (and often the only resource) to counter the enemies of hope.

- **Hope in Hopelessness**

Biblical material offers a very specific view on hope and hopelessness : hope is often born in the midst of hopelessness, and an alternative vision has often emerged from the pit of despair.

The Genesis narratives are stories of hope amidst struggle (Brueggemann 1987 : 73 [cf. Von Rad & Westermann]). The prophetic texts are even bolder in proclaiming a hopeful new future as an alternative to the unjust and oppressive presence (Brueggemann 1987 : 74). It is important to remember that the prophets were often marginal people and their material has grown from oppressive and exploitative realities; if not born marginal, they were forced to the margins because of their solidarity with those at the bottom of the social ladder. The hope contained in the prophets are often the hope of a new social reality to emerge (cf. Brueggemann

1987 : 75; e.g. Micah 4 : 1-5; Is 2 : 1-5; Is 19 : 23-25; Is 65 : 17-25; Zechariah 14 : 8-9; the messianic hope amongst Christians and Jews 1987 : 75-80).

Brueggemann (1987 : 83) describes Isaiah 65 as literature of a dispossessed people oppressed by the dominant priesthood. In this text the minority group speaks from a point of marginalisation, being excluded in terms of power and access by the dominant group.

> Isaiah 65 is the poetry of that minority which asserts an alternative mode of historical existence.

The vision of a new heaven and earth invites hopeless people to act with hope (Brueggemann 1987 : 83). The substance of Biblical hope was always "a new world of justice, equity, freedom, and well-being" (Brueggemann 1987 : 80). These themes run through the Bible like a thread. And almost always these themes are envisioned by those at the bottom or at the margins of society.

Brueggemann (1987 : 55-56) speaks about the so-called history-makers and ask critically who the history-makers really are. The official history is always produced by those in power, by the intellectual elite. He indicates how history-making in the Old Testament was done, surprisingly,  through the marginal voices of the prophets. The kings could not make history in the same sense that Jeremiah  could. Jeremiah, as a voice of marginality, stood outside the royal domain and yet, from that position he made history in a completely different and unexpected way, calling for an alternative society. The bulk of positive history-making reported in the Old Testament, came via the actions and the words of the prophetic minority.

Harvey Cox (1969 : 63-64) refers to research done by Jerome L. Singer and John Antrobus on the concept of imagination. Although their research is now a bit outdated, it remains as important        when Cox wrote his book. They indicated that children close to their mothers and rejecting the values of their fathers, as well as children from minority or marginal groups, daydream more frequently than others. Cox (1969 : 64), referring to theirs and other research,  continues to say that "(f)antasy thrives among the dissatisfied".

Our openness to a new and transformed reality depends on our ability or capacity to fantasise. If dissatisfied people are better at fantasy, it might just be that alienated people have a greater capacity to envision a new future. The prophets were often alienated from their own societies. Jesus suggests that the poor will grasp the kingdom of God (cf. Cox 1969 : 64). Brueggemann (1987 : 90) speaks about those who are desperate, being able to hope for something better, while those who are satiated have often lost the capacity to hope or to imagine.

## ● **The Pain of an Alternative Imagination**

The official history is often a "make-believe story designed positively to protect the monopoly and negatively to make the pain less visible and less dangerous" (Brueggemann 1987 : 52). Pain - when visible - has the capacity to be dangerous. The guarantors of the status quo would therefore always strive to hide the pain of society. When pain does become visible, in other words : when the poor and those in solidarity with them express pain in visible ways, Brueggemann (1987 : 52) suggests that we get close to the process of making history. Because the public display of pain has transformative power.

This is what also distinguished Jeremiah as a history-maker. Brueggemann (1987 : 60) suggests that he was so much in touch with his own pain and the pain of his community, that he was able to "to think the unthinkable, to utter the unutterable", to imagine the unimaginable. So overcome by the realities around him, Jeremiah carried within him the seed of a radical alternative. Characteristic of history-makers is that they, contrary to normal historic lines, carries something radically new into history at a specific time.

> ...history-makers are passionate poets, moral energizers, dangerous theologians.

> (Brueggemann 1987 : 65)

Based on a proper analysis, and exposed to the realities of pain and struggle, they can lead us out of the darkness of the night, help us to remember, to forgive and to move on to a new place (cf. Brueggemann 1987 : 71). But the first step is the disengagement from the death within us, and a self-conscious exposure to the pain around us. Such a disengagement from the royal consciousness will bring about a risky imagination of an alternative consciousness (Brueggemann 1987 : 91).

> It begins by not eating at the king's table (Dan.1). Eating at the king's table invites despair. An alternative diet of manna makes hope possible and powerful.

Brueggemann (1987 : 97) suggests that evangelicals are those, not withdrawn into a spiritual enclave, but open to hear the Spirit in the pain of this world.

> The true evangelicals are those whose eyes notice the hurt and whose noses smell the grief.

Brueggemann is probably right. If the gospel has so transformed us that we can disengage from the dominant culture with the compassion of Christ, we have become evangelical in the sense of Christ. Evangelical faith does not only receive new gifts, but are also inviting hurt, loss, grief and pain to become its part (cf. Brueggemann 1987 : 100). Because only in experiencing these realities, can the alternative imagination emerge within our souls.

If the task of the prophetic church is to penetrate the numbness in society,

Brueggemann (1978 : 111) suggests that it would be done not so much through anger or indignation, but through sharing the anguish and pain of a struggling society.

> The public sharing of pain is one way to let the reality sink in and let the death go.

Society knows about self-actualisation, but has lost its capacity to lament the death of the old world. Brueggemann (1987 : 11-16) says that the first task of the propethic church is to offer a criticism of current ideology that enslaves. The second aspect is the public processing of such pain. Brueggemann (1987 : 16) refers to  this as

> an intentional and communal act of expressing grievance which is unheard of and risky...

It requires of the church an internalisation of pain. Grieving is something we are vaguely familiar with in our personal lives. But we still have to learn and apply it to the rest of society. And we have

> to learn it about God, who grieves... and who waits to rejoice until his promises are fully kept.

> (Brueggemann 1978 : 113)

People need to experience their pain publicly, not privately only, to generate social power.

> When there is a meeting, there is a social anger which generates risky, passionate social power.
>
> (Brueggemann 1987 : 17)

That is why governments make laws against public assemblies. In Israel possible ways of such public processing of pain were through a protest meeting, a formal protest in court according to proper legal procedure, or a liturgical act (cf. Brueggemann 1987 : 17).

Brueggemann (1987 : 102) goes to the heart of the gospel, suggesting that the dialectic of Good Friday and Easter Sunday, of grief and surprise, must always be held in tension in evangelical faith.

> This failure to grieve and then to receive newness concerns the ministry of the church because those of us who purport to be evangelical are entrusted precisely with the resources and discernments which could matter.
>
> (Brueggemann 1987 : 104-105)

In the city this dialectic of death and surprise, is a resource that can sustain us through the death of communities and churches, and open us up for the surprise of resurrected communities and new wineskins.

> Evangelical faith is gifted precisely with the news about dying and being raised.
>
> (Brueggemann 1987 : 105)

It is important to note, however, as Brueggemann (1978 : 111-112) rightly does, that the kind of faith that embraces death and expects newness is rare. We are more comfortable with the resurrection than the cross, with renewal than with dying, with success than with decay. This kind of faith is rare as it is not something that we can achieve through hard work, because then all of us (and all of our churches) would have done so. Rather, it is a gift for which we are to wait patiently, prayerfully and receptively, as we continue to engage with the city.

- **The church as agent of an alternative imagination ?**

Harvey Cox (1969 : 94-95) suggests five characteristics of an institution that could shape an alternative social reality :

* cultivating symbols that opened people to new levels of awareness in the past
* in touch with the most effective artistic forms of the day
* teaching people to celebrate and fantasise
* provide soil for new symbols to emerge, for new rituals to be expressed (affective)
* to be part of the culture in which we live but also free to envision something new and better

Cox is not convinced that the church can be this institution, although it is supposed to be. All five characteristics should be part of who the church is. The reason why the church cannot be this agent of an alternative imagination, in the words of Cox (1969 : 95), is that "the church is not the church". The churches have departed too far from what they were supposed to be in the world. According to Cox (1969 : 96) it is the wrong question to ask whether the church could be renewed to take up its task again.

Cox thinks that, once we are not so bound by renewing the church, we might even discover signs of life within some of the churches. But he suggests that the new churches we would need, would not come from the existing churches. His suggestions are that our fantasy should go beyond the traditional confines of organised churches, to find signs of hope wherever we can find them (Cox 1969 : 96-97).

Although, in many ways, the harsh criticism of Cox rings true, the assumption of this study is that the church could be transformed to indeed become such an agent of an alternative imagination. I do agree, however, that the transformed church might come in completely new wineskins, the shape of the church may differ radically from what we were used to, and existing historical churches might or might not be part of this process of transformation. The assumption of this study is that God is the Lord of the church, however, and He will transform the inner city church to play its rightful role. God is not dependent on any specific church or ecclesial model, and that is

where we have to open ourselves up for the element of surprise.

Contextual theology would contribute to such a discussion by saying that the church could indeed be an agent of transformation, but only if it positions itself in solidarity with the poor and marginalised. From the perspective of the poor, the church would be exposed to its own death, to the hope of the hopeless, to the possibilities of imaging new and better communities, to the art of fantasy, and to the need for its own transformation. The church in solidarity with the urban marginalised, can be transformed to embrace a prophetic imagination for the city.

## 4.3   The New City

New visions for social change and transformation "are marked by distinguishable signs" (Wallis 1994 : 161). Wallis suggests that there are certain signs of transformation, that reflect the recovery of "old moral values and new social possibilities" (Wallis 1994 : 161). The signs he mentions give evidence of spiritual transformation that points to a new socio-political future . There is a close relationship, thus, between spirituality and politics, and that is what Wallis (1994 : 160-161) is searching for in his book, *The Soul of Politics.* In this study I am exploring ways in which the church (spirituality) could contribute to the transformation of the urban public arena (politics). The signs of transformation could be sought in (amongst other spheres) the spheres of  religion, politics and economy.

Robert Linthicum (1991 : 47) provides a clear framework for an urban biblical theology. He is suggesting that Deuteronomy provides the clearest exposition of systems in the corporate life of Israel, and this exposition is also a helpful indication of how God has intended urban systems to function in order to ensure well-being for all people. Deuteronomy and the books that follow also indicate how these systems have been corrupted, however. Linthicum spells out the vision of God for a religion of relationship, an economy of stewardship and a politics of justice.

Brueggemann (1993 : 77) thinks along similar lines. He suggests that God's intention for the city is for faithfulness, justice and righteousness, for social structures and relations that will work for the good of all; for a place in which resources are shared fairly and God's presence is known. But the city does the contrary. The royal consciousness of the city promotes an economy of affluence, a politics of oppression, and a religion of accessibility and triumphalism [God is so present that we do not even notice his absence anymore] (Brueggemann 1978 : 41; cf. also Birch 1991 : 221-227).

Brueggemann (1983 : 80) proposes Isaiah 65 as a vision of the new heaven and the new earth. Based on this text, Brueggemann imagines the new things that God intends for the city.  As we pray for his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven, God creates new things. Jesus taught us not to pray to go to heaven, but to pray that God's will be done on the earth as it is in heaven. It is about the kingdom being

established here and now; the presence of God being felt in our time; not only in spiritual terms, but in every sphere of society.

Isaiah 65 is the story of God creating new things ("I create..."), and when God creates the old things will pass away ("no more..."). Isaiah dreams of a city where there will be no more weeping or distress of homeless mothers with children, of have-nots being abused and harassed by the haves; no more infant mortality rates; no more social dislocation through gentrification or urban renewal; no more children born into contexts of destructiveness (cf. the Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago; chapter 3, 1.2.1).

> No more, because God's own life is given over to the verb "I will create", and in so doing He will override the chaos that numbs and kills in the city.
>
> (Brueggemann 1993 : 83)

When God creates the poor will enjoy the produce of their hands, and share in the benefits of society. A new city will emerge where the big won't eat the small... with adequate resources for the good of everyone (Brueggemann 1993 : 79).

God's acts in Is. 65 are linked to concrete communal, socio-economic and political problems (Brueggemann 1993 : 84). In the face of painful urban realities, the real presence of God will be made known (Is.65 : 24-25; Rev. 21) and hostilities between human beings and between humanity and nature would also disappear.

This text represents a break from a religion of triumphalism, an economy of affluence and a politics of oppression (Brueggemann 1978 : 16). Instead of a triumphant religion, Brueggemann suggests a religion celebrating the freedom of God; instead of a politics of oppression, Isaiah 65 proposes a politics of justice and compassion (Brueggemann 1977 : 16); instead of an economy of affluence, Isaiah 65 suggests an economy of shared humanity. Jesus' own ministry has demonstrated these alternative visions for religion, politics and economy (Brueggemann 1978 : 94-95). It is this freedom (religion), justice (economics of sharing), and power (politics of justice) which will break through the royal consciousness (Brueggemann 1978 : 95).

The royal and the alternative consciousness, as the contrasts in Brueggemann, could also be understood in terms of Linthicum's exposition of the book of Revelations, referring to the city of God and the city of Satan.

In the book of Revelation he clearly identifies the city of Satan and the city of God as two separate realities (Linthicum 1991 : 278-291). The city of Babylon is portrayed as the city of Satan (Rev.17 : 1- 19 : 10). Babylon surrendered to other gods and was wholeheartedly committed to power and evil. Political oppression, economic injustices, and religious idolatry were the characteristics of this city (Linthicum 1991 : 284). Allowing a city to deteriorate to a point of no return, being completely committed to evil and the destruction of your own, would inevitably lead to self-destruction.

On the other hand, we see a vision of the city of God in Rev. 21 : 1 - 22 : 5. What is presented here is the vision of a new Jerusalem, a city as God intended it to be (Linthicum 1991 : 285). This city is marked by God's presence, by the absence of pain and grief, by the hunger of people for a relationship with God, and by the absence of those who have destroyed humanity through all means (Linthicum 1991 : 285-286). In the city of God all will be in a relationship with God; the economic relationships practised will be based on equitable distribution; the earth will be transformed and sustainable; the political order will be just and everyone will participate equally in governing the city. Linthicum (1991 : 288-289) refers to the statement "And they will reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22 : 5c), indicating that it does not say "God will reign", but that the people - in an equal, just and democratic way - will reign.

In our cities today we find signs of both Babylon and Jerusalem. And we are called to work consistently with God in defeating the Babylon within us, and in erecting signs of the new city even within our city. But in the end it is God himself who will usher in the new city - in his own time (cf. Linthicum 1991 : 285).

I will now briefly consider the three aspects that both Linthicum and Brueggemann highlighted  as characteristics of a transformed city (or a distorted city).

### 4.3.1  A Covenantal Religion

The foundation of a city's well-being is in a relationship with God (Linthicum 1991 : 48). Linthicum (1991 : 48-49) contrasts the observance of laws and liturgies with such a covenantal relationship (cf. also Brueggemann 1977 : 16; 1978 : 95). Obviously it could not be expected of the whole of the city to submit to such a covenantal relationship. The problem is that God's people have often lost this sense of covenant, and through empty ritual and the observance of certain laws and moral codes, we try to keep our faith alive. That is why the church needs to be transformed into the vision of God.

An authentic relationship with God would inevitably lead to a politics of justice and an economy of sharing. The covenant with God implies new covenantal relationships with one another, which prevent us from exploitation and abuse. The commandments in Deuteronomy are strikingly focussed on issues of justice. They deal with the redistribution of wealth to the poor, protection of strangers, the sick, the widow, the divorcee, liberation of slaves, limitation of powers for those in authority, and so on (Linthicum 1991 : 49-50). In the New Testament it is often made clear that love for God is not real if it is not translated into actions of love for our neighbours (James 2 : 14-26; 1 John 4 : 20b : "For anyone who do not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen").

### 4.3.2  An Economy of Community

The covenantal relationships between people call for an economy of stewardship. This implies a very different perspective on property and ownership issues. Land is ultimately a gift from God, that is only temporarily entrusted to us to manage. God remains the real owner, and those to whom land are entrusted would have to be accountable for the way in which they managed God's land. The way in which people spoke about it in Deuteronomy 8 : 17, saying "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me", was more than arrogant, according to Linthicum (1991 : 50-51). It was also blasphemous as it denied the real owner of the land the fact that he gave the land as a gift.

In the period of the kings, Israel has moved away from the vision that God had for them. The systems of the city and the nation have now been corrupted and the history of the kings give vivid expression of this. In Solomon, an economy of privilege and exploitation is exemplified (Linthicum 1991 : 53-56). Instead of being stewards of God's property, Solomon accumulated wealth at the expense of others, exploiting his fellow Israelites in the process. Israel now rapidly became a nation marked by class divisions (1 Kings 9 ; 15, 20-22).

The covenantal nature has been lost, and instead of the well-being of the community, the accumulation of wealth by a few became the norm. This study suggests an economy of community, in which our interrelatedness will be recovered, and therefore the notion of stewardship, sharing and redistribution.

### 4.3.3  A Politics of Justice

An economy of privilege and exploitation needs to be safeguarded by a politics of oppression (Linthicum 1991 : 56). We see this in the life of king Ahab, resorting to law and violence to maintain the status quo. Ahab recognised the faith of Israel as foundation for a politics of justice. To maintain the status quo, he had to destroy such a faith commitment (Linthicum 1991 : 56; see 1 Kings 18 : 16-46). The prophet Elijah entered into this arena and opposed Ahab by exposing the emptiness of Baal, the one that Ahab promoted to replace the faith of Israel. The second story illustrating Ahab's seizure of power, is the narrative of the land owned by Naboth. Ahab demonstrated that he could take property for the royal house as he wishes, and that nobody would oppose him. He was not held accountable by anybody. Instead of God being the owner and ruler of the nation, the kings replaced God and had ultimate control.

Josiah was the grandson of Solomon and son of Ahab. Based on Deuteronomy he has set out to bring about radical reforms in a land plagued by exploitation and abuse of power. Jeremiah challenged these reforms, however, thinking that they were merely superficial (Jer. 6: 16-21; 1991 : 58-59). Mere liturgical reform was not enough. It had to spill over into the public arena of politics and economy. Instead of

superficial alterations, true reform had to be rooted in personal and social repentance. The people of God still did not live according to the principles as set out in Deuteronomy for their religious, economic and socio-political life together (Linthicum 1991 : 59).

It is a question why the king wanted liturgical reforms at all. Did he sincerely believe that liturgical reforms would lead to order and peace in society ? Or did he engage in such reforms to further legitimise the status quo, and through the liturgy, to control his people ? (Linthicum 1991 : 60). The vision of Deuteronomy, however, was for a politics of justice.

> To fulfill the kingdom of God... Israel was to develop and maintain a politics of justice.
>
> (Linthicum 1991 : 50)

### 4.3.4 In Summary

*Israel moved away from a covenantal religion, a politics of justice and an economy of stewardship. They embraced a religion of control, a politics of oppression and an economy of wealth and exploitation.*

In our modern-day cities the same battle still continues. We are also faced with a religion of control that struggles to survive in inner city communities of chaos and despair, with a politics of oppression that marginalise certain people for the benefit of others, and with an economy of exploitation that rejects our common humanity for the sake of enriching some.

The church in the city needs to recognise the battle on these fronts, dealing with the death in itself, and engaging in the public arena, calling the city and its systems to conversion and accountability.

## 5. Towards a Spirituality of Inner City Transformation

Once we imagine a transformed city, we need to sustain this vision with a spirituality of transformation. Louise Kretzschmar (1996) suggests a holistic spirituality as a prerequisite for the reconstruction of South Africa (cf. Louw 1997 : 406). She stresses that the provision of infrastructure alone is inadequate for the transformation of society (including urban society).

> The promotion of morality is vital to the success of any structural venture. Thus, personal and social morality, individual and corporate spiritual growth, prayer and social involvement need to be integrated.
>
> (Kretzschmar 1996 : 74)

## 5.1    Defining the Concept

Kretzschmar (1996 : 64-65) defines spirituality as the integration of our experience of God in relation to ourselves and all the spheres of reality in which we act. By definition, she says, spirituality is holistic. Donal Dorr (1984 : 20) has a simpler way of explaining it, saying that spirituality for him is what *shapes* him, and what *moves* him. It is

> the outlook, the approach, and the set of attitudes and values which are the expression of this 'me'.
>
> (Dorr 1984 : 20)

In the context of this study I would like to propose a definition of spirituality as the discipline of opening ourselves up to God's Spirit, who is creating within us a new imagination. It is the art of imagining the new city as God has intended it to be, the art of seeing the city through the eyes of God (McClung 1991).

> *A spirituality of transformation is the discipline of opening ourselves up to God's Spirit, who is creating within us a new imagination...*
>
> *...and the values, commitments, rituals and actions, that will realise this transformed inner city reality.*

## 5.2    A Narrow Spirituality or No Spirituality

Kretzschmar (1996 : 67-70) identifies, in the South African context, a disinterest in spirituality in some sectors, especially among certain intellegentsia teaching at some theological institutions. Others present us with a narrow, privatised spirituality, limiting the gospel to the private sphere of the individual person. Still others, usually rooted in such a narrow spirituality, struggle to develop ministries of social transformation, since they simply lack the spiritual resources to inform and sustain such ministry. There is no social or transformational spirituality at work.

The first problem is the dualistic nature of spirituality in some sectors.

> A privatised Gospel is inherently *dualistic* because it separates reality into different spheres : the physical and the spiritual; the secular and the sacred; the public and the private; the saving of souls and social involvement. Christian faith is thought to be relevant to one sphere but not to the other. To seek to be personally transformed by the Gospel is regarded as valid, but to seek to transform the societies in which individuals live is not regarded as part of the task of the church.
>
> (Kretzschmar 1996 : 69)

The second problem is the spiritualisation of important Biblical categories. Sin, salvation, and poverty, are all regarded as **"spiritual"** terms only, without considering the physical and social dimensions thereof.

> As a consequence of this spirituality, homelessness, ecological degradation, or social injustice are not perceived as related to either sin or salvation.
>
> (Kretzschmar 1996 : 69)

A third problem is the individualisation of the gospel. The **individual** person is stressed at the expense of the group or community, and the communal or covenantal character of the Gospel is often lost in this approach (Kretzschmar 1996 : 69-70).

A fourth problem is that a privatised spirituality is also **a-contextual**. Spirituality that is contextual is rooted in the unique struggles of a specific community or context, and responds appropriately and in a dialogical way. A privatised spirituality offers "Christ as the answer" to every situation, without ever asking what the real issues or questions are (Kretzschmar 1996 : 70).

## 5.3    A Holistic Spirituality

Kretzschmar (1996 : 65-66) suggests that a holistic spirituality contrasts some of the dominant spiritualities of our time in a few distinct ways.

*        A holistic spirituality stands in contrast to our materialistic society, in which human values and the inner life are subdued by material possessions, accumulation of wealth and so forth.

*        It stands in contrast with our rationalism, as a holistic spirituality recovers "the importance of liturgy, symbolism and the unconscious dimension of the human personality" (Kretzschmar 1996 : 66).

*        Thirdly, it stands in contrast with our individualism and impersonalism, as it "stresses community and social concern" (Kretzschmar 1996 : 66). There shouldn't be any separation between prayer and social change. Social responsibility should be rooted in spirituality. In Isaiah 58 the prophet is speaking about true spirituality as actions moving beyond the liturgical or ecclesial sphere into the world of struggle and despair. True spirituality enters the public realm and offers the resources of death and hope, as captured in the Gospel, to bring about social transformation.

Kretzschmar (1996 : 74) pleas for a holistic spirituality that will go beyond the false dichotomies of "sacred and secular" or "private and public" or "prayer and politics" (cf. also McAfee Brown 1988 : 23-33) :

> Because the Lordship of Christ extends beyond each person's individual soul, only a holistic spirituality can meet the needs of brokenness of persons and groups and bring delivery to creation itself. It is persons and groups who are being restored who have the energy and motivation to pursue the goal of reconstruction of an entire country. Therefore, I submit that the identification and promotion of a holistic spirituality is a prerequisite for the reconstruction of South Africa.
>
> (Kretzschmar 1996 : 74)

A holistic spirituality is an *integrated spirituality* that informs and sustains our walk with God, our relationships with others, and our interactions with the systems of the city and the world around us.

## 5.4    An African Spirituality

In the African context there is a natural inclination to view life in an integrated way and religion is often a fundamental feature of the way in which African society is organised and in the African world view as such (Kretzschmar 1996 : 70). It therefore makes sense to embrace a holistic spirituality within the African urban context.

Danie Louw (1993 : 46-47) describes some of the typical features of such a spirituality, including humility, the relational character, co-operation and mutuality within a holistic approach to life; the sacredness of life (cf. Deist 1990 : 4; Maimela 1991 : 5)); acceptability; inclusiveness; and  dialogical structures. Louw (1993 : 47) concludes by saying that a truly African spirituality is a lively spirituality.

> Laughter, music and dancing reflect the spirit of their culture.

Unfortunately Louw speaks in "we-they" categories of "their" culture, without including himself as part of the African reality. An assumption in this study is our common belonging to the soil of Africa, and therefore the need to nurture an African urban spirituality, responding to the spirit and the culture of Africa. Inner city churches need to embrace a spirituality that will learn and draw from African expressions, in order to offer an authentic response to the cry of the African, and specifically South African, city. "African" in my definition is neither black nor white, but refers to our common roots, our common place of belonging and our mutual commitment.

Although I could have developed this theme more extensively even, I would like to suggest it as part of the kind of spirituality that we should discover in order to sustain our vision and ministry in South African inner city communities.

## 5.5    An Urban Spirituality : "God *is* present"

A spirituality of transformation in the South African city, needs to be both holistic and African.  I would like to suggest as a starting point for a spirituality of urban transformation, however, the affirmation that "God is present" in the city. God is

indeed present. And even when we withdraw from the city, God draws himself closer to the painful realities of forgotten urban places.

Because we affirm that God is present in the city, we have the hope of transformation. Unfortunately, we still struggle with the idea of an urban spirituality. We still draw our strength from resources outside of the city, and we still cling to rural or suburban images and metaphors, foreign to our own experiences. We need to develop an eye for God's hidden presence that want to surprise us when we least expect it.

A spirituality of inner city transformation will be distinctively urban. In order to nurture such an urban spirituality, we need to discover urban stories in the Bible, and we need to develop urban images and metaphors, urban songs and prayers, urban liturgies, urban art, and so forth. Gavin Taylor's reflections on ministry in the inner city community of Woodstock, Cape Town, *Remnant Voices* (1996), is an example of an uniquely urban spirituality. Brain Bakke's art and creative ministry in the Uptown community of Chicago is another example.

An urban spirituality will continuously seek for signs of God in a godless city. It will seek new ways through which to celebrate God's presence wherever and whenever we find it, and it will be intentional about highlighting God's presence where others cannot discern it. As this study is done with the inner city poor as vantage point, we need to be reminded of Jesus' identification with the poor in Matthew 25 : 31-45. An urban spirituality will seek God in the eyes of the poor, in the unexpected places, with the strangers and the outcasts.

## 5.6   Towards A Spirituality of Transformation

The starting point is the affirmation that God is present. We have to move from this reality to embrace a holistic or a balanced spirituality (cf. Dorr 1984 : 8).

In Micah 6 : 8 God's desire for our lives is spelled out clearly within the context of urban power and the marginal poor. A balanced spirituality affirms that as we draw closer to God, we are also drawn closer to each other, and we are drawn deeper into the city and its painful realities.

In his award-winning book *Spirituality and Justice*, the Roman Catholic priest Donal Dorr (1984 : 8), speaks about a balanced spirituality. He responds to the one-sided spiritualities of our world, which Kretzschmar also referred to. He offers Micah 6: 8 as a corrective to a narrow spirituality, saying that the three demands made by God in this text are the basis of a balanced spirituality. I suggest these three imperatives as the basis for a spirituality of transformation, but also as the Biblical imperatives that lie at the roots of the three base theories to be developed (i.e. a theology of community, a transformed ecclesiology, and a public theology : chapter 5; 6-8).

Micah is a village peasant who finds himself in the city and speaks against the power of the urban government. Power was centralised in Jerusalem and the government, military, industrial and religious sectors have used their power at the expense of marginal people (cf. Brueggemann, et al 1986 : 6-7). Marginal people could not find access to social power (Brueggemann 1986 : 16).

We read Micah 6:8 within this context :

> *This is what Yahweh asks of you, only this :*
> > *That you act justly,*
> > *That you love tenderly,*
> > *That you walk humbly with your God.*

Dorr speaks about the need for a threefold conversion. These three demands represent three spheres in which conversion needs to take place.

Dirkie Smit (1990 : 19) speaks about conversion as a permanent process of revolution, referring to Niebuhr who said that our conversion is a continuing imperative. Smit states clearly that this kind of conversion or transformation that needs to occur is not something that individual people themselves can produce. Rather, it is "a response of radical, revolutionary *conversion*, a response to what the living God is doing." He speaks of it as a "*concrete conversion*".

God himself is busy in our lives, communities and cities. We have to discern the signs of newness and respond to it through conversion or transformation. Smit (1990 : 20) makes it clear, though, that this conversion does not happen in a vacuum. God is working in specific situations that are very concrete. It could also be called contextual conversion. He identifies transformation as a process to happen in our churches, in the lives of individuals and communities, and in society. Kretzschmar (1996 : 72) also speaks about transformation or reconstruction at these different levels : reconstruction needs to take place at a personal (and communal) level, at an ecclesial level, as well as at a social level.

### 5.6.1 "To walk humbly with God"      (the church as servant community)

This refers to our personal, religious conversion (cf. Dorr 1984 : 8). We are called to walk with God in a close and intimate relationship, to walk humbly with God, to surrender to God.

Brueggemann (1986 : 15) writes about this in a terrific way speaking about the ambiguous nature of this phrase. The obvious meaning is that we are humble in God's presence because He is so powerful. The second reading is that God's own walk is a humble walk, and to walk with God means to walk as humbly as He does. After all, his solidarity with us and with the poor, is not a powerful, paternalistic

solidarity, "but it is a patient, attentive, waiting, hoping solidarity" (Brueggemann 1986 : 15).

I will apply this phrase to the sphere of the church. It is in this sphere that the personal conversion to God is expressed most clearly and intentionally. A conversion to the humble God, and a correlating humble walk, have major implications for our personal lives and ministries. A humble walk with God should form the basis of a transformed, urban ecclesiology, i.e. of the church as a servant community in the city.

What does it mean for inner city churches to walk humbly with God ? What does it mean in terms of our worship, our fellowship and our diaconate ? How and where will we position ourselves ?

### 5.6.2 "To love tenderly"        (a theology of community)

The second imperative refers to our moral conversion. If the first conversion is a personal conversion (although I apply it to the "person" of the church also), then this conversion has interpersonal implications (cf. Dorr 1984 : 12-13). It is about my life with others. Again the words of 1 John 4 : 20 rings in our ears : we cannot say that we love God whom we have not seen, if we do not love our neighbour whom we have seen.

Brueggemann (1986 : 15) suggests that "tender love" is about entering "into relationships of abiding solidarity". This conversion is calling us back into covenantal relationships, affirming that we indeed belong to one another, and that we will journey together in solidarity. **This conversion is calling us back into community.**

The way of solidarity or tender love is expressed by God's solidarity with his people. Walking humbly with God is therefore a prerequisite for loving tenderly, since we can only learn from God how to love with tenderness and fidelity.

> There is a close relationship between the ability to 'love tenderly' and the power to 'walk humbly', between moral conversion and religious conversion.
>
> (Dorr 1984 : 14)

Before I can really touch others effectively, I need to be in touch with my own fears and struggles. Before I can reach out in tenderness to others, I must surrender in humility to walk with God, submitting my fears and struggles to the tender God (Dorr 1984 : 14).

This second conversion requires of me to surrender myself to others.

It is a matter of entrusting myself to the other, allowing myself to be vulnerable. This is what 'openness' means - being willing to take the risk of leaving myself open to rejection or hurt.

(Dorr 1984 : 13)

To love *tenderly* is also calling us to fidelity. It is about making commitments to each other in communal relationships, and honouring those commitments.

...our love is to be modelled on the enduring faithful love that God shows us (e.g. Jer 31 : 13).

(Dorr 1984 : 14)

To love tenderly in the city, means to become a listening people, listening to the voices of the city, as God is listening to our cries.

This is the basis of a theology of community, affirming people's dignity by reaching out to them in tenderness, and committing to people in solidarity, thereby nurturing a new community of genuine humanity. The kind of relationship that God envisages here is similar to his relationship with us : it is covenantal and cannot be breached; it is interdependent and therefore affirming our need to be in communion with one another; it is communal and therefore always seeking to cross barriers and to break down walls - in order to celebrate community in the presence of God.

## 5.6.3  "To act justly"          (a public theology)

The third sphere in which conversion needs to take place is in the public arena. Spirituality is not restricted to interpersonal relationships only, but now spills over into the public arena and concerns itself with issues of justice and the way in which society is organised (Dorr 1984 : 14). This is a "political conversion" and implies us working for a society that will be just and fair to all its people (cf. Dorr 1984 : 14-15).

God's solidarity with people is not just tender and humble, but it is also combined with powerful and active intervention when required (cf. Brueggemann, Parks & Groome 1986 : 15). We are called to do justice as God does justice.

And when God does justice it is not modest or polite or understated. It is an act of powerful intervention.

(Brueggemann, et al 1986 : 15)

Justice, in the Biblical sense, is not a holding action to maintain the status quo.

It is rather an active intervention aimed at the transformation of social power.

(Brueggemann, et al 1986 : 15)

It provides a social vision, an alternative imagination, of how every person and

group in society should have access to power and fair options for life. It includes social entitlements (or rights), the cancellation of debts, and the redistribution of land (Brueggemann, et al 1986 : 16-17).

Justice, in the Biblical sense, should be understood within the realm of the covenant. God, as God of life and resources, has given land and other opportunities to be used for the well-being of all people. Justice is to ensure that every person and community will get what "belong" to them (Brueggemann, et al 1986 : 5), i.e. what they need to live with dignity. Inequality, the lack of access to resources and severe poverty levels, could all be interpreted as symptoms of the wrong or unfair distribution of goods and resources, which needs to be rectified .

This element will be the basis of the third base theory, namely a public theology. A public theology rests on the assumption that we envisage and work for social justice, equality and shalom in the socio-political-economic spheres of society. And God called us to "act justly".

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Dorr (1984 : 17-18) emphasises that any of these three elements can only be complete if they are supported by the other two.

> A proper balance and integration of all three is the basis for a truly Christian spirituality and this is more important than ever in today's world.
>
> (Dorr 1984 : 18)

It is a distortion to focus on only one of these elements as if it entails the whole of Christian spirituality. We need to walk humbly with God into the city as servants and servant churches; we need to love tenderly and faithfully as we enter into covenantal relationships with the masses and the individuals; and we need to act justly where powers and systems crush people and communities.

## What are some of the implications of these imperatives ?

*"To walk humbly with God"* will imply the following *"spiritual disciplines"* for individuals and urban churches :

*      surrendering to Christ in a child-like faith
*      opening ourselves up and inviting the capacity to dream kingdom dreams
*      a commitment to the humble, the poor and the marginalised
*      a discovery of God where he is present with the poor
*      exchanging upward mobility with a commitment to be in solidarity with the city
*      disengagement from the royal consciousness and embracing an alternative consciousness
*      replacement of traditional developmental models with participatory models, including community organising, empowerment, self-help programs, etc.
*      servanthood in the example of Christ

*"To love tenderly"* will imply the following *"spiritual disciplines"* for individuals and urban churches :

*      affirming people's dignity and humanity
*      a continuous invitation of strangers into fellowship
*      intentional acts to break down walls of separation and to build bridges of trust
*      nurturing of inclusive communities, breaking down racial, cultural, or other prejudices
*      a shared journey in covenant with one another
*      an intentional search and longing for community
*      to practice our "togetherness" through communal celebrations, actions, rituals, and play
*      to practice tenderness and kindness daily
*      to share authentically - spiritually and economically
*      to struggle with people ("compassion"), entering the pain of others' realities

*"To act justly"* will imply the following *"spiritual disciplines"* for individuals and urban churches :

*      to disengage from unjust practices and exploitative relationships
*      to celebrate our covenantal interrelatedness
*      to act with and on behalf of the poor
*      to process pain and struggle in public ways
*      to reflect on and to work for social justice
*      to advocate for those who cannot speak for themselves
*      to seek the presence of God in the public sphere
*      to denounce the false gods in the city
*      to practice a prophetic witness, exposing (criticising) the current reality and imagining (energising for) the alternative, new reality

### 5.6.4 "To die into the city"

In chapter 4 I analysed the church by differentiating between churches in the city, churches to the city and churches with the city (cf. chapter 2; 2.2; chapter 3; 7.2). I would like to position this analytical tool within a spirituality of transformation.

*"Churches in the city"* often practise a narrow spirituality, in which personal faith is the sum total of spirituality, but the struggles of the city in which they are, do not speak to the core of their faith. There is no relationship between faith issues and social issues around them. Such churches are often captives of a specific cultural or economic group. They merely survive without any clear insight into God's purpose for their being in the city.

*"Churches to the city"* are churches who have started to respond to the needs they perceive around them. They give something of themselves away, even though it might be like the people in the Gospel narrative who gave out of their abundance (Mark 12 : 41-44), without their giving impacting upon their budgets. There are some inner city churches, though, who extend themselves to touch the needs of the city, and who are more like the widow in the story who gave graciously the last two coins that she had. She gave everything that she had to live on (Mark 12 : 44). To become a church to the inner city, implies reaching out from ourselves to others, giving something away, dying to our own agendas.

The third movement is that of the church being *"church with the city"*. As we explained earlier, this implies being church with others, not necessarily prescribing but walking with the people of the city in solidarity; i.e. struggling with, dreaming with, even to the point of being absorbed by the pain of the city ourselves. Churches with the city are churches who have become servants of the city, entering its pain seeking to be like balms of healing, opening its buildings to receive pain and death on its doorsteps. These churches are going the next step in self-giving, in self-sacrifice, and in dying to themselves. The traditional concept of success is slowly leaving such churches, as they invite the desperate and not so successful into communion with them.

But as we seek to become inner city churches who are about the transformation of the inner city, I suggest that we become *"churches dying into the city"*. It is escapist to be a church in the city without having a city agenda. It is a step towards solidarity to become a church to the city, but it often tends to be paternalistic and from a distance. It is a moment of wonder when churches become churches with the city, and we desperately need such churches who are in solidarity with their communities. But theologically, the real journey that we need to embrace is the journey of dying into the city.

Cox (1969 : 141) feels that we should always have an openness to be surprised.

> A church that actually holds power and reigns has little capacity for self-caricature or irony.
>
> A weak, even ridiculous church, somehow peculiarly at odds with the ruling assumptions of its day, can once again appreciate the harlequinesque Christ. His pathos, his weakness, his irony - all begin to make a strange kind of sense again.

In the inner city, we desperately need churches who are able to survive through the irony and contrasts and pathos of everyday life. Strong churches often do not make it, and the ridiculous, upside down churches run by no funds and weak leadership, often become signs of incarnational hope amidst suffering people and communities.

"Dying into the city" is the theological imperative that could trigger transformational ministry in the city. Dying into the city is the theological imperative that guarantees hope and life. Dying into the city has the promise of resurrected congregations and communities on the other side of the grave.

We first have to engage the death in ourselves before we can be open to receive the newness of life. We need to engage the death in our church, before we can invite the new wineskins so desperately required. We need to engage the death in our communities, before we can celebrate the signs of God's transformation.

A spirituality of inner city transformation should embrace the notion of dying into the city : dying to ourselves and our success images, dying to our need for acknowledgement or recognition, dying to our old images and ecclesial expressions, dying to our middle-class values and aspirations, dying into the city... so that the city could live.

This is the same gospel dialectic at work once again (cf. Brueggemann 1987 : 102). If we want to gain our lives, we will lose it. But those who lose their lives, will gain. The death of Good Friday was never the last word. But it was the road of the cross that led to the victory of the resurrection. Philippians 2 : 5-11 expresses this paradox in a striking fashion. Jesus himself did not cling to his equality with God, but allowed himself to be stripped of power and glory, and he physically died into our world. And now we are called to have the mind of Christ, according to Philippians 2 : 5.

As Jesus died into the city, signs of transformation emerged. And his death on the cross became the hope for transformation in our world and in our cities.

The table below indicates the process of dying into the city. We can either escape the reality of the city, as Jonah almost did. We can be hard-hearted inner city churches, condemning our context, as Jonah indeed did. We can be a church ministering to the city "from above", as Peter to the Gentiles before his prejudice was challenged in Acts 10. We can also be a church with the city, journeying in solidarity as Jesus did. This process of identification with the city to the point of solidarity, is the process of dying into the city.

| churches escaping the city | |
|---|---|
| churches in the city<br><br>churches to the city<br><br>churches with the city | **dying into the city** |

Some churches escape from the city. Others decide to stay in the city and through ministry to the city and identification with the city they embark on a journey of dying into the city.

When we look at the life of Jesus it is clear that He practised a spirituality of transformation. The life of Jesus resembled criticism of the status quo, as he expressed his solidarity with the marginalised "and the accompanying vulnerability required by that solidarity" (Brueggemann 1978 : 81).

Jesus chose to take the humble position with the poor and the outcasts, and in doing so He became a sign of transformation himself. The solidarity of Jesus was characterised, though, by a literal disengagement from the privileges of the world, to the point of being as helpless as those He chose to spend most of his time with.

> The only solidarity worth affirming is solidarity characterized by the same helplessness they know and experience.
>
> (Brueggemann 1978 : 81)

Already in the birth of Jesus we see him as the homeless baby (Luke 2 : 7). Soon after his birth we identify Him as the refugee in Africa (cf. Matthew 2 : 13-15). The narrative in Luke 1 : 51-53 and Luke 4 :18-19 clearly identify where and how Jesus has positioned himself. In the stories that Jesus told, He also represented a new consciousness. The story of the good Samaritan challenges the dominant consciousness that ignores the marginalised. The Samaritan himself cuts through the numbness and denial of the religious establishment. The Samaritan expresses a new way of including outcasts in our social arrangements (Brueggemann 1978 : 87-88).

Matthew 9 : 35-36 speaks about Christ's compassion : "When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless." These words do not only express his compassion, but they are also polemical in their reference to the helpless and harassed. Brueggemann points out that people get harassed by others, and people are often kept helpless by others (1978 : 87). Jesus' compassion is also a challenge to those who cause the harassment and helplessness.

The compassion of Christ becomes clear when He is with the crowds in this text
(Matthew 9 : 35-36), when He cries over the death of a good friend (John 11 : 33-
35), and when He mourns over Jerusalem (Matthew 23 : 37-38). Jesus' compassion
reached its culmination as He finally surrendered to the cross (Brueggemann 1978 :
80-95).

But the compassion of Jesus was more than pity.

> Compassion constitutes a radical form of criticism, for it announces that the hurt is to be
> taken seriously, that the hurt is not accepted as normal and natural but is an abnormal and
> unacceptable condition for humanness.
>
> (Brueggemann 1978 : 85)

In his compassion, the prophetic nature of Jesus' ministry became clear. The
prophets were internalising the pain of society (cf. Hosea 11 : 8-9; Jeremiah;
Brueggemann 1978 : 87). In their words and actions they expressed and embodied
the pain, hurt and grief caused by the royal consciousness. The establishment
usually denied, repressed and covered up the pain around them, but the prophets
expressed and absorbed it (cf. Brueggemann 1978 : 87). In the same way Jesus
absorbed human pain and suffering to the point of carrying it to the cross.

The prophetic ministry of Jesus was not only a criticism of the status quo, or in
solidarity with the pain of society, but it was also a resource for transformation.
Jesus' compassion, namely, penetrated the numbness and made the abnormality of
people's suffering visible. The way in which He transformed the "less important"
issues into central issues on the agenda of the powerful, is an important exemplar
for urban churches (Brueggemann 1978 : 85).

Brueggemann (1978 : 91) speaks of

> ...this *passionate* man set in the midst of *numbed* Jerusalem. And only the *passion* can finally
> penetrate the *numbness*.

Jesus in his compassion criticises death and penetrates our numbness, but his
compassionate solidarity also contains the power to transform (Brueggemann 1978 :
91). His criticism offers the "possibility of an alternative beginning" (Brueggemann
1978 : 91). The ultimate prophetic criticism is in the crucifixion, announcing the end
of death in the world and the beginning of new life.

The stories of the Bible, of Jesus and the prophets, connect "the **internalization of
pain** and **external transformation**" (Brueggemann 1978 : 88). The real challenge is
to translate this insight into a transformed inner city praxis.

## 5.7 A Spirituality of Inner City Transformation : A Summary

Three general requirements for a spirituality of inner city transformation should suffice.

- It is vital to discover and nurture a distinctively **urban** spirituality on the basis of the affirmation that God is present in the city.

- A spirituality of inner city transformation has to be **holistic**, allowing God to speak into the different spheres of urban society.

- In the South African context, we need to nurture an **African** spirituality, drawing from African culture and experience.

More specifically, an outline for a spirituality of inner city transformation should contain the elements summarised in the following table :

| GOD IS PRESENT | "to walk humbly with God" | personal & ecclesial conversion | DYING INTO THE CITY |
|---|---|---|---|
| | "to love tenderly" | moral conversion | |
| | "to act justly" | political conversion | |
| | **TOWARDS TRANSFORMED INNER CITY COMMUNITIES** | | |

- A spirituality of inner city transformation has as a starting point the affirmation that God is present in the city. This is the foundational hope on which all other actions in the city rest.

- Jesus literally **died into the city.** The road of the cross was characterised by a humble walk with God, relationships of tender love and communion, and acts of justice. In his death on the cross Jesus announced the beginning of a new life. This same process of dying (and anticipation of resurrection) is required of inner city churches.

- His **humble walk with God** was expressed in his humble obedience, downward mobility, solidarity with the poor, fellowship with strangers and outcasts, and suffering amidst a suffering world.

- His **tender love** was expressed in the communal relationships which He established between people, and between people and God. He called people to himself and set them in communities. He healed people and re-integrated them back into society. He affirmed the dignity of people and called them to embrace each other in community. His solidarity with humanity was

expressed most poignantly as he surrendered on the cross.

- The life of Jesus stood in the **sign of justice**, calling out against false religion and false gods, the marginalisation of certain groups, the glorification of the law above relationships and of individuals above the well-being of all people. Jesus' life was an attempt to restore covenantal relationships, which had as consequence a shared life-style and a politics of justice. When he died on the cross it was an act of justice shouting out not only against personal sin, but against the way in which our personal sin carries over into the public arena to abuse and exploit and oppress.

## 6.    Towards the Church as Servant Community

In the beginning of this chapter I provided an outline of my framework for a theology of inner city transformation. I suggested three base theories as three strands contributing towards such a theology of transformation, i.e. a practical theological ecclesiology, a practical theological anthropology and a practical theological diaconate. In this section I will reflect on a practical theological ecclesiology for the inner city, suggesting as base theory the church as a servant community.

It is impossible to develop an ecclesiology in isolation from an anthropology or a public theology. Therefore, these ecclesiological reflections will be rather tentative and introductory at times, as it will be explored in greater details in the next two sections, i.e. a theology of community and a public theology. I suggest a world-oriented ecclesiology, that will serve humanity and seek for shalom in the public arena as well.

### 6.1    Defining a Practical Theological Ecclesiology

A practical theological ecclesiology provides a view on the church, as the church is **supposed** to be. This view forms the frame of reference within which congregations act in the world, and on the basis of this framework they evaluate themselves and their actions in society (cf. Heitink 1993 : 264). There are different practical theological ecclesiologies shaping the praxis  of the church, and leading to the church being present and active in different forms in the world.

In the sixties a very negative view of the church was adopted. People like Hoekendijk and others questioned the role and relevancy of the church. Hoekendijk spoke of the parish church as immobile, self-centred and introverted (cf. Bosch 1991 : 394), and argued that the world was the real locus of God's interaction with humanity. In the seventies a shift took place again and a new emphasis was placed on the fact that mission needs to be understood in ecclesial terms (cf. Bosch 1991 : 385; Gutierrez 1988 : xxxiii - xxxvi). Even some of the theologians that held the

church in very low regard in the sixties now changed their minds and called for a rediscovery of the identity and relevance of the church.

Bosch (1991 : 381) speaks of two major schools of interpretation regarding the church. The first school views the church as sole bearer of the message of salvation, expecting a partial realisation of God's kingdom on earth and understanding mission as the transfer of people from death to eternal life. The second school views the church as a sign, pointing to God's actions in the world, focussing on the humanisation of society, and understanding itself as a consciousness-raiser.

The first approach robs the church of its ethical thrust and the second of its soteriological depth (Costas 1982 : 80; Bosch 1991 : 382). Both interpretations should be held in tension, instead of opting for one or the other.

Today there is a new vision for the church as is evident in the development of various practical theological ecclesiologies, both abroad and locally (Pieterse 1993 : 157). Fresh expressions of the church are emerging from the grassroots and developments such as the base ecclesial communities, small Christian communities in Africa, and so forth, are providing resources for critical reflection upon the establishment church, but probably also for its transformation.

The new appreciation for the church tends to have a different focus, however. The church is seldom viewed in isolation anymore, but finds its true identity in its close interaction with the world. This vital shift is important as a basic assumption in this study. The church has shifted from being church for ourselves to being church **for** others, and even more, being church **with** the world. In the context of an apathetic church, Bonhoeffer (1971 : 382f) speaks of the church as "church for others"  He wrote

> The church is the church only when it exists for others... The church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving.

Bosch (1991 : 368-389) suggests that we go beyond being church for others, as this is detrimental for  authentic co-existence. He suggests that we become "the church with others". He devotes a section to the notion of "church with others" in his book **Transforming Mission**. For a long time Biblical images such as servant, salt, light, yeast, and so forth, have been silent as stronger images of domination and authority have been used to describe the relationship of the church to the world (cf. Bosch 1991 : 374). Bosch (1991 : 374) suggests that these images have surfaced again in our time and gave birth "to the idea of the church as sacrament, sign and instrument". The church should not be seen as the dominant authority any longer, but as a servant sharing and walking with others.

Bosch (1991 : 373) suggests in this regard the two notions of "people of God" and

"pilgrim church" and state that these two are closely related. The notion of pilgrim church has surfaced with Bonhoeffer and others. The image of the people of God as a pilgrim is dominant in Hebrews and in 1 Peter. The church is described here as a wandering people, an outsider in this world, a pilgrim in a postmodern era, a servant in humility.

> It has no fixed abode here; it is a *paroikia*, a temporary residence.      (Bosch 1991 : 374)

If we understand ourselves as temporary residents on a pilgrimage with the rest of humanity, we are humbled and the nature of our ecclesiology is challenged to the bone. As pilgrims, we will often have to meet our fellow pilgrims on the margins of society, where temporary residence is normal. As the church is drawn to the margins, and as it increasingly discovers its own place on the margins, it will look at the world through new eyes. It will look at the world through the eyes of marginal people, and then it will look at itself through the eyes of the poor. And when that happens, we will be humbled to a conversion of our ecclesiologies, of our very understanding of being church.

The practical theological ecclesiology that I suggest here will be world-oriented, and will seek to position itself on the margins of society to hear the silent voices.

Küng (1968 : 487) states that everything the church does must be done "with windows open to the street". If the church acts within the confines of a "self-congratulating community", living only for itself, it has lost its identity. The church has to recognise that it cannot exist outside of its relationship with the world. What is required in our time is "a dynamic, purposeful, world-directed ecclesiology" (Van Engen 1991 : 160).

### 6.1.1   The Church-as-Organism & The Church-as-Organisation

Pieterse (1993 : 158) makes the important distinction between the church as **organism** and the church as **organisation**, in order to maintain both the theological and empirical dimensions of the church. Both these elements need to be reflected in a practical theological ecclesiology.

He further distinguishes between the pastoral and social functions of the church. The pastoral functions ensure that the church lives up to its identity and vision as body of Christ, i.e. as organism. The social functions want to ensure that the church as human institution can exist meaningfully in this world, i.e. as organisation. The social functions are important to facilitate the necessary impact of the pastoral functions. These two sets of functions are integrally related to each other.

The pastoral functions are generally summarised under the threefold heading of kerugma, koinonia (incl. leitourgias), and diakonia. Burger (1991 : 21) suggests four

key social functions to ensure the effective functioning of the church, namely vision, commitment, koinonia, and service. Van der Ven (1993 : 82) also identifies four social functions that belong to the essence of the church as organisation / institution, i.e. identity, integration, policy, and management. Pieterse then suggests, on the basis of these, that both the effective integration of the pastoral functions and of the social functions, as well as the integration of pastoral and social functions with each other, would result in the building of the church into a healthy body (organism) and institution (organisation).

The church in the inner city is at great risk institutionally (organisation). As organism new expressions of faith are emerging globally, that need to be reflected upon and learnt from for new directions in ecclesiology. These new expressions also present the institution with resources for its own transformation. That is what this section is about. In order for the church to become an agent of inner city transformation, it needs to be transformed first. And the first steps in such a transformational process is to evaluate the church in terms of its pastoral and social functions, and to trace the signs of newness as the Spirit gives rise to new expressions of faith and church all over the world.

## 6.1.2  Models, Metaphors or Images of the Church

The forms of church life, or the various expressions of faith communities globally, are dependent on the ways in which the church understands its function or mission in the world  (cf. Cox 1965 : 109). In time, different models or metaphors emerge as indicators of the church's self-understanding.

In South Africa today, it becomes important for the inner city church to discover its role within a changing environment, to develop a clear vision for this environment, and to commit itself and its resources to work for the well-being of this environment. We need to explore the various models of church, and, being informed by these models, we need to seek for the most appropriate way of becoming church in the inner city.

Dulles (1987) introduces five possible models of the church, i.e. the church as institution, the church as mystic communion, the church as sacrament, the church as herald, and the church as servant. Each one of these models, taken in isolation, is reductionist, since it only emphasises certain aspects of the church, sometimes at the expense of other vital aspects (Dulles 1987 : 194-197). Each of these models has its strengths and weaknesses.

In a later study, Donald Messer (1989) introduced five distinct images for contemporary Christian ministry, namely **wounded healer, servant leader, political mystic, practical theologian,** and **enslaved liberator**. Again, each of the images have certain strengths and weaknesses, and only as we integrate them do we have a fuller picture or vision on the church and on ministry as God might envisage it.

Louw (1992 : 126-127) identifies homiletic, cultic, communicative, revolutionary transformation, and charismatic "body of Christ" models. Hendriks (1992 : 14-24) identifies institutional, proclamation, "body of Christ" and transformation models. Pieterse (1991 : 71-79) identifies three models in line with the terminology of Dulles (1987), namely the church as herald, the church as body of Christ, and the church as servant.

It is important to recognise that we do not have to choose for one of these as opposed to others. We should rather find a way to integrate the strengths of the different metaphors into a contextual ecclesiology that will facilitate the various functions of the church. For the purposes of this study I would suggest a framework for a practical theological ecclesiology, that will, in my opinion, be most appropriate to the inner city context of South Africa currently.

It is important for the church to be self-critical as to the dominant images that shape its life and praxis of ministry. Brueggemann (1994 : 263) suggests that the analysis of different church models and a self-critical look at our current models, are important to affirm that our existing models are not necessarily the best, and that other metaphors or models for being church can indeed be possible and imaginable.

Dominant church models do not escape the influence of the context or dominant culture. Therefore, in the past many of the ecclesiological models suggested something of a success-oriented triumphalism, which is not necessarily to be identified with the gospel. Even the models described by Dulles, often gave the church a privileged position in relation to the world. The church is teaching or proclaiming good news or claiming to be God's people.

> In all these models the Church is seen as the active subject, and the world as the object that the Church acts upon or influences.
>
> (Dulles 1986 : 89)

Ecclesiology in the South African context has also been shaped predominantly by Western, individualist categories. Louw (1997 : 394) therefore suggests certain major shifts as prerequisites for an appropriate pastoral approach in the South African context.

- from a rational, individualistic perspective to a systemic perspective
- from an emphasis on personal problems, to environmental, social and structural problems
- from a clergy-oriented and denominational ecclesiology to an ecclesiology of people, and - I would submit - an ecclesiology of the public arena.

Nowhere could these shifts be more important than in the urban context in general, or the inner city context, in particular. In the inner city, the triumphalism of the past has often been replaced by a struggling, rather tentative church. Success has been replaced by loss. On the other hand, the transitional nature of the inner cities with its tremendous cultural and racial diversity, require of us to look very self-critically at

the Western character of most of our inner city churches. There is a new longing for community and belonging, across racial, cultural and denominational boundaries, and somehow a transformed ecclesiology should celebrate such diversity in community.

## 6.2    A Conversion to the Humble God

> In the same way that the vast majority of churches never lifted a finger to oppose apartheid, there are few today that have the vision or capacity to engage in their own reconstruction, let alone the reconstruction of the country.
>
> (Kretzschmar 1996 : 73)

This study is about the transformation (or reconstruction) of inner city communities in the South African context. Kretzschmar raises the need for an ecclesial reconstruction that will empower churches to engage themselves in issues of social welfare and social transformation. Such an ecclesial reconstruction first of all requires a conversion that will empower us to become agents of change.

Not only the church in South Africa, but the church in the African context needs to be transformed (Mulemfo 1996 : 129). The transformation of society needs to start with the transformation of the church itself (Mulemfo 1996 : 145; Bosch 1991 : xv; 189; Cochrane, et al 1991 : 10; Hiebert & Hiebert Meneses 1995 : 375). Smit (1990 : 22) refers to Niebuhr's discussion on the transformation of culture and submits that even Niebuhr's accent was on the conversion of the church, or of Christianity, itself. It has to be transformed in response to God's actions in every new situation. In a new situation in the inner cities of South Africa, such a transformation process is long overdue.

In 4.3.1 a vision for a covenantal religion was spelled out, implying covenantal relationships between God and his people, and between God's people among themselves. A covenantal religion learns form God's solidarity with his creation, and establishes relationships of covenantal solidarity on earth. It was suggested in 4.3 that such a covenantal religion has become redundant, and was replaced by a religion of accessibility and triumphalism (cf.6.1), where God was often equated with the status quo and made into an idol, much less than the sovereign, free God. In a triumphalist religion the poor and vulnerable are often marginalised, whilst the powerful monopolises God for themselves.

In the inner city a religion of triumphalism is seriously challenged, and the accessibility or presence of God is often questioned. Theologically, a triumphalist religion does not reflect the character of Christ, who is the head of the church.  And perhaps the church assumes too much when it boldly confesses God's presence in our midst, when we have refrained from following Christ outside the gate (Hebrews 13 : 13). Such a triumphalist religion also negates the special solidarity that God expressed with those at the margins.

It is vital to ask where Jesus is today. Cox (1965 : 128) suggests that Christ is not confined to our ecclesiastical traditions, but that He usually goes before us to call us to ever new places.

> He is always ahead of the church, beckoning it to get it up to date, never behind it waiting to be refurbished.

I want to submit that the inner city church should humble itself to follow Christ to places where He is already waiting, outside the walls of the church, and outside the city's gates. What is required is nothing less than a personal and ecclesial conversion to the humble God, who became flesh and served humanity to the point of the cross. The image that I want to suggest for the transformation of our ecclesiologies, is the image of God who chose to serve rather than to dominate or manipulate; God who chose to empower rather than to overpower.

Guider (1995 : 119), reflecting on the church of liberation in Brazil, speaks of the irony of a church that positioned itself on the side of the poor, without really recognising its own institutional involvement in creating and maintaining certain oppressive structures in society. The depth of conversion that is required of the church, is often not appreciated. Guider (1995 : 143) continues to argue that the most important lesson of the Pastoral da Mulher Marginalizada, the base movement that joined the church and women in prostitution together, is not about the most effective response to prostitution. It is rather a lesson about

> the mystery of how the church itself may be transformed through the process of participation in the lives of marginalized women.
>
> (Guider 1995 : 143)

As the church positions itself in new places, it will learn from the humble God and from humble people, and it will be transformed.

This conversion process of the church is an on-going process. We are always in the tension of what the Christian community is and what it actually should be (cf. Bosch 1991 : 387). In line with the Reformed principle of daily conversion, Goedhart (1984 : 24) suggests that the congregation should daily position itself in situations where it becomes possible to learn about servanthood. To become a servant church can never be completed but will remain an on-going process of transformation.

The story of the Good Samaritan is a helpful metaphor in this regard. In this story, it is the person at the bottom of the moral and religious hierarchy who became what God wanted humanity to be. Those at the top of the moral and religious hierarchy, the priest and the Levite, ignored the suffering one. Bosch (1991 : 90), quoting from Mazamisa, concludes that it was the "non-human" who cared for the fallen man, while the "human" in Jewish society ignored him. We find in this metaphor the striking paradox of the "non-human" Samaritan expressing humanness and thereby affirming his own humanity. The "human" religious ones have dehumanised a fellow

human being, and thereby they have lost their own humanness.

This story helps us to look at the church through the eyes of the poor and the outsider. Only when we learn to look at the church through such new eyes, can we be transformed enough to become agents of transformation in the city.

- **Re-Evangelisation**

A personal and ecclesial conversion to the humble God will imply the re-evangelisation of people. The purpose of evangelism is conversion. The "converted" church and certain "converted" individuals have gone through the process of re-evangelisation already. They now need to continue this process within their communities.

De Gruchy (1992), Kritzinger (1991) and Mkhatshwa (1991), all suggest the importance of re-evangelisation in the South African context. Kritzinger (1991 : 107) borrows this term from Motlhabi (1984) and defines the content of re-evangelisation as

> helping Christians to break with the unjust established order and to commit themselves to the creation of a new society.

Re-evangelisation implies that something radically went wrong in the process of initial evangelisation leading to an inhuman church condoning an unjust society (Kritzinger 1991 : 107). A personal and ecclesial conversion would not be complete without a new commitment to justice for all people. Furthermore, such a conversion would require that the church develop the mechanisms to re-evangelise people and communities.

This would obviously mean different things for different people. De Gruchy (1992 : 8) reflects on the different worlds within one country, and suggests that the task of evangelism is one, but the method to evangelise different distinct groups within society, might vary considerably. He refers to affluent white suburbanites, a member of a militant right-wing organisation, a radicalised young black person, and a squatter who moved into the city from rural peasantry. One can add the single mother living in a high-rise building in the inner city, the mother of gangsters on the Cape Flats, or the farmer fearing that he might be the next victim of on-going farm killings.

> Indeed, both the promise and the challenge of the gospel will relate differently and its appropriation be expressed in diverse ways.
>
> (De Gruchy 1992 : 8)

De Gruchy (1992 : 9) speaks of a positive response to the gospel as a re-orientation to life and relationships, accompanied by a new set of personal and social values and commitments. Often people might be Christians, but they still need to undergo a "second conversion", as Peter did in Acts 10 (Pannell 1992 : 63-91). This is the conversion following on an approach to evangelism that is contextual and going beyond personal categories to spell out the gospel's social implications.

Such a process of re-evangelisation will call us from within the narrow confines in which we find ourselves, to new places, where we will have "the ability so see and meet other people as human beings" (Kritzinger 199 : 114). As such, re-evangelisation will have to address our fears and prejudices, at a personal, collective and ecclesial level .

Wouldn't something of Isaiah 65 become true, if the farmer from Ermelo, the young man from Mannenberg, the single mother from Sunnyside, and the AIDS-victim from Soweto, could join hands as part of God's family, as fellow human beings, working humbly together to build a new society ?!?

The personal transformation called for by a process of re-evangelisation, goes hand in hand with societal and cultural transformation (De Gruchy 1992 : 9-12). Existing divisions and barriers in society often intensify in times of transition, such as in the present-day South Africa. De Gruchy (1992 : 9) states that such social (and cultural) transformation cannot be achieved without personal transformation.

Transformation begins with repentance (Pannell 1992 : 109) and repentance of injustices, prejudices, and other sin, would not only transform individuals and churches, but would also have an impact on society-at-large. Conversion implies liberation **from** true guilt that we experience and confess, and **liberation to** a new praxis of God's justice (Goedhart 1984 : 45).

Contextual, holistic evangelism is essential in our time, calling people to follow Christ with their whole lives, and in every sphere. In the South African context this might often imply the re-evangelisation of confessing Christians.

> Given the fact that the major stumbling block to the just transformation of society is human self-interest and that in a period of uncertainty and transition there is an intensification of what has always been a high level of distrust, fear, hatred, and frustration, with the consequent polarisation of factions and the periodic outbreak of violence, evangelism is of crucial social significance not simply in terms of church growth but also of social transformation.
>
> (De Gruchy 1992 : 9)

In South Africa, as anywhere else, evangelism should include a call to God, a call into community, a call to reconciliation, and a call to justice (Conn 1982 : 27-34; Pannell 1992 : 39-62). Thus, evangelism always has socio-political implications as well. Re-evangelisation in the South African context would include a call to the humble God (ch. 5; 6), a call to tender, humanising relationships (ch. 5; 7), and a call to justice in the public arena (ch. 5; 8).

## 6.3    The Church as Servant Community : A Practical Theological Ecclesiology

This study wants to combine two of Dulles' models to suggest the church as a servant community, whilst integrating the values of other models. I suggest the church as servant community, being convinced that these two images - servant and

community - are the most appropriate for the needs and challenges of the inner city today. Aspects of the church as institution, sacrament and herald will be integrated into a theology of the church as servant community.

Let me briefly look at the church as servant community in the light of Dulles' models. The church as servant community, in order to carry out its mission, might need to develop new institutions that will facilitate healing and social justice, and must be serious about transforming the church as institution to be a more effective vehicle of service, koinonia and healing (institution). The church as servant community is responding to the truth of the gospel and the example of the Servant Christ, and as servant community the good news of the gospel is shared in relationships and proclaimed with greater integrity and power (herald). The church as servant community is establishing signs of God's incarnating presence with humanity, and sacramental signs of God's grace where people have lost hope (sacrament) (cf. also Dulles 1987 : 196-197).

An ecclesiology of the servant church differs quite substantially from the more authoritarian models or metaphors. Dulles (1987 : 92) refers to this model as "secular-dialogic" : secular, because the world is its locus of activity, and dialogic, because it operates where the world and the church meet, instead of merely applying the principles of the Christian tradition to the world. Theologians such as Bonhoeffer (1965 : 350) and Teilhard De Chardin (1960 : 138) have spearheaded a shift towards a servant ecclesiology (Dulles 1987 : 93), and Gibson Winter (1963), Harvey Cox (1965, 1966, 1978), and others, have developed these ideas further. Both Winter and Cox focussed on the church in the urban arena, calling for servant churches.

Winter (1963 : 55), in **The New Creation as Metropolis**, speaks of a servant church that will not primarily be about confessional proclamation or cultic celebration, but rather about reflection on God's presence in the midst of history (cf. also Dulles 1987 : 95). John A.T. Robinson (1965 : 92) is critical of the church's elaborate structures, suggesting that it should rather work within the structures of the world than to build parallel structures. He says, namely, that the first characteristic of a servant is that he or she lives in the house of somebody else, not their own (cf. also Dulles 1987 : 96).

Various South African scholars opt for the "body of Christ" model as the most appropriate in the current South African context (Pieterse 1993 : 159-160; Heyns & Pieterse 1990 : 61-62; Louw 1992 : 128). This model is able to integrate the different functions of the church meaningfully, affirming the unity and interdependence of believers, but at the same time allowing for plurality in unity.

Heitink (1993 : 264) also suggests the community of believers, or koinonia, as the dominant and organising theme for a practical theological ecclesiology. The Christian community should reflect signs of God's alternative community in this world. Koinonia, suggests Heitink (1993 : 265), is not on the same level as kerugma or diakonia, but it is the image that connects the other functions of the church and informs them (cf. Kritzinger 1988 : 35).

In the opinion of Heitink (1993 : 265-266) the church as Christian community provides the link between anthropology and diaconate. The Christian community is supposed to move between humanity and the public arena, to be in solidarity with the poor and the marginalised, and to envision an alternative distribution of resources for the sake of a fairer society.

It means that the church should build community internally (the Christian community), in the surrounding geographical area (neighbourhood), and in the public arena (city). At all three levels the church should seek for relationships of covenantal solidarity, implying not only new relationships within the religious sphere, but also new economic and political relationships.

*The church as servant community is an alternative community embodying the transformative presence of God through an incarnational and serving presence in the world.*

- **A Holistic Model**

Jesus had the threefold task to announce the arrival of a new regime, to personify its meaning and to distribute its benefits (Dulles 1987 : 109-110). This corresponds with the church's threefold functions of kerygma (proclamation), koinonia (demonstration of new community) and diakonia (redistribution). As a servant community the church is an embodiment of the covenantal community that Christ inaugurated, and as it serves and distributes gifts in this world, it proclaims the reign of God.

It is my opinion that the servant community as metaphor best expresses the unity between the threefold functions of kerygma, koinonia and diakonia. It is such a holistic view that Dulles (1987 : 102) also pleas for.

Not only the **nature** of the church's servanthood, but also its **focus** should be holistic. Calvin has emphasised the work of the Spirit in renewing both the inner life of the human soul, and the face of the earth (Bosch 1991 : 256). Cox (1965 : 115-116) suggested that the church, as servant and healer of the city, should not separate between healing of souls and healing of the "whole urban region" (Cox 1965 : 116). The church as servant community is called to minister both to the people of the city, but also to the soul of the city. Individual and social structures, care for the body and the soul, ministry in word and deed, transformation of religious, social and cultural life, can at best be distinguished from one another, but should never be separated. The church has to serve the whole person and the whole of humanity (Goedhart 1984 : 24; Dulles 1987 : 26). Such a holistic understanding of the church as a servant community, is also helpful in integrating both the cultural (Genesis 1-2) and evangelistic (Matthew 28 : 19) mandates of the church (De Beer 1991 : 102-103).

- **A Discipleship Model**

The church as servant community finds many parallels with the metaphor used by Dulles (1987 : 204-226), when he describes the church as a community of disciples. Discipleship is characterised by Jesus' call to himself, to community, and to serving the poor.

Service, in the Greek sense of the word, often refers to the servant waiting at the table, serving food and pouring wine. The distinction between master and servant was very clear at the meal (Kung 1968 : 390-391). The basis of discipleship is not in knowledge, power or the law, but in servanthood. The only valid model, according to Kung (1968 : 392), for the community of disciples in this world, is the one of service at the table.

Discipleship is marked by Jesus' call to himself. The church as servant community will understand God as servant, will discover God's presence in servanthood, and will know that Christian servanthood is defined by the cross (Messer 1989 : 100-103). The image of Christ as the incarnation of God, is the theological foundation for this model. The servant community is, namely, the fellowship of the crucified (McGavran 1981 : ch.5). In the same way as Jesus, washing the feet of his disciples in John 13 : 16, the church is called to humble servanthood in community. Servanthood can easily be misunderstood, as if the church should receive its orders from the world, being a servant to the world. The church needs to understand itself rather as an incarnational sign of Christ, working in the name of and in submission to Christ, who remains the head of the church (Dulles 1987 : 99).

A transformed ecclesiology will shift from an ethic of achievement to an ethic of suffering and sharing (Louw 1997 : 395). To be a servant church, it is required of the church to be converted from worldly values to the Spirit of the Servant Christ.

Discipleship is marked by Jesus' call to community. The Western church has been absorbed by a search for self-fulfilment and a healthy self-image. Service is the Biblical concept that could provide a correction to this individualised view of humanity, recognising that individual rights and worth can best be realised within communal relationships were we focus on the other (Burger 1991 : 131). Christ re-interprets and deepens the meaning of service, suggesting that it implies our fundamental concern for others, our life with and on behalf of others, a moving away from ourselves to an embrace of others.

Discipleship is finally marked by Jesus' call to serve the poor. If the church as servant community is not in solidarity with the poor, it has lost its identity as followers of the crucified Christ. Through its ministries of presence, solidarity and prophecy, it will express an appropriate response to God's call from the margins.

## 6.4    Basic Concepts in a Theology of the Church as Servant Community

I will briefly introduce the ministries of presence, solidarity and prophecy, in this section. The church as servant community will establish an incarnational presence in the inner city, expressed in relationships of covenantal (or communal) solidarity, and with a commitment to serve as a prophetic community, addressing injustices and demonstrating just alternatives.

I will also reflect briefly on models of ministry that seem to embody the elements of presence, solidarity and prophecy in integrated ways, being signs and instruments of transformation in places of struggle.

### 6.4.1  Presence

It has been suggested that the conversion of the church to the humble God will have implications for its presence in the world (6.2.1).

The church should have "a theology of presence with people" (Dandala 1994 : 7). Guider (1995 : 96; 139-163), in her book on prostitution and the church in Brazil, advocates for a theology of incarnate presence. She relates the Brazilian reflections on the relationship between pastoral agents and prostitutes, stressing the importance of "presence, encouragement, and availability" (Guider 1995 : 96). It was the women in prostitution that suggested the style of Jesus

> as the most appropriate approach to foster conscientization, conversion, and compassion.

Jesus' life and ministry stood in the sign of an incarnational, self-emptying presence with others. The church is called to a similar incarnational presence in the inner city and among the poor.

For Guider (1995 : 148) the principle of incarnation is not rooted in humanity's need for salvation, but rather in God's desire tot be one with humanity, to be "God with us". The church, in response to its Lord, is also drawn to be one with others. Too often incarnational presence is advocated as a means to another end. Guider (1995 : 151) argues that an incarnate presence with others is an end in itself. It is based on God's yearning to be with us.

Heitink (1993 : 269) considers the model of presence in contrast to the parochial model arranged along territorial lines. In the contemporary church the model of Christian presence expresses itself most visibly in new wineskins, such as the base ecclesial communities and other experimental communities of faith. Especially in cities new expressions of Christian community and presence are found, and Heitink specifically refers to emerging models in the inner city of Amsterdam.

In mainline churches in the 19th and 20th century, the white middle-class has

emerged and the fusion of dominant Christianity and white middle-class values have been so real, that the Biblical meaning of Christian presence has been overshadowed. Christian presence and white middle-class respectability have become almost synonymous. Middle-class values and images have been fostered as the only authentic ways for being Christian.

The black church in the United States has reacted to this dominant view of Christianity, providing a "liberating, communal voice for justice and equity" (Gerkin 1991 : 95) and introducing a presence that translates into processes of social transformation. Added to this emerging voice were the voices from the Third World and from women, suggesting new perspectives on Christian presence in a diverse and divided world.

In Israel the metaphor of presence started with a recognition of and a sensitivity for the presence of God (Gerkin 1991 : 106). God's presence is described in Genesis in very humane and earthly ways as a God walking with his people in the garden, speaking from a burning bush, and so forth. Often God is making his presence known in unexpected places. Gerkin (1991 : 162) suggests that the Christian community and its individual members should be seeking for this "elusive presence of God".

> God's presence and God's call of the people of the Bible to their vocation was never a matter under their control and it came to them often in hidden, elusive ways. It seldom came as they expected it, or with great fanfare. Hidden in a burning bush or a still small voice, the call of God as often as not came quietly only to those "who had eyes to see and ears to hear."

The Christian community should shape its presence according to the ways in which God has made himself present in our midst.

> ...just as God's presence in human affairs is, according to that story, most often elusive and hidden, so the leaven of the Christian vocation will in most situations be an elusive, hidden presence more concerned with the transformation of the whole of human life than with its own public acknowledgement.
>
> (Gerkin 1991 : 162)

Dorr (1984 : 16-17) suggests that we seek for signs of God's presence with the poor. He emphasises the significance of the poor in history, as expressed in the Old and New Testaments, and in Christ who identifies himself as one with the poor (Matthew 25 : 31-45). If we are serious about discovering God with the poor, it will imply that the church has to  position itself intentionally where the poor are (Dorr 1984 : 17).

The presence of the church in the world could also be described in terms of Dulles' models. The church's presence refers, in the first place, to the church as a human institution, serving in society alongside other human institutions. It also refers to the church as God's new community, reflecting alternative values and relationships. As God's new community , the church is establishing a serving presence, in the example of Christ. The presence of the church as servant community is also sacramental, as it mediates the grace of God in a society where death has become evident. Finally,

where the church is present as servant community, it proclaims the presence of God in our midst.

- ### An Active, Participatory Presence

Instead of a passive presence, the Christian presence should be an active, listening presence, responsive to the voices of struggle and to the voice of God.

In Guider's book (1995) about prostitution in Brazil, she emphasises the transforming effect that listening has on the church and on theology. When the church in Brazil started to listen to women in prostitution, they were faced with their own captivity and provided with opportunities to be transformed.

As we seek to address the inner city poor, new questions emerge that we haven't explored before. Often we refrain from asking these questions, or we ignore them when they emerge, because they usually challenge our existing values and praxis of ministry. Guider (1995 : 22), speaking about the Brazilian church trying to respond to the issues of women, says

> That the very efforts gave rise to questions and concerns that required a particular kind of paradigmatic adjustment and reconceptualization to take place.

We cannot be with the poor without being changed ourselves. It is our listening presence with the poor that will lead to our own transformation and that will become a source of healing and transformation to the poor themselves. As they relate their stories, both listener and narrator will be healed (cf. Müller 1996 : **foreword**).

Our active, listening presence has to integrate the notions of visibility and availability (Van Houten 1999 : 99; Guider 1995 : 158).

For those on the margins, the church-as-people is often not visible or real. In the inner city and among the poor, we need to establish **a visible presence**, which will invite people to engage with us. It might require that we position ourselves in completely new ways. Northside Ecumenical Night Ministry is situated on the North Side of Chicago and ministers to young people at-risk and on the streets. They have established a presence on the streets at night time between 11pm and 4 am, and they make themselves visible in the places where the young people are. Their visibility is an embodiment of God's care and the basis for relationships of trust and healing.

If we are merely listening or visible, however, without also being responsive through our  availability, our presence will amount to nothing. Guider (1995 : 158) uses the term **disponsibilite**, which captures a position of availability and openness, responsive to the sturggles of our fellow human beings. This is a humble, vulnerable presence, not always knowing the outcome; but with the potential to bring about a redemptive relationship (cf. Müller 1996 : 12-13). The church needs to establish

such a presence among the inner city poor, since "vulnerable availability" paves the way for real communion and "copresence" (Guider 1995 : 158). This stands in contrast to purely functional ministry that is not incarnate, and that can afford to withdraw after a day's work, leaving the minister or the church "unchanged and unchangeable". **An available presence** suggests a position of openness, allowing ourselves and our churches to be changed through communion with others.

Such a presence, marked by listening, visibility and availability, is a **participatory presence**. Guider (1995 : 161) suggests such a presence to be concretised through the embodied presence of the church, through communion established by ministries of love, hope and fidelity, and through the intuitive experience of the transcendent presence of God. She contrasts the ministerial practice of participatory presence with a problem-solving approach, which is more functional and based on certain learnt skills. She speaks of "participation as being" (or incarnate presence), and suggests that such an approach is rather "marked by wonder, humility and reverence for the other", instead of being marked by technique and skill. In this approach the distinction between the minister and other persons loses its meaning and validity (Guider 1995 : 161; cf. also Bons-Storm 1989).

## 6.4.2  Communal Solidarity

On the basis of such a participatory presence, relationships of communal solidarity will emerge.

### 6.4.2.1      The Church as Covenant Community

The challenge for local churches in urban environments is to become convenant communities, based on a Biblical vision of the church (cf. Hiebert & Hiebert Meneses 1995 : 350; also Birch 1991 : 172-184; Van Engen 1991 : 104-108). For a long time, ecclesiology was dominated by institutional and sacramental images of the church, at the expense of the servant image, or the image of the church as covenantal community (Van Engen 1991 : 104-105). As the church became strong, we have lost the gospel of community (Lupton 1996 : 3-5). We replaced our need for community with suburbanisation, self-sufficiency, and self-fulfilment. In our day the notion of covenant community needs to be recovered. The church is called to be an alternative community to the clubs or corporations of our day (cf. Hiebert & Hiebert Menenes 1995 : 349).

A recovery of this notion will translate into a greater emphasis on koinonia within the church.  Burger (1991 : 103) suggests that koinonia is about the establishment of faith communities in which believers can experience communal care and love. Where relationships of  solidarity and fidelity are established (covenant), our faith can grow and take shape. Burger (1991 : 118) is of the opinion that this kind of community needs to filter through to every area of the church's ministry. Individualism needs to be countered in the preaching and other modes of ministry,

worship services should offer more opportunity for genuine koinonia, small group ministry should be implemented in congregations, and a new focus should be given to family ministry in the church.

It is important to stress, however, that a covenantal community takes root within a specific context. It is Bujo (1995 : 6) who offers an important description of the elements of context and culture in community. He reminds us that covenantal communities are by definition incarnational.

He speaks about Christ who incarnated himself into our broken realities to bring all people closer to God. God is so serious about human realities, Bujo (1995 : 6) states,

> that he descends into the depths of the non-divine in order to speak to human beings in human form.

Although the church is a mysterious community (cf. Dulles 1987 : 47), it is always incarnated within a larger community, having a human face. Bujo suggests that the incarnational character of God has vital ecclesiological implications. Speaking from a black African perspective, Bujo (1995 : 6) asserts that

> the church in black Africa cannot refrain from becoming black African.

Bujo (1995 : 6) continues, saying

> Africa, says Joseph Malula, is expecting a child, and the child, i.e., the local church, will certainly be given to us, and it will be a *black* child.

Our faith communities need to struggle with the issues of contextualisation and inculturation. The church-as-community incarnated into our human communities, needs to speak to humanity in a human form that can be understood and that human beings can relate to. Within the inner city context of South Africa, the church could be a multi-coloured, inner city child. Within the context of Marabastad, the church could be a poor, black child. The church will emerge in new forms where God is present in new places. Where God demonstrates his covenantal solidarity with humanity, the church has to respond likewise.

Bujo (1995 : 6) proposes the African understanding of family as a basis for church life in Africa. He suggests that the small Christian communities of Africa could lead the way in this regard, as they have become a visible demonstration of familial relationships among brothers and sisters belonging to the same parent.

The Christian community should be exemplar of what it means to be a people of covenant (Gerkin 1991 : 161), but that will not happen in the secluded privacy of the Christian community itself. The church can only demonstrate such covenantal solidarity and faithfulness, as it dislocates itself into the world.

> ...the Christian community's vocation will be realized, and God's call to God's people will find appropriate response, as ways are found to provide a leavening presence in all; the places where human beings are together. As the centrifugal model of the church... the church's vocation will be found not so much as it draws the world to itself, but as it dislocates itself into the world as a servant people to "be a light to the nations"
>
> (1991 : 161)

The church has to replace its upward mobility with solidarity. In the inner cities of South Africa we have to discover the notion of servanthood in community, and translate that into bold actions of solidarity, also in the public arena.

### 6.4.2.2      A Community, "Outside the Gate"

Orlando Costas (1982) writes the book, *Christ outside the gate,* referring to Hebrews 13 : 13.  The church is called to go to Christ outside the gate, and Costas (1982 : 7) is of the opinion that this is metaphorical of where we can locate Christ today,

> in the battles and heat of history, among the nonpersons of society.

Jesus suffered "not only for but with humanity in the lowest and most horrible form of death" (Costas 1982 :13). Costas suggests that the reality of the cross has universal meaning for today's poor and oppressed as well.

> Wherever there is oppression, there is the Spirit of Christ incarnated in the experience of the oppressed; there is God contextualized in the present history of the nonpersons of society.

The inner city church is called to die into the city, or, in the metaphor of Costas, to die outside the gate. As we move closer to the cross, we move away from our walls and secure environments and into the painful realities of struggling people. And as we move close to those who endure abuse like Jesus had, we can become authentic witnesses of his gospel (Costas 1982 : 192).

The location of the death of Christ outside the gate has serious soteriological and ecclesiological implications. The margins become a central locus for Christ's incarnated activity in the world, the place from which He calls his people to become agents of transformation (cf. Costas 1982 : 193-194). Salvation is no longer a purely personal event,  a religious privilege or a status symbol. Salvation is rather the radical transformation of people, when faced with the crucified Christ. Salvation is therefore not to be used to build ecclesiastical fortresses, but it sounds forth a call to follow Christ to the margins.

Costas (1982 : 194) calls for a radical new commitment :

> Therefore let us not be co-opted by the structures of Christendom but, rather, let us become apostolic agents in the mobilization of a servant church toward its crucified Lord, outside the gate of a comfortable and secure ecclesiastical compound.

What is required is a world-oriented ecclesiology that envisions the church on the margins of society. It is a church always on the move away from itself to embrace the other. Gerkin (1991 : 133) makes this distinction between centripetal and centrifugal models of Christian community. In a centripetal model the Christian community is at the centre and there is seldom an outward movement to the margins. A centrifugal model of Christian community refers to the church's dispersal

> ...outside its own boundaries into the larger world of human affairs. Centrifugal implies a move away from the center.
>
> (1991 : 133)

The centripetal model is church-centred and the centrifugal model is world-centred. Gerkin (1991 : 133) is not rejecting the centripetal model as a whole, but places the two models in a creative tension to seek for a corrective.

- **An Inclusive Community**

Covenantal communities demonstrate solidarity not only with their own, but also with those "outside the gate". Only in as far as the church succeeds in establishing a presence outside, would its own communities become more inclusive on the inside.

Jesus' mission was profoundly inclusive, embracing both poor and rich, oppressor and oppressed, sinner and devout (Bosch 1991 : 28). The new community that Jesus called into existence was therefore an inclusive community, as is evident in the first disciples of Jesus, in the first church in Jerusalem, and in the church in Antioch (cf. Acts 2; 6 : 1-7; 13 : 1).

Bosch (1991 : 28; 86) speaks of "Jesus' practice of boundary-breaking compassion", as He associated with the poor, with women, with Samaritans and tax collectors, always crossing the social, religious, cultural and economic barriers of his time, always showing compassion. His compassion broke down walls of hostility and prejudice between people, and gathered diverse people into inclusive communities.

The new community of Jesus was a "sociological impossibility" (Hoekendijk 1967 : 245; cf. also Bosch 1991 : 48). The new relationships that were established between very diverse people, accepting one another as brothers and sisters, were very different from what was experienced elsewhere in the Roman empire and even beyond. The churches that Paul founded were equally strange as they were located in a world divided culturally, socially, economically, and religiously (cf. Bosch 1991 : 172). Even within these churches they often mirrored society's divisions. What is important, however, is Paul's insistence that any nurturing of such divisions or separation within the church, is a fundamental denial of the gospel.

Guider (1995 : 154) refers to women in prostitution, suggesting that they

stand as a constant reminder to the church that it cannot save those whom it does not include.

On the margins we are made aware of how much we still need to change.

Heitink (1993 : 268) introduces the issue of pluralism in churches, suggesting that every congregation consists of people with different views of God, church, humanity and the world.  The art is to discover the commonalities and to develop diverse communities that will learn how to celebrate their unity in diversity (Heitink 1993 : 268-269). Heitink speaks of a democratic or conciliatory model, based on equal subjects, rooted in a common hope and the presence of the Spirit, and seeking together for truth.

In the inner city we need new images to describe the pastoral function of the church in building inclusive communities. Mogoba suggests such a new image, calling for a pastoral ministry in which the church will assume the function of bridge-builder (in Louw 1997 : 394). Within a fragmented society, characterised by joblessness, homelessness, and hopelessness, the role of bridge-builder cannot be overemphasised.

> *The role of the pastor shifts from being merely a counsellor to that of a pontifex : bridge builder.*
>
> (Louw 1997 : 394)

Nürnberger (1996 : 163), in similar fashion,  speaks about the role of the missionary, or the church for that matter, as a facilitator. He writes within the context of power, powerlessness and dependency, and suggests that the pastoral agent becomes a facilitator of interaction and confrontation in relation to both the powerful and the powerless. As facilitator, this person is also a bridge-builder, allowing for inclusive communities of solidarity to emerge.

The church in the inner city needs to reflect the heterogeneous composition of its surrounding communities. If the church itself is divided along racial, ethnic, economic, language or denominational lines, it is only perpetuating existing dichotomies and biases, and could not easily fulfil its task as servant-healer of the city. Such a church is still a mirror of society, and has not yet become a window into a new society (Cox 1965 : 128; Hendriks 1988 : 1). Cox (1965 : 128) speaks of such a church as a "bastion of the past" instead of "a breakthrough point into the future". The inner city church will do well to embrace the contemporary images of bridge-builder and facilitator as authentic pastoral functions.

## 6.4.3  Prophetic Community

The church as servant community establishes relationships of covenantal solidarity within the small circle of the Christian community, within the larger geographical circle of the human community, but also within the macro-circle of the city's public

life. As servant of the city, the church is called to minister healing and transformation wherever there is brokenness and fragmentation. In a later section of this chapter I will deal extensively with the church's role in the public arena, describing its public-prophetic function in greater depth (chapter 5; 8). These paragraphs are merely introductory.

Jesus' actions and words were profoundly political, although He was never part of a political movement. When He speaks of the poor, prostitutes, tax collectors and lepers, as children of the kingdom, he sets himself against the establishment of the day.

> It expressed a profound discontent with the way things are, a fervent desire to see them changed.
>
> (Bosch 1991 : 34)

Christ's servanthood had radical socio-political implications, as it proposed and demonstrated a radically new vision of society, transforming the reigning consciousness and restructuring relationships at all levels (cf. Borg 1995 : 76; Van Engen 1991 : 96). The church as servant community needs to be modelled on Christ's ministry. Therefore Dulles (1987), in speaking about the servant church, says that

> ...it seems appropriate for the ecclesiastical leadership to point out the dangers of dehumanization and to inspire concrete initiatives for the transformation of human society according to the ideals of the Kingdom of God.

The service of the church might include prophetic criticism of social institutions as well as actions aimed at their transformation (Dulles 1987 : 98-102). Such prophetic action may or may not be political in nature. Sometimes the church will address specific policy issues, but most often the task of the church will be that of creating a new consciousness and imagination within the community (Brueggemann 1994 : 224).

Brueggemann (1994 : 231-232) suggests that the prophetic ministry of the church should be an all-encompassing ministry expressed in the different functions of the church. It should not be limited to certain actions in the public arena only, as it belongs to the heart of the church's liturgy and worship. Prophetic actions in the public arena should flow from the koinonial experience. And public action should inform the liturgical experience.

Gerkin (1991 : 163) suggests that the minister's role of guiding God's people to fulfil their vocations in this world, has a clear prophetic dimension.

> In sum, the minister's role in fulfilling the calling of God to a transformative vocation for the Christian people in the world is a pastorally prophetic role.

This study suggests that the church as servant community is implicitly also a

**prophetic community**. In Brueggemann's words (1994 : 223), the prophetic task of the servant church is

> ...to maintain a destabilizing presence, so that the system is not equated with reality, so that alternatives are thinkable, so that the absolute claims of the system can be criticized.

This destabilising presence is not meant as destructive presence, but rather as an exposing presence bringing destructive forces to the surface and exposing them for what they are. The purpose of the destabilising presence of the prophetic community is to counter the forces of stabilisation that are working among the benefactors of the status quo to maintain what is in place (Brueggemann 1994 : 223).

The servant community engaging itself in prophetic or destabilising actions, is called to be present on the margins. Being a prophetic community often implies hostility and marginalisation. The prophet Elijah provides a good example. God chose to feed him through a widow, which was a social category used to identify people without social power (Brueggemann 1994 : 228).

Elijah had to disengage himself **"from royal definitions of reality"** (Brueggemann 1994 : 243). Elijah's very presence with the widow was "an act of disengagement from the dominant support system" (Brueggemann 1994 : 229). He was not to eat from the tables of the kings, or to fear their fears. Pastoral-prophetic work in our world "requires being fed by ravens, not at the king's table" (Brueggemann 1994 : 244).

Yet, this woman became a source of life. Elijah found life outside of the system, affirming that the dominant system does not have a "monopoly on life" (Brueggemann 1994 : 229). The dominant systems of the city have the sources for livelihood, but the widow in the story did not have access to these sources. She had to find alternative sources to survive. The task of the prophetic pastor in this story is to affirm that God can work life in our midst even outside of the dominant system.

> The medical community does not control healing. The bureaucratic church does not govern grace. The agent of arms does not really preside over the possibilities of peace. The world is much more open than that to the invasion of God's lifegiving power, granted to the unqualified.

> (Brueggemann 1994 : 233)

The prophet's destabilising presence, exposing the systems' inability to support this woman, and proving the possibility of life outside of the dominant system, leads to transformation (Brueggemann 1994 : 232-233). The role of the church as prophetic community in the inner city, is to expose the "powers and principalities", and to affirm that God can work life in the midst of death.

The servant community that establishes a prophetic presence in the public arena, embodies the alternative community of the kingdom, takes servanthood beyond charity to justice, uses its institutional resources and implicit power for the well-being of humanity and creation as a whole, becomes a sacrament of God's just presence in unjust situations, and proclaims God's victory over the powers of this world.

## 6.4.4  Church From the Bottom-Up

Lupton (1989 : 120) highlights some of the common characteristics of urban churches globally that express signs of a transformed ecclesiology. These include solidarity with the poor, communal living and sharing, cultural diversity, the resurrection of the laity, and bottom-up church development. These are also characteristics of the church as servant community. This section would take a brief look at the base ecclesial communities of Latin America, the small Christian communities of Africa, and other examples, locally and abroad, of servant communities.

The first chapters of Acts (Acts 2 : 42-47; 4 : 32-37) present us with a vision of the church as servant community, breaking down traditional barriers between diverse people, and establishing relationships of solidarity with a deep sense of sharing, both spiritually and economically. From the basis of this new community, the first church demonstrated servanthood in the spirit of Christ, caring for the poor and engaging in relationships that facilitated economic and social justice. The examples cited below often reflect something of the first church in Jerusalem, both in terms of service and community. They also reflect the character of a new and alternative movement, that has a religious and a social impact.

### 6.4.4.1    Base Ecclesial Communities

I would like to make some observations about the Base Ecclesial Communities (BEC's) in Latin America, as an ecclesiological expression worthy to explore in a study of this nature.

Various factors contributed to the birth of the BEC's. One of the reasons was the crisis in the institutional church, including the scarcity of clergy, the inability to deal with oppression at the grass-roots level, and the exclusion of the poor (Boff 1986 :1). The BEC's were also a reaction to the atomisation and anonymity of modern society. Small communities were created in which persons knew each other, could express themselves and were welcomed by name (Boff 1986 : 1). The social context in which they were born was a context of death, which included great poverty, the reality of death squads and repressive governments (Gornik 1994 : 6-7). It is in this context of death that the BEC's became a sign of life.

"Base" refers to the socio-economic status of these communities as well as the size of the units. It emphasises a new epistemology from the bottom-up. "Ecclesial" refers to the fact that these communities were church-related. They are the "church of the poor", gathering to celebrate the reign

of God amidst their own struggles. "Community" refers to the geographical area in which they are located, as well as the Biblical notion of koinonia, implying a depth of sharing, solidarity, and communal spirituality and action (Gornik 1994 : 7). The BEC's insist to be communities and not organisations.

Boff (1986 : 2) is of the opinion that the BEC's constitute a principle for the re-birth or re-invention of the church. They are generating a new ecclesiology based on new theological concepts. The birth of the BEC's was aptly described as an "ecclesiogenesis" (Boff 1986; Klein Goldewijk 1991 : 69).

> Theologically they signify a new ecclesiological experience, a renaissance of very church, and hence an action of the Spirit on the horizon of the matters urgent for our time.
>
> (Boff 1986 : 1)

Although most of the BEC's were initiated by a priest or a member of a religious order, it is essentially a lay movement. Some of the other characteristics of BEC's include the absence of alienating structures, the existence of direct relationships, reciprocity, mutual assistance, deep communion, equality among members, common goals, and so on (Boff 1986 : 4). This stands in contrast to societal, and ecclesial, structures which are most often hierarchical, with rigid rules and distinctions on the basis of status and titles. It is important to say that the BEC's are a diverse movement and more complex than what meets the eye. They are not the same everywhere, but adjust to their specific context and its demands (Gornik 1994 : 9-10).

It is important to distinguish between the church as institution (organisation) and the church as community (organism). The BEC's indeed offered an alternative community, in response to the crisis within the institutional church. The base communities should not be seen as an alternative to the institutional church, however, or even as having the task to transform the entire institutional church into a community. It can and should provide a stimulus, however, for the global renewal of the church (Boff 1986 : 6; Klein Goldewijk 1991 : 70).

The question arose whether the BEC's were in fact church or just containing elements of church (Boff 1986 : 11; Klein Goldewijk 1991 : 70). Those within the BEC's would assert that it is actually church. Those on the outside would look at a more parochial structure as minimum requirement for what constitutes a church.

Klein Goldewijk (1991), reflecting on Leonardo Boff, said that Boff considered the BEC's as the heart of the Latin American liberational ecclesiology, and therefore as church in the true and whole sense of the word. The BEC's have integrated both social and religious elements into a new ecclesiological praxis, which is focussed on integral liberation. At the base of Latin American society, where small communities emerged, a new self-understanding of the church has developed.

It is important to note that the BEC's are both a religious and a social movement; or

that the BEC's as an expression of church embraces both religious and social goals (Boff 1986; Klein Goldewijk 1991 : 310-311). As **church of the poor** (Klein Goldewijk 1991 : 2), the BEC's gave the poor an opportunity to become active subjects of history within the church and within their communities of struggle. This is unlike the dominant church in which marginal people usually remain at the margins (Richard 1988 : 210-211; cf. Gornik 1994 : 8). The BEC's represent new models of community, not only to the church but also to society, and contain the elements necessary for a flourishing democracy (Gornik 1994 : 8).

> The poor participate by creating a new language, a new symbolism, a new "rhythm", new liturgical forms, new prayers, a new reading of the Bible, new ministries, and a new theological reflection.
>
> (Richard 1988 : 211)

Being church of the poor does not imply exclusion of others. Gornik (1994 : 9) suggests that the church of the poor includes "all Christians who are living out a biblical commitment to the poor". This might include the base communities, pastoral and community workers, congregations and others who are in solidarity with the poor.

I conclude the reflections on the BEC's, by comparing it to my own suggestion of the church as servant community.

Boff emphasises the ecclesiological importance of the BEC's, when he identifies three types of church that co-exist in these communities : the church as people of God, the church as communal sign of liberation and the church as prophetic instrument of liberation (in Klein Goldewijk 1991 : 68). Richard (1988 : 210) summarises it well when he describes BEC's as a "presence of the **church**, experienced in a **communal** way and firmly established at the **base**". Richard states that the BEC's are more than a movement or a model, but that they are indeed the church itself among the people at the base.

> Whenever we have an ecclesial presence, of a communal type, established at the base, there we have BEC's, whatever their form or organization.
>
> (Richard 1988 : 210)

The descriptions of both Boff and Richard indicate that the BEC's correspond to the vision of the church as servant community, as discussed earlier. The basic concepts of presence, communal solidarity and prophecy, are integrated in the life of the BEC's. These are servant communities at the base, caring for each other in solidarity and community, and embodying an alternative community in a very prophetic way.

### 6.4.4.2       Other Expressions of the Church as Servant Community

- **Small Christian Communities in Africa**

Small Christian communities have emerged in Africa, partly in response to the Latin American experience. Shorter (1991 : 101) writes about these communities, and speaks of it as a "renaissance of the Church" (referring to Boff).

This term is even more appropriate today as the theme of an African renaissance is emerging.

The development of small Christian communities as a pastoral priority, has been adopted in 1973 by the Catholic bishops of Eastern Africa (Shorter 1991 : 102). Unlike the Latin American movement, the African counterpart was a top-down movement initiated by the hierarchy **for** the people. However, small Christian communities have emerged all over Eastern Africa and were often very successful, especially in places where the situation and the leadership were geared for it.

These communities differed from the old parish system, as it related more directly to real-life situations, and as it combined a pastoral and a social justice dimension (Shorter 1991 : 105). The tasks of these communities were therefore also pastoral **and** social, varying from marriage preparation, prayer, home visiting and the Eucharist, to working for justice and peace, running co-operative shops, providing skills training classes, and so on (Shorter 1991 : 106).

Shorter (1991 : 106) is of the opinion that the purpose of these communities in the African city, is to unify and intensify Christian living, "by focussing on life and work contexts", and by crossing the barriers of the parish into the world, as well as the economic, ethnic and  educational barriers. Shorter (1991 : 106-107) stated that it required

> a constant effort to ensure that basic ecclesial communities 'step out of the sacristy and into the street', by confronting the justice issues of everyday life.

There are parishes today that shape their whole congregational life on the concept of small Christian communities, and the weekly meeting on Sunday is merely the celebration where all people come together (cf. Chikolwa 1997 : 74-75). Where this happens it is a slight variation to the base communities in Latin America, as it incorporates the idea of small Christian communities into the heart of the institutional church, by a process of restructuring the church. (It also corresponds to congregations based on the cell church model.)

These communities also bear characteristics of a servant community, combining pastoral and social justice concerns, within the context of the community where people are.

- **The Small Group Movements : House Churches, Cell Churches, and Other Structures**

There are many parallels between the BEC's and SCC's on the one hand, and other small group movements, such as house churches, cell churches, prayer groups, and other structures. There are also significant differences.

The small group movements are authentic movements towards greater koinonia in the church (cf. Sider 1990 : 170-177), and have facilitated large-scale church growth in many parts of the world (e.g. Seoul, Korea). House churches and cell churches often focus narrowly on the members of these small groups, however, without an external focus. The concerns of these small groups are often pastoral in the narrow sense of the word, reducing the pastoral task to spiritual issues. Church growth and spiritual growth are often contrasted with community development and social justice.

However, these reflections are very general and can surely not apply to all house churches or cell churches. Within the context of this study, the challenge would be to broaden the scope of these movements to include pastoral and social justice issues on their agendas. Shorter (1991 : 105) cites the example of fifteen prayer groups in Nairobi, converted into small Christian communities, to broaden its scope of concern. These remained praying communities, but they now also integrated a social justice dimension.

Shorter (1991 : 105-106) warns, however, that not all groups should necessarily be converted into small Christian communities, or base ecclesial communities, as these different groups supplement each other within the urban environment. Although that might be true, and the intension of different communities might differ, I would still like to argue that all such communities need to have the world as their concern. Without such an outward vision, they might become stagnant and die.

Shorter (1991 : 107-108) speaks about suburban small groups and the challenge to link them with the poor of the city, assisting them to contribute to social justice and shalom in the urban context. I believe this is a priority for all Christians everywhere. Discipleship without a concern for the poor, is not in line with the Biblical notion of discipleship. And suburban small groups without a concern for the poor, are therefore reducing the notion of community to those "inside my group", instead of being a model that extends to solidarity with those "outside the gate".

The challenge for the small group movements is to become servant communities in the sense that it was used earlier in this chapter.

The Church of the Savior in Washington DC was one of the forerunners of the small group idea (Sider 1990 : 173-175). All members are incorporated into one of its many mission groups. These groups are more than prayer meetings, Bible study groups, or social action committees. They are the heart of the Church of the Savior,

and it is within these groups that the body of Christ is experienced within the church. Members of these separate groups have gone in covenant with one another, committing themselves to four covenanted disciplines, and holding each other accountable on a weekly basis. It is significant that economic arrangements and financial giving constitute a prominent part of their membership commitment.

These groups have become places of prayer, celebration, sharing, communal solidarity, caring, commitment to social justice and economics, and so forth. They have become true signs of the church as a servant community. Although there is a high level of koinonia within these groups, they find their identity in reaching into the world through sharing, service, solidarity and prophetic action. Each of the mission groups focusses on a specific issue and this becomes the goal and identity of that specific group. Inner city housing, children's rights, health care, international peace, financial stewardship, and public policy, are amongst the focus areas of the different mission groups.

(Later in this chapter [8.5.4] I will refer to the Reba Place Fellowship as another example of a servant community in a modern urban environment.)

- **Summary**

Brueggemann (1994 : 268) shows how the early Israelite community was a marginal community socio-economically. This was a new, alternative community planted among people who were ready for risk and prepared to break with the norms and values of the dominant consciousness.

> It is a new church start that specialized in neighbour priorities and had at its centre the powerful voices of Moses and Joshua and Samuel, whose main work is voicing and revoicing and voicing again the liturgy of liberation and the covenant of reshaping communal life, power, and vision.
>
> (Brueggemann 1994 : 269)

I suggested this presence on the margins, communal solidarity, and prophetic voice, as marks of the church as servant community. Signs of such a transformed ecclesiology have been traced in Latin America, Africa and in the small group movement. This was also the character of the first church in Jerusalem. And Brueggemann suggests that it was the character of the early Israelite community, seeking to establish their identity as people of God.

What can we learn from these marginal ecclesiologies ? I quote from the findings of Mark Gornik (1994 : 11-14), an inner city pastor from Baltimore, Maryland, who applied the lessons of these marginal communities to his inner city Presbyterian congregation.

congregation.

- Presence is more important than programs
- Justice and worship belong together
- Community forms the context for ministry
- Bible study is about every area of life .
- Renewal percolates up, not down
- The church belongs to more than itself
- The resurrection of Christ is the basis for the rebirth of lives and neighborhoods

The gospel values of service, sacrifice and incarnation, cannot be replaced by anything. Gornik (1994 : 14) suggests that the embodiment of these values in a church of the poor, represents the urban church of the future.

The danger of such a new ecclesiology, is the emergence of two churches. In Latin America it might be a popular church of the poor, and a bourgeois church (Houtart 1988 : 118-119). There is a similar challenge for the church in Europe being divided between working-class or inner city churches and establishment churches. In the South African urban context these divides come a long way as churches in suburbs and churches in urban informal settlements do not have much in common. In the inner city the tension between the institutional church and the church emerging from the bottom-up, still needs to be dealt with theologically.

The notions of moral conversion, stewardship and partnership, to be discussed in the next two sections of this chapter, might be helpful in reflecting on (and even overcoming) this tension.

For the church in the inner city of Pretoria, there still lies a great challenge to grow into a servant community, marked by an authentic and incarnate presence, covenantal solidarity and prophecy. The marginal communities of Marabastad and Salvokop offer exciting opportunities for a bottom-up ecclesiology, and the institutional church in the inner city might do well to learn from these experimental communities, and to use them as resources for their own transformation.

## 6.5    The Church and the Kingdom : What is the Relationship ?

The  church and the kingdom is not to be equated (cf. Van Engen 1991 : 107; Ridderbos 1962 : 354-356). Dulles (1987 : 103) refers to a similar assertion by Pannenberg, indicating that the church points towards the kingdom of God that is *beyond* the church (cf. also Van Engen 1991 : 109). Kung (1968 : 94-95) asserts that the message of Jesus neither allows identification of the church and the kingdom, nor dissociation between them.

> The church is not the kingdom of God, but it looks towards the kingdom of God, waits for it, or rather makes a pilgrimage towards it and is its herald, proclaiming it to the world.

(Küng 1968 : 95)

The servant church is not an end in itself, but a means to God's kingdom (Messer 1989 : 100).  Hans Kung (1968 : 87-93) echoes this by stating that the church is a finite reality, essentially a present

reality, whereas the kingdom of God belongs to the future and is essentially infinite. Scherer (1993 : 82) speaks of the transition in theologies of mission from being church-centred to being kingdom-centred.

The church, says Bosch (1991 : 169), is always a "preliminary community, en route to its self-surrender unto the kingdom of God". Küng (1968 : 96) says it is more than a preliminary community, but it is a anticipatory sign of the reign of God (cf. also Van Engen 1991 : 110). In the end, Kung (1968 : 489) says, "the Church will reach the goal of its pilgrimage and the world will recognize its Lord".

This is the calling of the church : not to exalt itself, but to serve the reign of God. It is called to serve humanity selflessly (cf. Küng 1968 : 99), but at the same time to recognise that this service is for the sake of the kingdom. Moltmann (1991 : 327-329) describes the church as servant, not merely to preserve or maintain what is, but to serve the transformation of humankind. Küng (cf. 1968 : 101-102) asserts that the church which wants to seize power for itself, will become enslaved by that very power. On the other hand, the church which is concerned with the kingdom as a servant, despite its own failures, becomes truly free.

Dulles (1987 : 103-104) objects to the description of the church as a temporal reality. Instead of the church fading away, he suggests that the church will come of age at the end of history. Dulles (1987 : 121) believes that the final coming of the kingdom will be an initiative of God, but that it would not imply the destruction of the church, but its fulfilment. God's grace extends beyond the institutional church and would also transcend the current dichotomy between church and world.

> The glorious, triumphant Church will be indivisibly united with the renewed cosmos.
>
> (Dulles 1987 : 121)

In Paul's view of the church, eschatology and ethics are intimately linked, as the church , in its life and work, is participating in "God's cosmic-historic plan for the redemption of the universe" (Bosch 1991 : 150).

Perhaps we need to overcome this tension by qualifying the relationship between the church and the kingdom even more. It has already been asserted that church and kingdom cannot be equated. It has also been stressed that the church does not exist for itself but for the kingdom.

Boff (1986 : 58) suggests that the connection between the kingdom and the church is Christ, who is present in both.

> Christ provides the basis for a continuity between the two.

Boff's vision of the kingdom of God has an evolutionary character, similar to that of Teilhard de Chardin (Klein Goldewijk 1991 : 271). He sees Christ working in the present transforming the world into the all-encompassing kingdom of God. Christ is actively engaged in transforming the world, working both inside and outside the church.

Van Engen (1991 : 109), in reference to Cullmann, speaks of three concentric circles under the rule of Christ, with Christ at the centre. The first circle encompasses the rule of Christ in the church. The second, larger circle, includes the rule of Christ over all things (Eph. 1 & Col. 1). The third circle includes "the rule of Christ over all unseen spiritual forces" (Van Engen 1991 : 109). Although Christ rules in each of these realms, the three realms differ slightly. It is important to note that Christ is at work, also outside of the ecclesial realm. It would do injustice to the total reign of Christ, to seek for signs of his kingdom exclusively in the church (Van Engen 1991 : 112-113).

I want to suggest, in line with Bosch, Küng and others, that the church as we know it, i.e. the

institutional church, is indeed a finite, temporal reality. The process of the church on earth should be that of dying to itself, surrendering to the kingdom of God. In dying the church will continue to live, as the body of Christ will be absorbed, or taken up into, the perfect city where God's presence will fill the whole place. At that point there would not be the need for the institutional church as we know it today, because God's presence will fill every sphere and God will be with his people. Dulles is right when he objects against the destruction of the church. That the church will die to its current form, being integrated into the perfect kingdom of God, is not to be objected against, however, since the present church is not existing for itself, but for the kingdom of God, and for the sake of proclaiming the presence of God.

These reflections have implications for the way in which the church is involved in the public arena. The church which is concerned with its own continued existence, more than the kingdom of God, will adopt a different approach to ministry in the city, than the church surrendering in service to Christ at the margins.

## 7.    Towards a Theology of Community

### 7.1    Defining Practical Theological Anthropology

Within the sphere of contextual theology I propose a practical theological anthropology that will have its starting point with the inner city poor in the South African city. Inner city people,  the inner city poor, and the (South) African inner city poor, are the categories to shape such an anthropology. Insights from urban anthropology, liberation anthropologist with their focus on the poor (cf.Tlhagale 1991 : 57; Boff & Boff 1986 : 14), and African anthropology (Maimela 1991 : 4), will inform the anthropological base theory that I suggest here. In this study I will not develop a complete and detailed anthropology but merely provide a framework for a *"theology of community"*.

A practical theological anthropology provides a framework for thinking about humanity, as expressed and experienced in society, and as reflected upon in Biblical literature (cf. Pieterse 1993 : 164-167; Heitink 1993 : 248). Heitink (1993 : 248-249) refers to Kwant's definition of anthropology, describing it in terms of the reference world of human beings which determines their behaviour, decisions, and the way in which they evaluate themselves and others.  Different anthropological perspectives have developed through specific theories or narratives, such as the humanist view, liberal view, Calvinist view, and so forth. These views emerged within specific historical contexts and were determined by the culture and world view in which they emerged. Seeking for an anthropology in this study, will obviously also be determined by the context of this study (inner cities) and its location within contextual theological thinking (theology "from below"), as indicated above already. The specific contextual perspective will determine the anthropological insights (cf. Pieterse 1993 : 163).

I will first identify some of the anthropological foci of the past decades to indicate what a Biblical anthropology should not be about. After that, this section would be an attempt to suggest a broad framework for an anthropological base theory, which I

would refer to as a theology of community.

Brueggemann (1977 : 186) identifies two major anthropological goals in the past century. *Existentialism* viewed emancipation of the human being as the central agenda of humanity. It is about freedom, self-assertion, individual self-discovery and fulfilment. After the war *the search for meaning* became a central category for humanity (cf. Frankl 1985; Brueggemann 1977 : 186). In response to the failure of Western ideologies, war and its disastrous effects, and the failure of technology, human beings started to search for the meaning of life and being.

Deist (1990 : 3) speaks about the so-called "naturalist" ideologies which are anthropologist based on general views which are not necessarily tested against Biblical views. He contrasts Biblical anthropological perspectives with the naturalist anthropological perspectives. Deist refers to two distinct perspectives, namely a nationalist anthropology and a liberal anthropology.

*Nationalist anthropologies* were, in the South African context, especially expressed in Christian nationalism, protecting a specific ethnic or racial group. In this perspective the group provides the basis of an anthropology and a person is a mere extension of the group. Elsewhere nationalism has also emerged from people's struggle for self-determination (cf. Baum 1988 : 110). Sometimes this is legitimised by referring to Old Testament concepts such as the corporate personality of Israel, the triumphalist tendencies in many royal psalms, and so forth (Deist 1990 : 4). The group is often exclusive at the expense of other groups. In the inner city context of South Africa this perspective is still maintained by some churches, and if "my group" has left the inner city, my church will also relocate. This anthropology, according to Deist, is fundamentally egoistic.

*Liberal anthropological values* are represented by modern capitalist environments in which the rights of individuals are foremost. These rights are often nothing more than self-interest only, and therefore the individual rights of the group. Group egoism (or nepotism) and individual egoism are the two extremes. Individual rights or self-interests could easily be promoted at the expense of the broader community or other people.

Heitink (1993 : 250) speaks, within the context of practical theology, of a base anthropology ("basale antropologie" - Dutch). A base anthropology describes humanity in terms of the "whole person", i.e. the unity of body, soul and spirit, the need for salvation and wholeness ("heil en heling" - Dutch), the relationships of human beings with each other, with the world around it, with norms and values, with goals of self-fulfilment, and so forth. Heitink includes in a base anthropology the structural dimensions of humanity, referring to the way in which human beings are affected by the social and cultural environments in which they find themselves . Such a definition will obviously be filled with different content, depending on the context or vantage point from which humanity is viewed.

This study views humanity from the perspective of the inner city poor, their holistic needs and aspirations, the need for their integral liberation (salvation and wholeness), the relationships between human beings in the city, the presence or lack of community in the inner city, the relationships of the inner city poor with urban systems and structures, and so forth.

In the next paragraphs I will briefly introduce some basic principles that will form the framework for a theology of community, which I suggest as a practical theological "base anthropology".

### 7.2    Basic Themes for a Practical Theological Anthropology (Theology of Community)

Deist (1990 : 3) writes an article in which he wants to construct a biblical anthropology as a framework for thinking about liberation. That is in line with the contextual approach of this study, and justifies more specific consideration. He recognises, however, that his suggestion is only one possible Biblical anthropological view.

Deist is of the opinion that different anthropologies could be justified from a Biblical perspective if people really want to. He is seeking for a deeper principle of humanity, however, to form the basis of his Biblical anthropological reflections. Deist (1990 : 4) finds it in the "*principle of life*", which is a basic theme in Genesis 1-11. In the rest of this section I will explore this theme more.

In the inner city this loss of life is evident in many situations, not only on a personal or interpersonal level, but also in the way that inner city decay deprives people and whole communities from life and wholeness.

*The notion of community - rootedness and belonging in a community, as well as communal well-being - would be the hermeneutical key in Brueggemann's anthropological perspective.*

As with existentialism and the search for meaning, his might be another contextual response to the current situation of growing homelessness, landlessness and poverty in the world. Yet, even if that is true, the terminology used by Brueggemann (1977 : 187) is probably closer to Biblical categories than the thinking of the existentialism.

Leonardo and Clodovis Boff (1986 : 14) speaks about theology in their work *"Wat is Theologie van de bevrijding ?"* in very human terms. Tlhagale (1991 : 57), in line with the views of Boff and Boff, is of the opinion that the contribution of liberation theology can be seen "as a revitalisation of a true Christian anthropology". The liberation view on humanity provides a fresh approach which could inform our search for a practical theological anthropology immensely.

Boff and Boff (1986 : 14) make it clear that the gospel is not only directed to the

critical human being as introduced by European liberal theologies and as expressed in the search for emancipation or meaning, but also to what they call the "niet-mens", or non-human, i.e. those people who have been deprived of their dignity and their fundamental human rights. The task of theology is to be in solidarity with the non-human person to the extent that he or she could be humanised in the full sense of the word, in the image of the "new Adam", Jesus Christ (Boff & Boff 1986 : 14-15). Kritzinger (1995 : 384-385) provides an important insight with regard to the African context, questioning the term "non-person".

> In African cultures every person is perceived to have a *seriti*, or shadow, which constitutes the dignity of that person. Even when somebody is grievously oppressed, she or he never becomes a non-person because nobody can take your shadow away from you.

Although we cannot argue about the reality of dehumanisation, Kritzinger's observation is important in terms of affirming that which is still human within a person who is dehumanised.

The inner city is home to many dehumanised people, who have become victims of abuse, poverty, landlessness, unemployment, family and marital problems, health problems, and so forth. These people are often ignored in the processes of urban renewal and inner city revitalisation. A contextual anthropological perspective needs to affirm these groups and individuals.

- *Their anthropological vantage point is the dehumanised person and his or her humanisation.*

The liberation theologians have focussed on the category of the poor, and their anthropological reflections started with the poor. They reflected and acted for the sake of the poor, but - as the Boffs (1986 : 15) also clarify - eventually it had to facilitate the liberation and freedom of the *whole* person and of *every* person ["en ten gunste van de integrale bevrijding van heel de mens en van iedere mens"]. Such a holistic approach is echoed almost universally today (cf. also Pieterse 1993 : 163).

It is Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1983 : 4) that continued to remind us that true liberation was a mutual process. White liberation was dependent on black liberation, and white people could only call themselves free, if black people in our country were free. This mutuality of liberation, wholeness and well-being, lies at the heart of a theology of community.

In the inner city this implies wholeness in every sphere of human life and activity, i.e. housing, health care, education, employment, recreation, religion, culture, and so forth. It further implies liberation that will affect both poor and rich, exploited and exploiter, homeless and housed.

- *In line with the other keys to unlock a Biblical anthropology, I propose as the goal of a practical theological anthropology the thesis of Boff and Boff (1986 : 15) : "the liberation of the whole person and of every person".*

The theological depth of any attempt to construct a Biblical anthropology, cannot be

reached without a recovery of the creation narrative (Genesis 1-2) and the incarnation of Christ.

The meaning of human beings as created in the image of God, is the fundamental principle for an understanding of humanity. The recovery of this image should be the goal of a practical theological anthropology. The liberation of the whole person is to help people discover themselves as created in the image of God, with the freedom, rights and responsibilities, that go with that indicative. It is about people's liberation *from* sin that stole away the notion of being in God's image, and a liberation *to* a full embrace of that notion once again. Human beings will be truly human if they can proclaim again with boldness and confidence : We are indeed in the image of God.

Inner cities are often places of gross dehumanisation, where people are numbers and productivity, power and prestige, the determining factors. The image of God gets lost in such an environment, unless we are intentional about recovering and affirming it once again.

● *Humanity as created in the image of God, is a vital hermeneutical principle for constructing a Biblical anthropology.*

The second important theological principle is that of God's presence with and in humanity.

> The Biblical God is close to human beings, a God of communion with and commitment to human beings. The active presence of God in the midst of the people is a part of the oldest and most enduring Biblical promises.
>
> (Gutierrez 1988 : 106)

We cannot understand and describe humanity fully from a Biblical perspective, without grappling with the reality of God's presence with humanity. This presence of God - though sometimes elusive or hidden - is important in determining the nature and character of human beings. Throughout history God made his promise of being present with us known in different ways. The deepest point, or the fullness, of that presence was expressed when God became human (cf. Gutierrez 1988 : 107). Current-day theology, as stated earlier, is more focussed on humanity than ever before, and as Gutierrez (1988 : 106) puts it, it tends to reflect more and more "on the anthropological aspects of revelation".

> But the Word is not only a Word about God and about human nature; the Word is made human.

This is vital for a true Biblical understanding of humanity. The Word became a human being and dwelled in our midst. We need to understand humanity through the eyes of the incarnational Christ, the Word that became flesh. Gutierrez (1988 : 106) summarises it well, saying :

> Human history, then, is the location of our encounter with God, in Christ.

We cannot meet humanity outside of the incarnational Christ. But we can also not

meet God outside of the human reality of suffering and pain. Through the incarnation God expressed himself to humanity, and that needs to be recovered by a Biblical anthropology. The incarnational Christ was also the covenantal Christ, who desired so much to draw us back into close communion, that He became flesh.

In the inner city we need to meet God in the eyes of the homeless woman and her children, and in the face of the man who live in slum housing. "The Word became flesh and came to dwell in our neighbourhood." We need to discover God daily where we live and work in the inner city.

- *A practical theological anthropology could be based on nothing more profound than the incarnation of Christ Himself. The depth of a theology of community could only be discovered in the motif of the incarnation.*

I suggest these as some of the basic principles for an anthropological framework. These principles would be explored more on the next pages.

## 7.3    The Poor as a Fundamental Anthropological Category

I suggest the poor as fundamental anthropological category from a contextual theological perspective. It is important to qualify this category, however.

### 7.3.1  Socio-Economic Poor

Leonardo and Clodovis Boff (1986 : 56-57) distinguish between the socio-economic poor and the evangelical poor ["evangelisch arme"]. The socio-economic poor are those who are deprived of basic necessities, such as food, shelter, clothes, health care, education and jobs.

Gutierrez (1988 : 163) speaks of material poverty, which is "the lack of economic goods necessary for a human life worthy of the name". This category of poor is often embedded within an exploitative society, where market forces, technological advancement, and poor wages contribute to the marginalisation of certain groups and people. This category is often  characterised by discrimination on the basis of race, culture, gender, language, disability, or sexual orientation, and therefore excluded from the mainstream economy and opportunities (cf. Boff & Boff 1986 : 56-57).

Gutierrez (1988 : 163-168) views this kind of poverty as degrading and dehumanizing, and contrary to the Christian idealisation of poverty. He argues that it is evil and scandalous. Tlhagale (1991 : 58) speaks about poverty as that which denies the dignity of the human person : "hence the need to eradicate it".  This corresponds with the contribution of Seltser and Miller (1993 : 94-132) in their book, *Homeless Families*. They stress that homelessness is more than anything else a moral problem, since it is about people struggling to maintain their dignity.

In liberation theology the material poor is placed at the centre of history, and the

responsibility for ushering in a new humanity rests on the shoulders of the poor and marginalised. They are not only the objects of history but have now become the subjects of their own history (cf. Tlhagale 1991 : 57; Brueggemann 1987 : 55-56).

Klaus Nurnberger (1996) writes an article about marginal cultures and refers to the analyses of Paolo Freire in Brazil and Mannoni in Madagascar. Both reflects on marginal cultures that have developed a dependency syndrome.

Freire (1970), in response to the poor in Brazil, developed his well-known pedagogy of the oppressed. He is criticising the fact that oppressed people have often internalised the myths of the oppressors.

> Through constant indoctrination the existing power structure is reproduced within the psyche of the oppressed to such an extent that the mere thought of rebelling against it does not even occur to them.
>
> (Nurnberger 1996 : 153)

Freire is of the opinion that the consciousness of oppressed people is ruled from afar by those in power. People often lose their self-confidence and become passive receivers of orders, hand-outs and development aid (cf. Nurnberger 1996 : 153-154). Unfortunately they also duplicate the style of the oppressors when they manage to get into positions of power or situations where they have more control. Freire describes how the oppressed vent their aggressions on their families or fellow workers, instead of on those who oppress them. The causes for their misery are usually found with supernatural powers, God or fate (Nurnberger 1996 : 154; Maimela 1991).

Mannoni (1956) explores the psychology of dependency in colonial Madagascar. He describes the well-structured vertical, patriarchal, and hierarchical relationships that structured poor communities. Beliefs, values and norms are transferred from one generation to the other by the most senior members of the community. The young people need merely to obey what they are instructed to do and believe in. Although they have a very dependent structure, it possesses deep psychological roots that have grown over many centuries, and provide "emotional security and social stability" (Nurnberger 1996 : 149). Security is found in submitting to a strict, but very reliable parent (or authority) figure and individuals are accepted into the social structure so unconditionally that there is no doubt with them "as to their right to exist" (Nurnberger 1996 : 150).

On the one hand there is a great sense of dependency and a lack of personal responsibility and ambition. On the other hand there is a great sense of personal security and social-emotional stability. Mannoni contrasts this with the high sense of responsibility and achievement within Western-European society, yet, the enormous sense of guilt and inferiority due to the uncontrolled environment of competition (cf. Nurnberger 1996 : 149-157).

Freire, in reflecting on oppressed cultures in Brazil, views people who have lost
initiative - passive, receptive and dependent - per definition as slaves. Mannoni's
perspective on traditional cultures would question this. Vertical relationships in
some of these cultures might, in fact, be very "normal, healthy and just" (Nurnberger
1996 : 157).

Both perspectives are important for a balanced perspective on humanity from the
perspective of the poor. The sense of community, rootedness and belonging
(described by Mannoni) is vital as a starting point for human (and social)
transformation. On the other hand, the enslavement of people through those who
have a monopoly of power, are dehumanising to the point of being evil. Ignoring this
would be to condone the status quo. Evaluating poor people and communities in a
narrow way as nothing but slaves of circumstances, can be equally dehumanising,
as it ignores the spirit of resistance and community that has survived, even in spite
of the systematic exploitation of society.

## 7.3.2  Spiritual poor

Boff and Boff (1986 : 58-59) introduces a second category, which they call the
"evangelisch arme" or the evangelical poor. I refer to this group as the spiritual poor.
This group has committed themselves to the poor and to works of justice, based on
their Christian faith. They serve humanity with all their strength and resources. They
might not be materially poor themselves, they might even be rich, but they have
adopted a position of solidarity with the poor, and work for the well-being of the
whole of society. They do not strive to be part of an upwardly mobile consumerism,
but resist these temptations to share their resources with  the broader community.

In the inner city of Pretoria this group would include some of the inner city pastors
and church members, housing consultants and business people, nurses and legal
advisors, and others who are committed to love as Christ has demonstrated it.

Gutierrez (1988 : 164) is less optimistic about this term. He sees "spiritual poverty"
as an ambiguous term meaning different things to different people. I would,
however, go with the definition of spiritual poverty that he does provide, namely the
condition of those people who  are not without material goods, but they are not so
attached to them. They are serving humanity in a self-giving way without attachment
to material possessions. This definition might include both the rich who are humble
in their walk with God, as well as the poor who are rich spiritually.

Boff and Boff (1986 : 59) suggest that the goal of a theology of liberation is to
transform all Christians, also the socio-economic poor, into becoming the
evangelical or spiritual poor. This implies an embrace of liberation dimensions of the
gospel, such as acknowledgement of the Fatherhood of God and personal
acceptance of our kinship ("sons and daughters"), the notions of justification and
justice for all, and a recognition of our place within a universal community of

humanity. Everybody is called to become the spiritual or the evangelical poor, in their definition.

Boff and Boff speak about this as the perfect liberation, since a person is liberated from him- or herself, and in following Christ, the poor one from Nazareth, the person is liberated completely for the other and for God who is hidden in the other.

### 7.3.3 The Moral Poor

I would like to suggest a third category, namely the "moral poor". The moral poor might consist of different distinct groups.

- They might be Christians who have not been converted morally. They view their faith in narrow vertical terms only, and in the name of Christ they might even participate in exploitative practices.

- They might be non-Christians in powerful positions, using human beings for production or the creation of their own wealth. They might be using their power at the expense of the poor.

- They might even be the poor themselves. It is wrong to view the poor in romantic terms as if they are morally pure. Nürnberger (1996 : 154) highlights the possibility that poor people, once in a position of power, might resort to the same methods used by those who previously abused their power (cf. the corruption in the "old" and the "new" South Africa). Donal Dorr (1984 : 79) suggests that the poor must learn to opt for themselves. Instead of it being a selfish option, it is an act of faith in themselves and those who share similar predicaments. The Israelites in the Exodus narrative constantly pined for Egypt, and found it difficult to believe in their own liberation (Dorr 1984 : 79-80).

The moral poor are those who are either intentionally abusing their power, those who have a narrow spirituality without concern for issues of social justice and the evil of poverty, and those who are themselves trapped by poverty and who have surrendered to its destructive consequences.

If the executive committee of the Pretoria City Council decides to homelessness from their agenda, contrary to promises and real needs, they are clearly in need of a moral conversion.

If churches spend all their money on internal infra-structure and staff, and almost nothing on the real issue of poverty and disempowerment in the city, and if they spiritualise economic and political realities without an active solidarity with those who struggle, they are in need of a moral conversion.

If the poor wait on the government to "save" them from displacement, or if they are divided amongst themselves thereby risking their future well-being, they are in need of a moral conversion.

Reformed theology preaches continuous conversion. Even those who are the spiritual poor and morally converted, need to be transformed from day to day, to

sustain their vision and commitment to an alternative inner city society.

A moral conversion might imply Christians who are converted to act in new ways in the interpersonal sphere, with loving tenderness and acts of justice. In other words, Christians who embrace a more balanced and holistic spirituality.

Non-Christians might undergo a moral conversion, which implies a commitment to the poor and to issues of justice, without necessarily becoming followers of Christ. In the South African situation many people who were not Christians worked hard for political liberation in the past, and many non-Christians are still involved in projects with street children, with victims of HIV/AIDS, and with numerous other community reconstruction projects.

The poor might undergo a moral conversion, analysing and understanding their situation for what it is, and organising themselves to act in solidarity with others towards their own  collective empowerment and liberation.

- **In Summary**

I prioritise the socio-economic poor in this study as an affirmative measure to redress their absence from theological discourse. Real transformation of the inner city would not be achieved, however, if the socio-economic poor is an exclusive anthropological category. Real transformation can only be facilitated if the socio-economic, spiritual and moral poor, are considered in terms of their own transformation and that of the city.

## 7.4    God's Presence with the Poor

### 7.4.1  Humanity Created in God's Image

In Genesis 1 God created humanity for communion with himself. When He called humanity into being He envisaged a continuous presence with those that He created. The intimate relationship between God and humanity becomes clear already as God says : "Let us create...". It was an act of grace through which God has called into being "his real counterpart" (Von Rad 1972 : 59) with whom He wanted to have communion (Van Selms 1967 : 34; Von Rad 1972 : 59).

God's presence with humanity is expressed here for the first time. That his presence with humanity is something unique and special, is expressed in the fact that humanity was created in his *image*. Important is the affirmation that this is not a spiritual or intellectual resemblance only. The whole person - physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually - is created in God's image (Von Rad 1972 : 58; Van Selms 1967 : 36-37).

Sin, in this context, would refer to every action that is destructive to the image of

God. Every action that is dehumanising - spiritually, physically, sexually - is also affecting God, since He created humanity in his image, and actions against humanity are therefore actions against God.

God created us in his image with a specific purpose. We are created to be co-workers of God, co-builders of the new city and of a new humanity (cf. Van Selms 1967 : 38-9). As people created in his image we are emblems of God, and his representatives on earth  (Von Rad 1972 : 59-60). We are shadows of God, meaning that wherever we are, God is. A shadow cannot appear without its owner being present. We are mirrors of God, reflecting the image of God through our being (cf. Van Selms 1967 : 36).

These are wonderful terms, but what do they mean ?  As image-bearers of God we have to make the presence of God known through our lives. Practically it implies the freedom to serve and to create in this world. But this freedom is balanced out with a certain responsibility to care for this world. Just as God entered into a relationship of solidarity with us in Genesis 1 (a relationship of freedom, creativity, responsibility and caring), we are also called to enter into relationships of solidarity with creation, and with one another - to make God's presence known.

The present reality is quite different, though. We have often abandoned our responsibility to care for creation, we do not serve but conquer, we do not create but destroy. We do not establish community, but accumulate personal wealth and success at the expense of others. And that leads the world to sigh : God is dead. Because poverty and marginalisation have led to the degradation of people and the loss of human dignity. Wealth and power often led to dehumanised people as they became their own gods and slave masters of others. In the process the notion of being people in God's image has been lost. We do not treat others as image-bearers any longer, and we do not perceive ourselves as such. In the inner city this is very evident, as the stark contrasts of rich and poor, and the dehumanisation of whole groups of people stare us in the face daily.

### 7.4.2  God's Incarnational Presence in Christ

The incarnational Christ is responding to the death of God's image in us. God became human in the person of Jesus Christ. The Christian life is about "becoming fully human" ( De Gruchy 1986 : 75).

> It is the restoration of God's image in us, the image of the 'Word become flesh', Jesus Christ 'who had been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet without sin.'

The incarnation of Christ models to us what humanity should be about. Christ shows us  how to be God's image on earth, being fully human, and how - through being fully human - we can actually make God's presence known. Because incarnation means "identifying with humanity. It means identifying with humanity's weakness, suffering and pain" (Chikane, in De Gruchy 1986 : 71).

A practical theological anthropology would seek to assist human beings to become fully human, which is to be restored to the image of God. Humanisation, in a theological sense, is to become more and more like Christ Himself, stripped of the desire for power, content in his walk with the Father, in solidarity with those who suffer.

The incarnation has certain practical implications for a practical theological anthropology, however.

●       **Meeting God in our neighbour**

God's presence in the city, with us and with the poor, has reached its deepest point in the incarnation of Christ.  Since the incarnation we meet God in our encounter with other people (cf. Gutierrez 1988 : 110). Where we express tender love and justice, we can expect to experience God's presence (cf. Isaiah 58; Psalm 146). Gutierrez states the opposite as well, saying that God is not known where justice does not exist. There "God is absent" (Gutierrez 1988 : 111). (Does that mean that we will experience the absence of God where we withhold our love ?)

The incarnation deepened the bond between God and our neighbour. The story of the good Samaritan can be re-interpreted, saying that the Samaritan has actually expressed love for God by embracing his neighbour. Whilst the religious has rejected God when they rejected their neighbour. Gutierrez (1988 : 116) is of the opinion that we need to shape "a theology of the neighbour" on the basis of God identifying himself to us in the eyes of "the other". A transformed spirituality will have as its focal point a conversion to the neighbour.

The neighbour should not only be understood as an individualised category, but needs to be understood collectively as well. It also refers to groups of marginal people, to subcultures, to  refugees, to the homeless, and conversion to the neighbour would imply a conversion to these marginal groups as well.

The content of such a conversion would be the incarnational love and solidarity of Christ; in other words, for us to flesh out his love and solidarity in practical ways. Gutierrez (1988 : 13) is critical of Christianity, asserting that we still avoid being present with our neighbours in their concrete struggles. Such avoidance to love is a sin and a rejection of community with one another. Those who do not love, according to 1 John 3 : 14, is still in the realm of death.

> They still do not situate themselves in Christ without attempting to avoid concrete human history. They have yet to trace the path which will lead them to seek effectively the peace of the Lord in the heart of social struggle.
>
> (Gutierrez 1988 : 118)

In the previous chapter I have analysed the inner city churches in Pretoria. It became clear that most churches were still not incarnational communities at the

point of human and social struggle in the city. They still need to be converted to the incarnated Christ, and to emulate his humanity in solidarity with their inner city neighbours.

- **Meeting Christ in the poor**

Since the incarnation we know that we can meet God in the eyes of the poor (Matthew 25 : 31-45). Therefore, our tender love to our neighbour and towards the poor, are acts of love towards God. Christ demonstrated the love of the Father through the way in which He loved us. And now we are called to love each other in the same way.

Jesus identifies himself so closely with those who have been affected by sin and exploitation in Matthew 25, that he says : When you look at them, you actually look at me. He makes himself present where the image of God has been destroyed. And Jesus calls us from his position of close solidarity and identification with the poor, to a moral conversion, i.e. to covenantal relationships with the poor. A moral conversion implies recognising God where He is with the poor.

Meeting God in our neighbour and in the poor, is to take the concept of the incarnation very seriously. As we love God in our neighbour and in the poor, we will be agents of restoration, supporting them to embrace their own full humanity. The poor who have often lost their dignity through exploitation and marginalisation, will be empowered by the affirmation that they are indeed created in God's image. Those who have become agents of dehumanisation, will be empowered to become human again, and to treat their fellow human beings as mirrors of God himself.

In the Belgium film, Daens, the people of the town in which this priest lived, found it difficult to see God when he preached or wore his clerical robes. But when he shared a meal with a broken family, when he picked up the dead in a wheelbarrow to give them a funeral with dignity, they were able to see Christ. Not clothed in religious sophistication made God's presence known. When the priest, Daens, became a human for human beings, they met God in him.

A conversion to our neighbour and to the poor may not be condescending or paternalistic, if we are converted to the humble God who is present with the poor. In fact, Gutierrez (1988 : 116) goes so far as to say that the salvation of humanity goes through the poor. Conversion to the poor is not only because the poor need us. But we need the poor. Our own salvation and humanisation is dependent on those who have been dehumanised. Because we belong together, and as long as certain people are captives, our freedom is a mere illusion.

> Our encounter with the Lord occurs in our encounter with others, especially in the encounter with those whose human features have been disfigured by oppression, despoliation, and alienation and who have "no beauty, no majesty" but are the things "from which men turn away their eyes" (Isa.53 : 2-3). These are the marginal groups, who have fashioned a true

culture for themselves and whose values one must understand if one wishes to reach them. The salvation of humanity passes through them; they are the bearers of the meaning of history and "inherit the Kingdom" (James 2 : 5). Our attitude towards them, or rather our commitment to them, will indicate whether or not we are directing our existence in conformity with the will of the Father. This is what Christ reveals to us by identifying himself with the poor in the text of Matthew.

(Gutierrez 1988 : 116)

Conversion to the poor means a conversion to Christ in their midst. A practical theological anthropology cannot view humanity without recognising Christ in the midst of human beings, especially of the poor and the marginal, without embracing Christ as the true human (De Gruchy 1986 : 75).

Jesus eventually died into the city of humanity. The implication of God's incarnation in Christ, is death to ourselves and an option for the poor. This should shape the nature of our ministry in the inner city.

## 7.5 Moral Conversion

To walk humbly with God implies to love tenderly in this world (Micah 6 : 8). A humble walk with God implies a humble, tender walk with each other. It means to walk with one another as Jesus walked with us. It means to walk in solidarity with humankind, with the poor and the marginalised, as Jesus demonstrated it to us.

### 7.5.1 The Content of Moral Conversion

Such is the content of a moral conversion. And a practical theological anthropology should call us to experience such a conversion. This imperative should be at the heart of a theology of community. It challenges the dominant consciousness which perpetuates power and individual success, and proposes an alternative consciousness in which the individual finds his or her place within community, and where the dignity and well-being of both individual and community need to be sought.

- Moral conversion is a conversion to people (to our neighbour). It is a conversion in the sphere of our interpersonal relationships. It is to horizontalise our relationship with God, expressing our love for God in our love for one another.

- Moral conversion is not a conversion to humankind in general terms only. It requires a specific conversion to the poor. In theological terms it requires a conversion to Christ in the poor. We meet Christ as the humble one who dwells with the poor. A moral conversion would discover God's presence with the poor and God's presence would draw us into solidarity with the poor as well.

- Moral conversion is a conversion to community, to the covenantal relationships that God intended between us. It is a conversion *from* individualism and materialism, and *to* covenantal relationships of sharing, mutuality and interdependence.

## 7.5.2  Mutuality

Nürnberger is critical of the way in which Paolo Freire demonises the oppressor without offering them an alternative as well. Nürnberger seems to think that the moral conversion of those in power is actually a possibility, and people of faith should not think in exclusive categories of the socio-economic poor only.

> Whoever has power to determine society must be held responsible for the use of that power.

> (Nürnberger 1996 : 161-162)

Nürnberger (1996 : 162) suggests a "pedagogy of the oppressors" which does not exclude the pedagogy of the oppressed, but puts the challenge of a new consciousness and of liberation within a broader context. For him the challenge of Christian faith is to horizontalise "vertical relationships on the level of a collective consciousness" (Nürnberger 1996 : 159). He argues for the humanisation of both oppressor and oppressed, rich and poor, powerful and powerless. Both oppressor and oppressed are dehumanised and in need of salvation and healing.

Nürnberger (1996 : 159) argues for the equal dignity of all human beings as a basic Christian and anthropological assumption, and therefore an imperative to work for. When both oppressor and oppressed see themselves again as created in God's image with equal dignity, the oppressor would be able to come to the table without prejudice or arrogance, and the oppressed without submissiveness or bitterness. This requires a moral conversion of both categories, and should become an important task of the church.

Chikane (1985 : 46) is cautious, making it clear that reconciliation or unity between oppressor and oppressed, exploiter and exploited, rich and poor, good and evil, are unacceptable, if it is not based on repentance and commitment to the truth. He warns against neutrality that actually condones the status quo.

> For Jesus there was no question of neutrality in the face of evil and injustices. In the light of the incarnate life of our Lord we are called to abandon false ideas of neutrality, unity and reconciliation.

> (Chikane 1985 : 46)

A true conversion is required from those who abuse their power before reconciliation is possible.  Although I agree with Chikane's reservations, the playing field is not always as clear in the inner city context. The very exclusive categories of "oppressor" or "oppressed", of "exploiter" and "exploited" are not always as easily identifiable. The challenge of mutuality, as suggested by Nürnberger, therefore makes sense to me. It also makes theological sense to offer the opportunity of humanisation (and liberation) to all people. Chikane's insistence on true conversion is important, however. I would therefore suggest going beyond conscientisation or

humanisation as Nürnberger meant it even, urging for a moral conversion that will include  both - and more.


●      **"We are Pilgrims on a Journey..."**

This mutuality that Nürnberger calls for, could be explored further in terms of the Biblical concept of pilgrims (1 Peter). From a Judaeo-Christian theological perspective all human beings are pilgrims, sojourners, strangers in this world. Seltser and Miller (1993 : 88-90), in their book on homelessness, indicate how both Jewish and Christian traditions have used the images of homelessness to describe the fundamental condition of human life. All of us know the experience of being strangers in a foreign land that is not really our own. We are all pilgrims on the same journey between life and death.

Once we discover ourselves in this way, once we are in touch with our own temporary status and our own wounds, it would be easier for us to be in solidarity with others, with the poor of the inner city, and the landless without homes. This realisation of a common belonging to a community of pilgrims, is a vital part of the moral conversion, because it sets us in community. It challenges the "we-they" divides, it facilitates actions of solidarity, a mutual struggle and a common search for liberation and freedom.

Such a moral conversion based on mutuality, interdependence and a common pilgrimage, would also facilitate an economy of community and a politics of justice, because such a conversion would not allow for exclusive economic growth and exclusive political power and social opportunities, which exclude a large portion of society.

## 7.6    The Principle of Life (and the threat of death)

### 7.6.1  Life : Humanity's Greatest Gift

African Traditional Religions hold that a person is created by God and that such life is the highest gift of God to the individual. The entire process of childhood, growth and maturing, is about living life to the fullest  (Maimela 1991 : 5).

Deist (1990 : 5), in reference to Genesis 1 and 2, indicates how God created life and made provision for its sustenance in the six days of creation. When God created humankind in his image and entrusted creation and created life to humanity (Gen 1 : 27-28), care for life is one of the major characteristics of that image (Maimela 1991 : 5). It is the task of human beings to sustain life by taking care of the earth and its creatures; including fellow human beings. When God created the Sabbath it was to remind us that He is the Source and the Giver of life. He is also the one setting the boundaries. Over against exploitation of life, of each other and of the earth, God

gave the Sabbath as a day of recovery and a day on which to celebrate Him as the Source of life. The Sabbath is also a reminder that life is to be sustained within this covenantal relationship with God. A position outside the covenant would lead to death and despair.

In the books of Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, we are offered a detailed account of how we are supposed to care for life. Life is more than a biological concept in the Old Testament, as it has deep ethical implications (Deist 1990 : 9; cf. also Maimela 1991).

> The laws of the Pentateuch are very much concerned with the nurturing of fellowship and the protection of human dignity, and it is this fellowship and dignity that bring "life" into the sphere of ethics.
>
> (Deist 1990 : 9)

The prophets also warned against life that was merely a biological notion, and against life that consisted merely in the performance of certain rituals.

> For the prophets "to live" meant to share life, to be responsible for life, and to care for life in all its facets.
>
> (Deist 1990 : 9)

African anthropology looks at life holistically, considering the multiple relationships in which human beings find themselves. Maimela (1991 : 12) highlights this as the most important possible contribution of African anthropology and African Christians to Christian thinking. Such a holistic view of life also has implications for a Christian response.

A practical theological anthropology would hold life in a high regard, indicating how humanity could participate in sharing life with one another. Life is about being truly human, and humanity is discovered in our communion with God, others and creation. Oppression, in this framework, is

> any human act - whether physical, ecological, economic, social, or political - that endangers the possibility of life in its fullest ethical sense.
>
> (Deist 1990 : 10)

Liberation, on the other hand, is the restoration of life through accepting one's powerlessness, and living according to God's rules "for the care and sustenance of life" (Deist 1990 : 11). Gutierrez (1988 : xxxvii) also describes liberation as an act of life-giving. He says to liberate is to give life. The incarnational Christ is once again our model. He was the life-giving one that restored people to wholeness in the full sense of the word. And we are called to do likewise.

A practical theological anthropology would stand not only against individual human acts that defeat the purposes of life, but also against death-dealing systems or ideologies. Theories such as nepotism and egoism, and therefore nationalist or liberal notions of anthropology, cannot be reconciled within a Biblical anthropology, since these theories spell death, not life. Thus, they cannot be authentic

Biblical reflections on humanity or humankind.

Deist (1990 : 11) suggests that a theology that takes liberation or transformation seriously, is interested in finding ways of restoring life to people - in the broadest sense of the word. Viewing liberation theology as political theology in the narrow sense of the word would be wrong. The concept of liberation has never been the exclusive property of political activists. Rather, it is a Biblical term intended to spell freedom to humanity in every sphere of society.

## 7.6.2  The Threat of Death

If Genesis 1 and 2 introduce the principle of life, then Genesis 3 -11 introduce the principle of death. Genesis 2 says that humankind will die when they eat from the tree of knowledge. Some people then regarded this as a sign of God's grace that people haven't actually died in Genesis 3, although they have eaten from the tree. Deist (1990 : 7) disagrees. He says that it is more likely to assert that Adam and Eve was in fact dead. Death in this context means the "'estrangement from fellowship'" (Deist 1990 : 7), alienation from each other, breach of covenant, breakdown of communal relationships, and so on. The result of this death is disharmony in our relationship with God, our fellow human beings, and nature. Death is sensed in the absence of close communion.

In African anthropology sin and evil manifest itself in the human attempts to destroy life and communal well-being. Therefore,

> any activity which aims at destroying or injuring our fellows is regarded as a serious evil or sin, because any such unloving act towards our fellow human beings is directed ultimately against God, the Creator and Source of all life.
>
> (Maimela 1991 : 11-12)

Sin, in liberation theology and in African anthropology, is understood in a broad sense, not only in terms of personal sin, but also in terms of the social dimensions of sin (Maimela 1991 : 61; Gutierrez 1988 : xxxviii). Sin is not only an evil activity directed against God, but includes all the evil deeds which are directed against fellow human beings. In the African context, a narrow understanding of sin and salvation will not meet the encompassing needs of the African world, with its holistic and communal world view (Maimela 1991 : 10).

> Sin is therefore the ultimate cause of poverty, of injustice and exploitation. The sensitivity to sin has been awakened by a situation where people lack food, housing, primary health care and education. The gift of freedom, an unmerited gift of God, invites human beings to a conversion. This is a call not only to change one's personal behaviour but also to work for social justice.
>
> (Maimela 1991 : 62)

Both African and liberation perspectives would agree with Deist's assertion that sin, and the consequential death, is about estrangement of fellowship in all spheres and has both personal and social dimensions. At its roots sin should be understood as

the breach of our covenantal relationships, resulting in injustice, oppression, abuse, individualism, and isolation. Instead of covenantal solidarity in society, we have often found retreat in an individualism which seeks only personal attainment and fulfilment, often at the expense of the other. This is still the dominant Western paradigm, even in our dominant theologies, in the church and in Christian mission. Such individualism might also be categorised as sin, since it clearly expresses the breach of our covenantal interdependence.

A last remark in this regard : much of contemporary Western theology has grown out of a response to the fears of Western people in the time of Calvin and Luther. They were asking questions about death and the individual salvation of the soul in the life hereafter (Maimela 1991 : 10). The African person asks questions about life here and now, about the well-being of the community, and about how to attain communal well-being and fullness of life.

It is important to understand that death is not necessarily the ultimate enemy in the African world view. Death, namely, is seen as natural and inevitable. It is a reunion with those who have gone before us. Therefore, the narrow focus on individual salvation which guarantees life after death, is not as applicable to the traditional African situation (Maimela 1991 : 13). This might be changing as African communities are also affected by urban industrial society.

Another problem is that traditional Christian responses packaged in Western containers, have not always been able to touch the soul of the African person. As Desmond Tutu (in Maimela 1991 : 9) said :

> Up to fairly recently, the African Christian has suffered from a form of religious schizophrenia... The white man's largely cerebral religion was hardly touching the depths of his African soul; He was being given answers, and often splendid answers to questions he had not asked.

The same could be said of the poor in the city who is addressed by a middle-class and intellectual Christianity, often meaningless to their unique cries (cf. Gamble 1991 : 31).

The focus on life in a holistic way, not only in personal or other-worldly terms, is important for a practical theological anthropology and soteriology, relevant to the context of South African inner cities. I suggest a theology of community as such a holistic anthropological perspective.

### 7.6.3  Restoration of Life (salvation)

The two trees in the garden represent the principles of life and death, as well as the struggle between the two. Human management of creation and human relationships with each other always stand in the sign of a choice between life and death. We either give life or cause death (cf. Deist 1990 : 5). The task or the calling of the

church and of Christians is also to create either "death-dealing or life-giving social structures" (Maimela 1991 : 14; Gutierrez 1988 : 37).

Once life was lost as in Genesis 3, human beings have searched after life by devising and using different mechanisms. The problem is that people usually try to secure life by "seizing" or "grasping" for power (Deist 1990 : 7; Brueggemann 1993). To obtain life, we take advantage of each other, we violate each other's rights, and we intrude and compete for each others' life space (Deist 1990 : 7). The consequences however, is that life seems to be ever elusive, as people end up in even greater "confusion, disharmony, disaster and death" (Deist 1990 : 7). The story of the tower of Babel in Genesis 11 is a parable of humanity's distorted sense of what actually has the capacity to guarantee life.

The attempt to regain life through the seizure of power, perpetually leads to destruction of life. The Biblical irony is that the opposite of power could create life-giving opportunities. It is when we are confronted with our own death, that we can open ourselves to the newness of the Spirit. It is the royal consciousness that preaches power as the way to overcome death. It is the alternative consciousness of the prophets and of Jesus, that teaches powerlessness as the way of life.

> But powerlessness leads to sharing of and caring for life, and therefore to life itself.

(Deist 1990 : 8)

Throughout the Genesis narrative God seeks to protect and re-introduce life. The continued resistance of human beings lead to death time and again. And even then God starts all over again, offering humanity a new beginning (cf. Noah & Abraham). Genesis 12 "is a structural counterpart of the creation story in Genesis 1" (Deist 1990 : 8), creating something new out of the death of human estrangement. It is God who enters into our condition of powerlessness and death, when we allow Him to, and who recreate life within us, our churches and our communities.

> God starts with one homeless man married to a barren wife. If life is to spring from them, it has to be by a creative act of God. Wherever these defenceless people go, their lives are threatened, by famines and powerful kings.
>
> (Deist 1990 : 8)

It was in fact a creative act of God that turned Abraham and Sarah into the spiritual ancestors of Christian people. In their lives the paradox of life in death, and hope in hopelessness, is powerfully demonstrated.

In the inner city, at the point of no return, it is the God of surprises who offers us a new imagination, calling situations of death back to life, restoring people, streets and buildings to their former dignity. Liberation or salvation in the city is about restoring life wherever death is staring us in the face : where people are far from God or far from each other, where people have lost their lives due to addiction or

abuse, where people are victims of slum landlords or city security personnel, where the decision-makers have become numb and the powerless have surrendered to misery.

*We in the church are called to develop life-giving structures - communities that will incarnate the life-giving presence of God, and affirm humanity as created in the image of God.*

## 7.7    Entering into Covenantal Relationships

The Bible provides the metaphor of the covenant as the dominant image for how human relationships should be shaped; i.e. in accordance to the inclusive relationship between God and human beings (cf. Gerkin 1991 : 151; Pieterse 1993 : 164).

Community was God's initial purpose with humanity, because He knew that humanity can be called good only in close communion (Deist 1990 : 6). God created us for perfect communion with Himself, with one another, and with the created world. Originally there was perfect harmony in these covenantal relationships that God has created. Genesis 1 and 2 suggests that life is most clearly expressed and experienced in the presence of close communion.

> Total freedom and therefore total personhood, comes in the final analysis from communion with God and others.
>
> (Tlhagale 1991 : 61)

As was said earlier, the greatest effect of sin was not so much personal actions against each other, but the condition of estrangement from communion. The loss of a sense of community and belonging, and therefore of life, was resulting in death. Our task today is to restore life, and that implies restoring community as well.

Within covenantal relationships we are supposed to distribute the gifts of life to one another. The African world-view does not view the life of an individual in isolation from other human beings. In fact, life is to be understood in communal terms and only through the mutual interdependence between people, and between an individual and his or her community, is a full and healthy life possible (Maimela 1991 : 5). We need to rediscover our "mutual interdependence " (Nürnberger 1996 : 161). Mutual acceptance and a mutual commitment to build a just society and a transformed city would be based on our recognition of mutual interdependence (cf. Nürnberger 1996 : 161).

African anthropology is human-centred and socially oriented. Individuals are constantly reminded that fullness of life can only be attained in relationship with other human beings. Individuals will therefore seek for a balance between their own fulfilment and the well-being of the community as a whole. This is in line with the

covenantal vision of the Bible. Both contemporary Christianity and contemporary South African society, with its emphasis on individual human rights, have lost this sense of communal well-being to a large extent.

This traditional African vision is summarised in the Northern Sotho saying : *Motho ke motho ka batho*. A human being is human only because of others, with others and for others (cf. Maimela 1991 : 11). If this is true of African society, it is even more true of the Biblical God. Tlhagale (1991) speaks of God not as the God of the law, but as the God who creates "covenants of fellowship" with his people (cf. Gerkin 1991 : 151-164).

> Therefore, at the centre of the covenant is not law and its impossible demands which mortal humans cannot fulfill but life-giving relationships between God and human beings, relationships which make life possible.
>
> (Maimela 1991 : 13)

Sin, in this sense, should then also be understood in a different way.

> Adam and Eve sinned not because they broke a law, but because they broke the life-giving relationship with God, causing them to be alienated from God, but also from each other and from creation.
>
> (Tlhagale 1991 : 13)

Overcoming sin or death, and restoring life, not only within an African anthropological paradigm, but also from a Biblical anthropological perspective, will require the establishment of new covenantal relationships with fellow human beings (based on our renewed walk with God in humility).

As African Christians, we are now called to engage in activities that will enhance the total well-being of the community, by entering into positive relationships with fellow community members (cf. Maimela 1991 : 6). In African anthropology there is a focus on the network of multiple relationships in which people find themselves and through which they attain life (cf. Maimela 1991 : 11-13) . The church is challenged to make a shift from a legal structure to a network of multiple relationships. In the inner city the concept of a network of multiple relationships is not foreign at all, but the challenge for the church is to ensure that these networks of relationships will be converted into life-giving mechanisms that will create well-being for *all* the citizens of the inner city.

In the traditional African religions, members of African society also engage in religious rites which maintain the well-being of the community. Failure to do so will release evil forces that will endanger its well-being (Maimela 1991 : 6).

God as Parent puts an obligation upon us "to create brotherly and sisterly relationships amongst human beings" (Tlhagale 1991 : 60). Those who accept the gospel are called into community, because this is the place where we share life with one another.

Van Schalkwyk (1996 : 56) speaks, in reference to feminist theologian Letty Russel, and within the context of the church and community development, of the challenge "to create the world 'as a household of freedom'". It refers to humanity and nature living "in a community of responsibility, partnership and freedom" (van Schalkwyk 1996 : 56). She contrasts this new community with the divisions and power structures of the dominant culture. The "household of freedom" refers to God's new community, where covenantal relationships would be restored, life shared, and a new city emerge - because we work together as a household in the Spirit of Christ.

### 7.7.1  Economics of Community

Sharon Parks (Brueggemann, et al 1986 : 40-42) speaks to Christian educators about their task to create and nurture alternative communities. The task of the educator is to lead us from our captivity to a royal consciousness to an embrace of an alternative consciousness. She defines such an alternative consciousness as a vision of the commonwealth (kingdom) of God. She suggests alternative communities that will reflect the values of God's commonwealth - values such as justice, equality, love, inclusion and peace; communities that will affirm new ways of being human; communities that will celebrate life, and that will contradict the idols of society which are often presented as the real forms of faith.

As an alternative imagination emerges and as we recover a sense of covenantal interdependence, we are called to be intentional about creating community (communities). One sign of such an alternative community - or of restored covenantal relationships - is radically alternative economies.

Although this overlaps with the next section where I will develop a framework for a public theology, I would like to briefly introduce the economic dimension as part of a theology of community. Different authors have suggested lately that we need an economics of community (Cobb 1992 : 72-77; Wallis 1994 : 179-185). Wallis (1994 : 179) is proposing community as the "moral foundation for economics". Wallis (1994 : 235-236) argues that Biblical material is consistent in offering  community as a moral foundation for economics and for economic justice. It is based, namely, on the assumption that we are interdependent, and therefore we cannot engage in individual activity that will destroy the common good, or the well-being of the community at large.

Walter Brueggemann (1991 : 19) suggests likewise when he says

> After the best efforts of self-indulgent existentialism, technological positivism, revolutionary Marxism and free-market ideology, we may yet discern that the covenantal discourse of the Bible, preserved as it is by (a) confessing community, is as close as we can come to a genuinely public language.

The concept of covenantal interdependence is, according to Brueggemann, the foundation for a public language that is just, including an economy that will be fair

and equal.

An economics of community is offered in response to the failure of both the market economy of world capitalism and the command economy of socialist states (cf. Wallis 1994 : 179). Wallis suggests that we ask new economic questions regarding the well-being of the human and ecological community, and these questions need to shape our economic thinking. Well-being of individuals and communities, in covenantal relationships, should be the yardstick. Within such communal or covenantal thinking, the most vulnerable should be a further qualifying factor in evaluating the morality of our economic activity and ideology.

Cobb (1992 : 72-73) writes in a profound manner to motivate his plea for an economics of community.

> ...each creature participates in a community of creatures. Its welfare depends on the health of the community and cannot be assured when its actions weaken the community of which it is part.

Current-day economic ideology, especially in capitalist societies, has been largely shaped by the atomistic thinking of humanity as consisting of individuals and households, and the community as the mere sum total of those individuals (cf. Cobb 1992 : 73). This has led to an individualism which caused a breach of the covenantal relationship, as everybody works for him- or herself, and only the strongest can survive.

Cobb (1992 : 73-74) challenges the idea of productivity or economic growth that leads to the destruction of traditional communities in the Third World, and the decay of inner city communities globally. Likewise, Wallis (1994 : 179-185) is questioning current policies on land reform, real estate speculation, property development, and so forth. But both Wallis and Cobb, as modern-day prophetic voices, do not get disillusioned by the current reality that they criticise. They offer alternative visions of an economics of community, that is based on covenantal relationships of interdependence and mutuality.

Wallis envisions radical land reforms, redistribution of land and wealth, cooperative ventures as alternative to individualised property ownership, and community-based economic development, as mechanisms reflecting a communal economy. Remember that the measure in an economics of community is the well-being of the community, including "the least of these". Cobb (1992 : 73-77), in similar fashion, envisages local community development strategies, decentralisation of political *and* economic power to communities, community-based production determined by the community's own needs, transformed labour policies in regard to decision-making processes and ownership, and so forth. Both identify vital issues relevant to the inner city arena. The inner city poor are largely the victims of a market-driven society in which the strongest survive. And local inner city communities are increasingly the victims of power brokers who think and act in individualist terms for

their own well-being and that of their institutions only.

An economy of community is an economics of stewardship, based on responsible and fair stewardship of God's resources (Linthicum 1991 : 50-51). It is also an economy of sharing for the sake of communal equality and well-being (cf. Brueggemann 1978 : 28-43). The challenge for the church in the inner city is to develop a praxis of ministry that will take stewardship and economic sharing seriously, as a central dimension of relevant and transformative inner city ministry.

Not only would an economics of community ensure fair distribution of resources to all members of society, but it would also "reduce the costs of welfare to the nation" (Cobb 1992 : 77). An economics of community, serving the poorest of the poor, would also serve the benefits of the rich. Because the cost of keeping certain people poor and dependent is too high in the long-term.

> Welfare payments are a sign of the failure of community.
>
> (Cobb 1992 : 77)

An economy of community should attempt to include as many people as possible in productive activities for the generation of their own income (within an understanding that some people cannot be productive anymore). This would be a real sign of transformation - when the resources of God are distributed in such a way that the well-being of the whole community is ensured.

> The key question is one of values. Important questions of scale, forms of technology, and patterns of ownership and decision-making will need creative thought and experimentation. But the critical issue is a change in our ethics and assumptions regarding economic activity. **And the key shift is the movement toward community - the idea of the common good - as the criterion by which we evaluate our economic structures and practices. Community is a sign of transformation.**
>
> (Wallis 1994 : 185)

## 7.8    Summary : "A Theology of Community" as Anthropological Base Theory

### 7.8.1  Major Elements in a Theology of Community (summarised)

| |
|---|
| The vantage point of a theology of community is humanity in general, and the poor in particular<br><br>:        the poor are understood to mean the socio-economic, spiritual and moral poor |
| The content of a theology of community is characterised by the struggle of humanity between life and death. Humanity has lost life, when it perverted the image of God and destroyed perfect communion in all spheres<br><br>:        therefore humanity is searching for life, often through seizing power<br>:        Biblical material indicates that life will be re-gained from a position, not of power, but of the paradoxical powerlessness<br>:        a theology of community suggests restoration of life within communal relationships |
| Central in a theology of community is the notion of covenantal relationships<br><br>:        covenantal relationships are contrasted with individualism, and provided as an alternative<br>:        covenantal relationships will express itself in tender love for one another, in solidarity with the poor, and commitment to social justice<br>:        covenantal relationships will lead to an economics of community, based on responsible stewardship and sharing amongst each other |
| The goal of a theology of community is to lead the way in establishing life-giving communities of faith, that will incarnate the life-giving presence of God and affirm humanity as created in the image of God (cf. p.51). This implies<br><br>:        liberation from death in all its forms<br>:        liberation to life in all spheres<br>:        restoring the image of God in humanity<br>:        re-affirming the presence of God with us |

### 7.8.2  The vision of a new humanity : liberated and restored to life in community (shalom *or* integral liberation)

A theology of community envisions a new humanity in God's image. It is based on the life, death and resurrection of the incarnational Christ.

> The rediscovery of the humanity of Jesus, and the fact of his poverty have led to a new understanding of salvation as liberation and humanization.
>
> (Dwane 1977 : 10)

In liberation theology a new and liberated (or free) humanity is envisaged. Christ has created a new person in Himself (Ephesians 2 : 15), and we are called to be restored to the image of God within us. We become truly human only when we

embrace our neighbour and the poor, and only when we work for justice and equality for all people, thereby affirming our covenantal interdependence. Human beings affirm their humanity when they work for the rights of themselves and others (Tlhagale 1991 : 62). We become true persons, only

> ...when they (we) turn away from their (our) selfishness and create communion by recognizing others as persons. Christ has freed human beings from the bondage of sin so that they can become a community.
>
> (Tlhagale 1991 : 62)

Van Schalkwyk (1996 : 55), in reflecting on the role of the church in community development, quotes De Gruchy :

> Liberation, properly understood, includes and integrate the redemption and renewal of the whole of life, whether personal, psychological and spiritual, or societal, political and environmental. Nothing can be more fundamental to the Biblical message of the kingdom of God.

Such liberation is equal to the task of seeking *the shalom of God in the city* : the restored, wholesome and just life of people in communion with God, with one another and with nature (cf. Van Schalkwyk 1996 : 55). It implies liberation from death and liberation to life.

I would like, at this point, to refer to the concept of *integral liberation.* That is the nature of the liberation that is implied in this study. That is also the nature of the new humanity envisioned in the city. Gutierrez (1988 : xxxviii; 97) describes liberation as an integral, comprehensive reality, embracing the whole person and all persons. He distinguishes three levels of liberation, namely :

- socio-economic-political liberation from situations of oppression, marginalisation, and so forth

- humanisation, i.e. the personal transformation of people who live less than human lives, into people who can celebrate their humanity once again

- liberation from sin which is at the root of all evil, breaking our friendship with God and with each other

This coincides with the three conversions that Dorr speak about, namely conversion to God (salvation), conversion to our neighbour (humanisation), and conversion to the public arena (socio-economic-political liberation). Integral liberation sees these three conversions as one. A humble walk with God would imply tender and humanising love, and acts of socio-political justice and liberation.

Although humanisation and social liberation might happen without a concrete conversion to God and repentance of sin, this should not be seen as salvation in the full Biblical sense of the word. It is a dimension of salvation, however, and a sign of God's intervention and presence in human history. Gutierrez emphasises this second level of salvation, in reaction to narrow interpretations of liberation addressing only religious and political issues. Gutierrez (1988 : xl; 97) is of the opinion that human liberation (or humanisation) should be very central in our praxis of ministry. The liberating acts of Christ have been fleshed out in human history, and the Spirit of Christ is still acting in the concrete process of humanity.

The nature of the new humanity could also be summarised in the term *humanisation*. If conversion to God is by definition salvation from sin (personal and social), then a moral conversion is by definition a call to humanise a dehumanised world. This might include the transformation of less than human conditions (such as the informal residents of Marabastad) to conditions that are healthier and more humane (formal housing & security of tenure). It might include the transformation of marginal people into people whose dignity are affirmed (homeless people who became project leaders and housing managers in the inner city of Pretoria). It might also include the transformation of those who dehumanise others, by calling them to repentance and offering them the opportunities of restitution through acts of solidarity and sharing.

At the heart of a theology of community, is the challenge to humanise humanity, i.e. to flesh out the truths of the gospel, demonstrating the life of Christ, and calling people to become truly human in the example of Christ.

*The new humanity will be*

*      liberated **from** death and **to** life
*      humanised and restored in the image of God, and
*      demonstrating the incarnational Christ through incarnational communities of covenantal solidarity.

## 7.8.3  Signs of a New Humanity

A liberated humanity will be characterised by signs of transformation or restoration. Some of these signs might include the following :

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ● | Diverse Communities : | communities where racial, cultural and economic diversity is celebrated |
| ● | Humanity in Solidarity : | communities and people affirming the poor and vulnerable, including them in decision-making processes, and working with them towards their well-being (cf. Boff & Boff 1986 : 109) |
| ● | Engaged Communities : | communities that die to themselves, by engaging in transformative action for a better and alternative world (cf. Boff & Boff 1986 : 109) |
| ● | Shared Participation : | communities that co-operate and participate towards their mutual well-being, whilst including the poor in the process of democratic participation |
| ● | Visionary Communities : | communities with the capacity for fantasy or imagination, who see visions of a new reality; Boff & Boff (1986 : 110) speaks of an utopian humanity in three ways : the small utopia of every person having one meal per day, the large utopia of a society without exploitation and with full participation of all people, and the absolute utopia of humanity in a creation completely liberated and whole. |
| ● | Prophetic Communities : | communities that expose death-dealing structures with critical clarity, whilst offering an alternative imagination through words and deeds (cf. Boff & Boff 1986 : 109) |
| ● | Communal Economics : | communities where sharing and responsible stewardship are offered as alternatives to materialism and individualism |
| ● | Socio-Political Justice : | communities working for the well-being of all people, that include the most vulnerable in political decision-making, and that provide access to social options for every person |
| ● | Festivity & Celebration : | communities that value occasional withdrawal (Sabbath), that recognise God's presence in humanity, and that develop the capacity to surrender to God and each other in festivity |

### 7.8.4 The Human Agent as Subject of a Transformed or Renewed Humanity

Theology "from below" emphasises the vocation of human beings collectively "to build a world that is fully human" (Tlhagale 1991 : 58). Authentic Christian mission and witness will be expressed in actions that will usher in a more humane world, in which oppressive structures are dismantled and signs of the kingdom erected in their place (cf. Tlhagale 1991 : 58-59). The human agency has a vital role to play in this regard.

In the anthropology of liberation theology persons are viewed as an end in themselves, unlike the dominant utilitarian anthropology in which persons are merely a means to an end, whether the end is development, colonial expansion, or technological advancement (cf. Tlhagale 1991 : 57). In the view of liberation theology, the dignity of a person "is the *highest value*" (Tlhagale 1991 : 57-58). Liberation theology is liberating humanity from its own estrangement from God, each other and nature, and from its enslavement to production, consumption, individualism, materialism, and so forth.

Within the context of a theology of community, the idea of human agent as an individual agent needs to be broadened. I would like to stress the role of incarnational, humane communities responding to a dehumanised world in new and alternative ways. This corresponds with the call of Brueggemann for alternative or prophetic communities, that will establish signs of an alternative consciousness and a humane world, where Christ rules in humane and life-giving ways.

In the inner city there is a need for the transformation of churches into incarnational and life-giving communities of hope. There is also the need for new wineskins and new expressions of church, in the form of intentional communities in solidarity with the people of the inner city.

## 8.     Towards a Public Theology

### 8.1     Defining a Practical Theological Diaconate

Diaconate is chosen here as a parallel term for ecclesiology and anthropology, in order for the three strands of a theology of inner city transformation to be developed. Heitink (1993 : 278) used the term "diakonologie" and stated that it can be misunderstood very easily, and it can also fail to do justice to the whole sphere of activities that is required from the church within the public arena. In some circles, on the other hand, diaconology is used as the collective term for all the practical theological subjects. It depends on our understanding of the diaconate, however. In my understanding diaconate is an adequately broad and encompassing term, including many different dimensions of Christian praxis.

Let me spend some time to reflect on the diaconate of the church. It is my opinion that the inner city church is still in need of re-assessing its diaconate, and on the basis of such a re-assessment, to embrace the diaconate as an essential and central feature of the life of the church (cf. De Beer 1991 : 116-117). In fact, I would go so far as to say that the diaconate of the church belongs to the heart of the church. It was the Dutch theologian, Verkuyl (1979 : 209), who asserted :

> A church that is not diaconal is no church.

Verkuyl (1979 : 209-210) continues with this radical statement :

> Urban mission without diaconate has little to do with the mission of Jesus Christ and amounts to paying lip service to Christos Diakonos.

Van Klinken (1989 : 67), another Dutch theologian, is of the opinion that the diaconate must be considered one of the signs of the church. Because without the diaconate there is not really a church to speak of.

Christ has shown himself par excellence as the servant and not the one to be served. The content of his ministry can be defined by servanthood, and that is why Verkuyl (1979 : 209-210) speaks of Christ as *"Christos Diakonos"*. It is as servant that Christ has died (Phil. 2 : 5-11). Theologically, it is vital to affirm this at the onset and as basis for a public theology. A public theology, although the temptation of power and popularity might be very real, should be based on the incarnational Christ and his servanthood. A public theology does not crave or grasp for power, but is the church incarnated into the public arena as the "public servant", seeking to make the presence of God known in all spheres. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Gibson Winter, John A.T. Robinson and Avery Dulles, all refer to the church as servant church within secular society, serving humbly instead of assuming power (cf. Dulles 1978 : 94-96).

Harvey Cox (1965 : 114) speaks about the church's diaconal function to heal "the urban fractures".

> Some scholars translate diakonia as service. But service has been so cheapened that it retains little significance. Diakonia really refer to the act of healing and reconciling, binding up wounds and bridging chasms, restoring health to the organism.

In the secular city such a diaconate would imply a ministry of reciprocity that will make whole that which has been fragmented and fractured.

> In order to be a healer, the church needs to know the wounds of the city firsthand. It needs also to know where and how these abrasions are being healed, so that it can nourish the healing process. For the church itself has no power to heal. It merely accepts and purveys the healing forces which God, working with man (and woman - my insertion), sets loose in the city.

(Cox 1965 : 115)

The principle of servanthood as demonstrated by Christ, should be the foundation of all ministry and of the church in general - not only of the diaconal aspects of our praxis. I would like to suggest that a diaconal focus should be integrated into all our other functions, i.e. worship, preaching, administration, pastoral care, and so forth. We need to develop the servant character of our Lord in our lives and churches and theologies, if we want to be relevant and faithful in the brokenness of our inner cities.

Harvey Cox (1965 : 116) says

> ...the church's task in the secular city is to be the diakonos of the city, the servant who bends himself to struggle for its wholeness and health.

When Heitink (1993 : 278-279) speaks of the church's diaconate, he insists that it should be a humble service, in the spirit of the humble God of Micah 6 : 8. The term "presence" is to him a helpful term, as it represents the kind of service which is

stripped of great pretension or triumphalism.

*A public theology is about the church becoming the present diakonos of the city, following Christ as the liberating Diakonos.*

## 8.1.1 A Public Theology as Base Theory

Within a practical theological diaconate I would suggest "public theology" as a base theory, referring to the church's *presence* within the public arena of the inner city.

A public theology deals with the church in its focus on the world. This is the missionary or diaconal mode of the church (Heitink 1993 : 278), where Christ is mediated in the world. Heitink (1993 : 276) refers to an emerging public Christianity as a corrective to a largely ignored dimension of the church's life and witness. The church's presence in the public arena has been least developed of all the dimensions of the church's witness.

I suggest public theology here in a broad sense, however, including those aspects of the Christian presence that might be classified as "secular"; in other words, the areas of presence where the immediate focus is not conversion to Christ, but presence in order to have a transforming effect in society through the transfer of certain values, ensuring democratic processes and the inclusion of the poor, affirmation of the dignity of a people, and so forth.

A public theology explores the presence of the church in the public arena, where power is brokered, and socio-political and economic processes are steered. A public theology positions itself at the point where powerlessness is experienced, and where the victims of political and economic exploitation are marginalised. The twin concept of power-powerlessness is central in the development of a public theology.

Where the previous section dealt with humanisation of a dehumanised world, focussing on the poor, this section wants to go one step further. I assume a moral conversion to covenantal interdependence, a conversion to the poor and to communal life, a conversion to people in general. This section wants to go beyond the moral conversion and call for a conversion to the political or public arena where decisions are made that affect people in the inner city still, every day. The humble God calls us to walk in tenderness with one another, but also to shout for justice when required. "To act justly" is an expression of a humble walk with God and a tender love for people.

The practical theological diaconate that I will deal with here, will focus on the aspect of justice. For too long, and in too many churches and places, the diaconal function of the church has been reduced to paternalistic ministry to the poor from the "top down", dehumanising people even further, providing "hand-outs"and creating dependencies. Our own entanglement with the status quo of the royal

consciousness, has disabled us not to be able to bring fundamental change to people through transformative actions of compassion and, ultimately, justice. A public theology implies a conversion to the public arena and to issues of social justice.

Cox (1965 : 22) refers to the cries of African-American people in American inner cities. Their revolt, he says,

> ...is not aimed at winning friends, but at winning freedom, not interpersonal warmth but institutional justice.

We are called to offer friendship that will humanise but also to go beyond that in order to secure institutional justice that will set people free. Inner city problems, says Cox (1965 : 122), cannot be dealt with privately through face-to-face relationships only, but need to be dealt with politically as well. Without the church playing an active role in the public arena, our attempts at inner city transformation would be futile, since we will continue to deal with the symptoms, while injustices still flourish.

The public theology that I want to suggest in the inner city corresponds with concepts developed in liberation theology, public theology in the USA, as well as the theology of conversion or transformation, that evangelical churches within Latin America have developed in response to contextual needs in that part of the world, as well as in response to Latin American liberation theologies (cf. Escobar 1987 : 39-40).

The theology of reconstruction, developed by Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 7-8), is a liberation theology with a different perspective (and even goal). It goes beyond political liberation and requires interdisciplinary action which "constitutes a decisive methodological challenge facing theology in the decades ahead" (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 8; cf. chapter 2; 3). This is a public theology, which is post-exilic in every sense of the word, seeking to establish community, identity, values and structure in a "free South Africa", where many people are still not free, either psychologically or economically [or spiritually].

Although I opt for the term public theology as part of a broader theology of inner city transformation, the term that we use is not the real heart of the matter. It can be a theology of reconstruction, conversion, liberation, or transformation. It can be a theology of social change. The key issue is whether the poor are embraced within society and integrated into the heart of the city, whether the presence of the incarnated Christ has been made known, whether social justice has been ensured, transformed inner city communities facilitated, signs of the kingdom or household of God erected. A further question is whether the church of Christ is actually able to be the agent of such transformative actions in the world.

### 8.1.2  Public Witness in the Past : Seeking for a New Response

Heitink identifies different models of public witness in the past :

*Theocracy*, in the definition of Berkhof, represented the cultic, judicial and ethical dimensions of public life as determined by the purposes of God with his people (Heitink 1993 : 279).

The *"two kingdom" doctrine* suggested that God reigns in this world in two ways. In the church Christ reigns through the Holy Spirit and through the Word and sacrament. In the worldly kingdom there are institutions, i.e. marriage, occupation, and so on, which are supposed to be expressions of God's reign (Heitink 1993 : 279-280). The Christian is a Christ person *and* a world person, living in both kingdoms, but with different vocations.

The *"Church for others"* suggests solidarity with the world around us as the central theme (Bonhoeffer 1971; Lange 1981; and others). Sometimes this led to the so-called Christianity outside the church, where a distinction is made between public and private Christianity. Certain people distanced themselves from the church and its rigid dogma; yet, they practised private Christianity as free individuals (Heitink 1993 : 280-281).

*Political theology* focussed on participation in the struggles of the poor and oppressed. The emphasis was never party politics, but political theology was vocal and positioned themselves clearly. Unfortunately Heitink (1993 : 281) refers to political theology in a narrow sense as the design of an ethics of revolution. This is not  to appreciate the broad corpus of material, which could be classified as political theology, with intentionally non-violent, anti-revolutionary and life-giving content.

Certain American authors focus, as of late, on the development of the notion of *a public theology or public church* (Heitink 1993 : 281). This is a broader category than politics only, including economy, criminal justice, policing, tourism, and other public domains of relevance, within the field of theological enquiry and / or activity.

Martin Marty offers a broader definition of public theology than what I intend in this study. He speaks of public theology as an interpretation of "the life of a people in the light of a transcendent reference" (1981 : 16). The "people" he refers to are not only Christians but all people who are somehow religious or affected by the language of the church. He distinguished such a public theology from the notion of "public church", which is, in his definition, the more specifically Christian mechanisms in terms of public polity and witness.

I would, for the sake of this study, use public theology in a narrower sense, speaking about the public theology of the public church, which is specifically Christian. I do recognise, however, that many outside the formal church and within the public arena, do operate with some kind of implicit, non-intentional theology, guiding their activities. consciously or without even recognising it.

In the South African situation, liberation theologians or black theologians have been

very visible in their public involvement against the previous apartheid regime. In the early century Afrikaner theologians were as visible in their public construction of the Afrikaner nation, which included the development of a set of values, influence on the political and economic spheres, and moral guidance to politicians of the day. It is people such as Villa-Vicencio (1992), Maluleke (1995) and Louw (1997), who are currently attempting to develop theology for a new era in which we are called as church to participate in the transformation of society, beyond mere political transformation.

[It is even a question whether political transformation has been effected well enough to the point of local grass-root people really having access to decision-making processes about their own future.]

The inner city church (and the urban church in general) needs an own local theology, emerging from the context and focussing on the goal of inner city transformation. A strong focus on the public arena - based on the church's diaconate in the world - should be included in such a theology. The discovery of liberating signs of hope and wholeness within the public arena, based on God's liberating presence in the inner city, is essential as part of such a theology.

Robert Bellah (1991 : 461) speaks about cultural barriers to a public faith, and suggests as the greatest barrier our individualism.

> ...if every affluent person is simply intent on buying the best possible house for his or her family with no concern for the provision of low- and middle-income housing in the community, then the cost of housing will soon go out of sight and even the affluent will become indentured servants of their mortgages, while the disappearance of low-cost housing means many will go homeless. If we all think only of our own convenience in driving our individual cars to work, then we all spend ever more time on the freeway breathing the polluted air our cars are creating, rather than working on better public transportation that would serve the good of all...
>
> (Bellah 1991 : 472)

Can we overcome such individualism to erect signs of hope in the public sphere ?

Gutierrez (1989 : xiv) in his book on Job, reflects on the task of theology in the Peruvian context by asking certain rhetorical questions :

> How are we to speak of the God of life when cruel murder on a massive scale goes on "in the corner of the dead" ? How are we to preach the love of God amid such profound contempt for human life ?  How are we to proclaim the resurrection of the Lord where death reigns, and especially the death of children, women, the poor, indigenes, and the "unimportant" members of the society ?

In line with such questioning, I would like to pose the following : How are we to speak of the God of life when a hawker is killed to death for wanting to sell his goods on the Pretoria station ? How are we to preach the love of God, when a so-called Christian business man allows children to be sold in child prostitution in his building night after night (saying that he only "allow" us to minister there because he is a "Christian") ? How are we to proclaim the resurrection of the Lord where death

reigns, and communities, churches and people, are dying inside and out ?

We need to develop a public theology and a Christian presence that would witness to the resurrecting power of Christ, the life-giving power of God, amidst gross abuses and injustices, amidst the reality of human suffering and the death of human communities. Because it is the servant Christ, the crucified Christ, that becomes our hope in the midst of dying places. We are indeed called to serve in the world, outside the walls of the church... in the public arena.

It reminds me of the powerful words of George McCloud, quoted by Donald Messer (1989 : 170) in a chapter on public ministry :

> I simply argue that the Cross be raised again at the centre of the market place as well as on the steeple of the church. I am recovering the claim that Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles, but on a Cross between two thieves; on the town garbage heap; on a crossroads so cosmopolitan that they had to write his title in Hebrew and Latin and in Greek; at the kind of place where cynics talk smut, and thieves curse, and soldiers gamble. Because that is where He died and that is what He died about. And that is where churchmen (and women) should be and what church men (and women) should be about.

*We cannot be about the transformation of the inner city, if we do not find a language appropriate to the public arena, and without a gospel of the cross.*

## 8.2    Basic Themes for a Public Theology

Increasingly the church is challenged to be involved in the public arena where politics and urban policy are shaped (cf. Conn, in van Engen, Gilliland & Pierson (ed) 1993 : 103). Conn mentions as one of the most important urban theological themes for today, the role of the Spirit of Christ in the urban church's search for justice and humanisation outside the Christian community.

Heitink (1993 : 283-287) identifies four critical issues to be explored more extensively in a practical theological diaconate, or public theology.

- The issue of labour and the growing contrasts between employed and unemployed people, need to be explored in the economic arena.

  I would like to add to this the issue of land and housing or property.

- Secondly he identifies the issue of equality between different groups, especially amongst those who are marginalised, equality between genders, equal treatment of people with different sexual orientations, and equality for people of different racial or cultural groups.

- The third issue is the relationship between the church and politics. Heitink refers to the issue of nuclear weapons as well as refugees as examples of issues that the church should address at a political level.

- Lastly he identifies the personal moral responsibility of individual Christians with regard to

> shaping the public morality. This involves the way in which social relationships are structured, issues of legislation, values and norms, and so forth. Heitink mentions amongst other things, the fields of medical-ethical issues such as euthanasia or abortion, ethics in the labour market, and sexual ethics.

First of all, public theology in my definition is political in nature. It will touch on the subject of the church in the political arena. Secondly, I will focus on the church, the poor and inner city housing. This will be a contextualisation of the framework for a theology of inner city transformation, and it will focus on the specific issue of the church and housing of the inner city poor in Pretoria. Thirdly, I will introduce as themes not only specific themes such as inner city housing, but more foundational themes that could apply generally, not only to the housing arena, but also to any other inner city themes arising from the public arena.

I will briefly introduce some of the basic assumptions that shape my framework of a public theology.

## 8.2.1 Faith & Ethics

For Luther politics was the affairs of people; for Calvin it was the affairs of God to be discerned within Scripture and tested within the faith community (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 144). Calvinists have consequently developed an organised political ethic based on the gospel who came to set us free. Faith has been translated into deeds which implied an ethic of sorts. Christians are now set free to be co-workers of God in the building of a new society, acting and transferring an ethic of love and justice (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 145).

> ...faith without deeds is dead.     (James 2 : 26)

Ethics belongs to the heart of the covenantal community. Faith communities need to discover and nurture those values implicit to the well-being of inner city communities. These values will be nothing but an expression of God's vision for humanity and creation as a whole. That is the challenge of a public theology in the inner city : to translate our faith into values and actions that will transform the city.

Already in the sixties, in a non-theological book, Abrams (1966 : 565) was quoted as saying that social conscience combined with religious gospel is potentially a major force in the drive for urban reform. It provides urban issues with an ethical focus. The shift to suburbia is effecting a break with the city and leaves the church with some difficult choices. These are not merely choices of convenience, though, but these are fundamentally ethical choices.

We have to provide an ethic of reconstruction or transformation, to facilitate the

process of social renewal ( Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 9). For Barth the grace of God is

the source of a God-given restlessness located at the heart of social construction.

(Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 11)

For the effective transformation of the inner city, people are required who are filled with a God-given restlessness to be agents of change and transformation in the Biblical vision.

The church should be a

> ...value generating community committed to such values that facilitate and enable people to live together in mutual respect. Theologically, it is a community within which people are taught to love one another, to forgive one another and to bear one another's burdens. Specifically it is a culture which elevates those who have previously been marginalised or excluded from the fullest participation in the community.
> (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 42)

The values transferred by the church into the public arena will have the poor as its focus and yardstick, ensuring that they - who have been excluded in the past - are integrated into society.

> I would like to go beyond the politically correct categories that we meet with daily, and to include in the previously disadvantaged groups not only black people - male, female and children - but also single mothers, homeless and unemployed people, marginal communities which are predominantly black but could also be white or coloured or Indian, the disabled - or differently abled - of different races, and so forth. Real transformation would not get stuck in politically correct terminologies which might once again lead to the affirmation of some at the cost of excluding others.

> I hereby do not oppose affirmative action or opportunities for the previously disadvantaged. I only broaden the spectrum of disadvantaged and call for affirmative action that would be inclusive and not at the expense of the "new poor", whoever they might be.

The church as a value generating community fulfils a function of *cultural empowerment* (Villa-Vicencio 1992: 42-45). Cultural empowerment is the process of value transfer by which local communities take responsibility for themselves and others in covenantal respect and interdependent relationships. It recognises that we need one another and that we need to take collective responsibility for the well-being of ourselves and our neighbours.

If the church fails in this vital function it is a failure of "its liberating obligation to society" (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 45). We are bound to be marginalised from the process of transformation if we do not participate in creating a new culture.

Frank Chikane (in Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 49-50) expressed his concern over black youth who used public transport in the past without payment, arguing that they do not have to pay within a structure exploiting them anyway. Chikane's question was

whether these same youths will pay in a new and open society. The effects of the past, namely, are "carried in the wounds and scars of the nation for generations to come" (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 50). The church can and should play a healing role in transforming culture. We can do that by means of solidarity and the transfer of values that make sense and that create collective responsibility.

Cox (1965 : 130-142), on the other hand, speaks of the church as cultural exorcist, addressing and exorcising the demonic distortions that we find in our society, such as racism, sexism, classism, exclusivism, and other realities based on inherited myths. This task requires a community which

> is in the process of liberation from compulsive patterns of behaviour based on mistaken images of the world.
>
> (Cox 1965 : 135)

*When the church translates its faith into ethics, it has the dual task of cultural exorcism, addressing that which is destructive, as well as cultural empowerment, facilitating and nurturing a constructive, collective culture.*

In certain single room buildings in the inner city of Pretoria the reality of a culture of non-payment and disempowerment has become clear over the past few years. In one building only 65-70% of the residents paid their monthly rental. Whenever they had a problem with management they just refused to pay. The effect was non-maintenance and the slow decay of their building. Garbage has been piled up in passages over weekends in the past, and rooms were overcrowded with friends and family members using it as a guest house.

Through a process of co-operative management, the development of shared values and house rules, and mutual responsibility for the building, a new management team has been able to empower people "culturally". The challenge in these buildings is to create a new culture of collective responsibility and joint ownership of the management and decision-making processes.

Obviously this requires a particular kind of management agent as well. In the previous scenario the first management team was not able to deal with the transition in the building and the demands of residents. A new management culture had to be established to facilitate a healthy and decent residential facility.

**Where faith is translated into action, based on a specific set of values or a shared ethic, the church can facilitate signs of transformation in the inner city.**

The church has a definite role to play in the public arena. In the past it was often religion that provided society with the faith and vision to move forward, and that sustained the goals of a better society (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 11). We can only think of leaders such as Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu, and others, who provided moral leadership in times of transformation or liberation. Their leadership assisted greatly to sustain a vision of radical change.

## 8.2.2  Towards a Public Language

We should be careful of "God-talk" in the public arena. We might have to develop a public language or a secular language if we are to transfer godly values into the public sphere. Our spiritualised or religious language might be so offensive that it loses its power to transform. We might do well to remember Jesus' warning that we need to be as wise as doves (and as shrewd or cunning as serpents) [Matt.10 : 16].

> In a radically pluralist society the church can (and should) have no monopoly over this process. It needs to learn with Bonhoeffer what it means to speak of its most fundamental values in a religionless or secular way. This is perhaps the only way in which it will be heard.

(Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 116)

The public arena is not always the most appropriate place where we can call people to conversion in the Christ of our faith. It is an arena where we can call people to a moral conversion and a political conversion in terminology that is without religious jargon. We need to find the common language or common values that can bind us into a common social  vision. In a diverse public arena with different religions, cultures and values represented, we might do well to be intentional about developing such a public language for transferring religious values.

Speaking as representatives or mirrors of the God of Christianity, people know where we come from. Our identities are never hidden. And somehow, through the consistency of our speech and acts, through our tender love and commitment to the city, people will be able to witness Christ within us.

> I have attended many Forum meetings with a respected business manager of our area. He takes bold initiatives in community renewal with great success. I know he represents profit for his business, and he knows I represent the homeless and their issues. Yet, we have been able to develop a relationship of understanding and mutuality which I deeply value. In our meetings, a public language is used, which do not specifically speak of God. And yet, the consistency of actions and speech, might communicate something of God.
>
> At one point, when this person had a personal crisis, I was - much to my surprise - asked to assist him pastorally. He wanted a "representative of God" to walk with him.

> In a recent Community Policing Forum meeting the issue of removals of homeless people in dehumanising ways was tabled. The participants around the table included, among others, five Muslim men from Marabastad. For the first time in my five years at these specific public meetings, "God" was mentioned by name as part of the discussion. The one Muslim man felt that burning down the shacks of informal and illegal homeless people, was perhaps the hand of God. I responded to the contrary, saying that I thought the hand of God is against those who use their power to abuse the most vulnerable. Both of us probably responded from within our own value systems and contexts, even emotionally. In the end, we were able to agree that we need a constructive partnership to address homeless issues in the city, rather than destructive removals.

I relate both these stories to indicate that we do not need "religious talk" to represent Christ in the public arena. Through a public language in the public arena, we might even earn the right to love people tenderly and to relate the caring, humble God in new ways to people. And when we do speak about God in public meetings, it should represent the values that we want to portray, namely protection of the poor and their integration into society. Our challenge is to reflect the character of God as far as possible.

Our need for power and conquest sometimes shape the way in which we act in ministry. As servants, it needs to be possible for us to speak in a secular language, at the service of society and the poor, without necessarily seeing dramatic results. In humility we need to rely on the God of our faith who is busy to work behind the scenes in the hearts and minds of people and in the processes of history. As Cox (1965 : 115) indicated when he said that the church does not have the power to heal - we merely follow Christ and discern signs of his Spirit in the city, and then we respond to that.

### 8.2.3  Solidarity with the Poor

The church is in the public arena, not to gain power for itself, but to stand in solidarity with the poor. The church has the moral obligation to locate itself, not with

the dominant culture or forces in society, not to be trapped or co-opted by them, but to stand on the side of the poor. The church has to resist the temptations of the royal consciousness for power, popularity and relevance, which were the temptations that Jesus also faced (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 30; Nouwen 1989).

> When a church is started among homeless people living in informal dwellings on the edge of Pretoria's inner city, and the city council wants to remove these people to a place near Bronkhorstspruit (almost 50 kilometres away) with no infra-structure, no economic opportunities, and no viability, we cannot merely be quiet. We have to stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters, who now have names and faces.
>
> When homeless people relate stories of shelters where they are abused, and where people enrich themselves in the name of Christ, we cannot be quiet, but have to be in solidarity with those who are exploited.
>
> When Christian organisations manage inner city buildings, yet allow these to become slum tenements without any maintenance being done any longer, we cannot be quiet, but have to stand in solidarity with the poor who are abused.

In the name of God, some people who operate from within the royal consciousness of the city enslave and marginalise and abuse. In the name of God we have to offer an alternative consciousness, resisting temptation and power, and standing in solidarity with those who are the victims. We will also do this in the name of God, but often without even using his name.

It is vital, however, to go beyond words or debate (with or without using God's name) and to engage in pro-active, constructive and hopeful action. If not, if we are confined to mere rhetoric, the church would have failed to demonstrate that it is indeed serious about social justice and a transformed inner city (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 40). It is the task of the church, in Villa-Vicencio's theology of nation-building, to participate in the process of shaping the character of society. In the context of this study, I prefer to speak of a theology of community-building, being done at the level of local inner city communities.

The character of society could reflect extreme individualism, exclusion of the poor, the idolisation of commodities, and urban renewal that benefits the rich and is expressed in the erection of sophisticated buildings, middle-class housing, or inaccessible amenities. Or the character could reflect human-scale development, integration of the poor, mixed-income residential nodes, grass-root economic initiatives, and participation by big and small, poor and rich, in decision-making and social processes.

The church could sit back and wait for a character of sorts to emerge. Or the church could play an active, constructive role in shaping the character of the inner city, based on its fundamental values which are life-giving and God-inspired, having the common good of humanity and creation at heart. I suggest that the church in the

inner city becomes intentional about developing a public theology and presence that would contribute to the character of the inner city.

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\*      Recently when the SAPS was asked by the landlord of an inner city building to raid this building, they (the SAPS) consulted with us beforehand. It seems a strange thing to do, but they were aware that we knew that the residents of that building were not the problem, but that the landlord was. And instead of dehumanising poor residents even further, the SAPS sought for an alternative method of dealing with the matter.

\*      Daily arrests of children in prostitution are not addressing the core problems and only contributes to hardening these girls more. Through a process of conscientisation and public participation, the SAPS adopted a diversion-model, diverting from arrest as only method to deal with child prostitution to an approach of encouragement and referral, prompting the girls to participate in community development programs and other possible alternatives to prostitution.

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\*      The city council has bought land near Bronkhorstspruit to remove the informal residents ("squatters") of Marabastad. Due to consistent public participation and calls to reverse this decision, as it would not guarantee long-term solutions for the inner city problem of homelessness, neither would it be viable for the people concerned, the process was halted. At the moment the possible integration of informal residents into the inner city, is part of an integrated development process for Marabastad.

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When we walk with marginal people from day to day, the false dichotomy between spiritual and social falls away. Because whatever deprives people of life in the full sense of the word, falls within the realm of God's concern. Public theology would always seek to be in solidarity with those who have least power to effect decision-making in the inner city. Such solidarity, if coupled with constructive action, could indeed make a difference.

## 8.2.4   Holistic, Integrated & Communal Action

### ●     Holistic & Integrated

It has been stated many times before in this study that I work with the assumption of holistic ministry, looking at life and humanity in holistic ways, and responding holistically. Public theology is about incarnating God's presence into the public arena of the inner city.

Marty refers to the words of Martin Luther King, who made a distinction (not a separation) between "saving and ordering" faith (Marty 1981 : 22).

> On the one side the church seeks to change the souls of men (and women - my insertion) and thereby unite them with God; on the other, it seeks to change the environmental conditions of men (and women - my insertion) so that the soul will have a chance after it is changed.

To put it rather crudely : the church in the inner city should not only be about saving souls of individual persons, but it should also be about redeeming the soul of the city. That is at the heart of public theology : to connect with the soul of the city in a way that is transformative; through transferring transformative values, through shaping the character of the city, through binding up the fractures and healing the wounds.

Mc Afee Brown (1988 : 64) summarises the notion of holistic ministry, when he says :

> ...salvation deals with the whole person, not with some presumed "spiritual" portion of the whole; ...salvation is a communal rather than an individual reality.

A public theology will facilitate salvation in the sense of wholeness in society. McAfee Brown, in this regard, asserts that salvation actually means "healing" or "wholeness", derived from the Latin word *salus, salutis* (1988 : 65). He (1988 : 65) refers to Paul Tillich's definition of salvation as healing in a very holistic sense :

> Healing means reuniting that which is estranged, giving a centre to what is split, overcoming the split between God and ourselves, ourselves and our world, as well as the splits within ourselves.

Public ministry that is holistic, is not only about crossing the divide between sacred and secular in the narrow sense, but it is also about restoring the fragmented parts into a mutual whole (cf. Cox 1965 : 114-115). The church in the public arena will call for actions, policies,  and decisions that will facilitate wholeness and integration. It doesn't make sense, for example, to spend R 11 000 000 on crime prevention in the inner city, but only R 48 000 on homelessness and other social problems. That was the budgetary priorities of the Pretoria Inner City Partnership in 1997-1998. We still deal with the symptoms, providing band-aid, instead of dealing with the causes of crime and proclaiming healing. Unless we deal with comprehensive social transformation, the crime rate will not drop.

Furthermore, a public theology that is holistic or integrated, will facilitate the integration of people who have been excluded by social barriers (cf. McAfee Brown 1988 : 85). These barriers are often

> skilfully erected to keep us at a good distance from those of a different race or social class or economic background.
>
> (McAfee Brown 1988 : 85)

Public theology will address these barriers and overcome them, demonstrating alternatives through community and action.

● **Communal Action**

The communal aspect of salvation is clearly demonstrated in the conversion of

Zacchaues, which is the conversion which is required in the moral and public spheres. As McAfee Brown (1988 : 66) illustrates it, Zacchaeus, in response to his meeting with Christ, did not decide to use his money to go on a retreat or to build a retreat centre for those who were tired and weary. No, Zacchaeus recognised the communal implications of his past life of injustices, and realised that true conversion would have to start there.

> "Lord, I realize I've been ripping of the people with this little tax racket of mine, so what I'll do is give every one of them a four-hundred-percent return on what I extorted from them in the first place."
>
> (McAfee Brown 1988 : 66)

The covenantal interdependence which is required in the vision for a new humanity, needs to spill over into the public arena, to transform the structures of society to the point of social justice and economic equality. The notion of a prophetic community or public church that is committed to the common good, or the well-being of the whole community, is a much required corrective to the individualism of our society and of our churches (cf. Marty 1981).

Cox (1965 : 118) speaks about the problems of inner city communities, calling for a broad-based and inclusive response.

> The problems of the (inner) city are the problems of the whole society... (Inner cities) always have a higher percentage of the aged, the ill, recent immigrants, and the culturally disadvantaged. Just because they happen to be located in the physical boundaries of a (inner) city does not mean that they must be wholly the (inner) city's responsibility. All of the injustices and abuses of America drain into a place like, for example, East Harlem. The wreckage and castoffs of ruthless competitiveness find themselves bunched together with the old, the infirm, the mentally deficient, the victims of racial and ethnic persecution. Only structural changes in the larger society will ever enable East Harlem to deal with these problems.

The notion of holistic, integrated and communal action within the public arena, is broadened significantly by Cox's observations. Inner city change cannot happen in isolation from other realities. Rural poverty and poverty in the eastern Cape feed into the realities of urbanisation in Gauteng. Many of the informal residents of Marabastad come from the Eastern Cape and the former Transkei. Inner city communities can therefore not be left to their own devices, but the issues of inner city decay need to be addressed at a metropolitan, provincial and even national level. At present it still remains to be seen whether the political will is actually there to address these matters in such a holistic way.

From the perspective of the church, such a communal vision has implications for the suburban church and for suburban Christians within inner city churches. The problem of a public church is the fact that people in the church have an individualist mind-set. The interpretation of life as a communal affair and the calling into covenantal relationships, break down in the church "because there is no communion

of people, there are only private strivers" (Marty 1981 : 26). The community is limited to the hour of the worship service, and then scatters or disperses not into the public arena, but into individualist dreams and aspirations.

- **Human Rights & Communal Well-Being**

The language of human rights is distinctively a public language. Yet, from a theological perspective, human rights need to be understood within the context of communal well-being.

Human rights are the rights that people have by virtue of being human, irrespective of anything else, such as creed, colour, economic status, language, and so forth (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 157). These rights are fundamental and inalienable (1992 : 157). Christian theology, being grounded in the Old Testament and in the incarnational Christ of the New, will find it difficult to deny the importance of solidarity with the poor and marginalised who are deprived of their basic human rights. These rights are basic options to life; and without access to them, death is proclaimed.

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 129) stresses the central place that a theology of human rights should take within a theological anthropology. We cannot speak of humanising a dehumanised world, without considering the fundamental rights of human beings.

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 162) defines human rights theologically, saying

> Human rights are seen theologically to be a specific and concrete response to the gospel message which offers life in the midst of suffering and death.

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 165) affirms, however, that these rights should not be seen in isolation of the communal vision of the Bible. The Biblical vision of society and of a new humanity relates to "the individual worth and dignity of all people, *realised in community with others* (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 165). Villa-Vicencio relates the striking parable metaphor of the lost sheep in Luke 15 : 3-7. Most sermons that I've heard interpreted this text in individualist terms only. Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 165-166) describes how this text is explained communally in contexts such as the Middle-East and Africa. The incompleteness of the flock of ninety-nine is as important a consideration as the loss of the one sheep.

Paul refers to the notion of communal interdependence in 1 Cor. 12 : 26 : "if one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it". Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 166) says : when one part suffers, they all suffer together; and when one flourishes they all flourish.

It is within this context of communal interdependence that Christians must act in the

public arena. Not only are we one body in the body of Christ, but in a broader sense we also belong to humankind in general (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 166).

> There can, within this ethic, be no healing or sense of completion in the individual without the restoration of health, purpose and security of the entire community.
>
> (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 166)

This is true also on a local scale in the inner city of Pretoria. The role of the church in the public arena would be to restore the fragmented parts into wholeness. Because it is only in fellowship with one another that the image of God is fully realised (Gen 1 : 28).

Many Western democracies stand in contrast to the Biblical vision, affirming individual rights often at the expense of other people. Freedom of choice needs to be curbed by the considerations of access for all residents to basic requirements of housing, health care, nutrition and education (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 166-167). Such economic and social securities need to be the yardsticks for the well-being of all, before free choice can be effected without limits.

Liberal individualism deals with poverty through individualised charity and this is still evident in the ways in which issues of poverty are dealt with in the inner city of Pretoria. People, Christians and non-Christians, are not prepared to engage in communal relationships of interdependent solidarity. Many church-based projects to address poverty lack incarnational involvement

> which requires solidarity and communal acceptance of responsibility and accountability.
>
> (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 169)

A public theology will advocate a world view affirming that we find meaning by being in community with others (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 173).

## 8.3   Death in the City

More than 20 years ago already, Paul Moore (1976 : 144) wrote about the struggle of cities, saying

> We are now far beyond the life or death of the Church in the city, we are now wondering about the life and death of the city itself, and, in turn, the survival of our civilization as we know it, because historically, the cities have been the souls of their nations.

We all lead private *and* public lives. Paying our taxes, voting at the polls, paying licencing fees, are all public affairs. These are contrary to sickness, death, our kitchen or our bedroom, which are mostly strictly private. We also experience death in both public and private spheres. We are somehow in touch with death in our private lives, even if only illusionary. But we have not learnt to be in touch with death

in the public arena. Our faith has not yet become responsive to death where it triumphs in our inner cities daily. Even though we are as affected by public events as by private, in fact, we often argue against Christianity in the public or political sphere.

A public theology wants to be in touch with death as expressed in the inner city, and from a position of solidarity wants to develop a language for proclaiming the power of life over the threat of death. Moltmann (1983 : 124) identifies death in its various expressions, when he says :

> It is the economic death of the person we allow to starve; the political death of the people who are oppressed; the social death of the handicapped; the noisy death that strikes through napalm bombs and torture; and the soundless death of the apathetic soul.

Deist (cf. 7.6.2) asserted that death is ultimately the estrangement from fellowship with God, one another and creation. The estrangement from God and each other gives rise to oppression, starvation and alienation. The estrangement from creation allows for pollution, and the estrangement from God leads to meaninglessness.

Moltmann (1991 : 325-329) speaks about the crucified God who died in solidarity with these different expressions of death in the world. Public theology should be rooted in the reality of the cross, seeking to be in solidarity with the inner cities of our day.

> It is in secular institutions where the church has to face the strangling problems of oppression, fear, hunger, insult and dehumanisation.
>
> (Moila 1990 : 27)

We can therefore not escape the secular or public arena.

### 8.3.1  Death of the Poor

Death expresses itself in the inner city amongst the poor. Where poor people are deprived of opportunities, systematically marginalised, and even physically abused, wholeness of life is absent and signs of death prevalent. Besides the emotional, psychological or cultural expressions of death, the poorest of the poor are exposed physically to the extent of dying on the streets. For the past five years, homeless people have died every winter on the streets of Pretoria's inner city due to exposure. Poverty, in the final analysis, means death (cf. Gutierrez 1988 : 8).

Moltmann (1991 : 330) identifies poverty as one of the vicious circles of death. He speaks about this as the *vicious circle of poverty*, which includes hunger, malnutrition, disease, class domination and exploitation. Being poor is reflected in physical lack, but is also a qualitative condition, implying a certain way of life, thought, prayer, struggle, and so on (Gutierrez 1988 : 8). These circles of death can be traced on a global scale in the relations between the industrial world and the

developing world, but also between urban and rural sectors within a region, or within the city itself between the suburbs and the inner cities (or urban townships). "Pockets of poverty" exist all over the world, carrying within it the death of a people. Instead of romanticising poverty, it should be understood for what it is, namely a form of death, which - at its roots - results from sin and the break-down of communion with God and each other.

In the political sphere a *vicious circle of force* is at work (Moltmann 1991 : 330-331). In its extreme form it is expressed in dictatorships, human rights violations, the refusal to grant political co-determination, and the violent suppression of the oppressed. In a less extreme form, the evidence of the circle of force could be identified in the way in which the market excludes and marginalises the poor, political processes are executed without due consultation and partnerships with local people, and political decisions that destroy whole communities are still effected unilaterally. When the circle of poverty and the circle of force work together, they become a deadly combination which needs to be addressed everywhere and every time.

The plight of the poor is often made worse by another force at work, namely the *vicious circle of racial and cultural alienation* (Moltmann 1991 : 331). This is expressed in discrimination against people on the basis of their background, skin colour, language, disabilities or gender. In the inner city of Pretoria subtle racism in certain shelters, the lack of non-racial transitional housing facilities in general, and the continuation of "whites only" shelters for the poor on the outskirts of the city, are all expressions of this alienation. The withdrawal of banks and churches when inner city communities change racially, is also a form of isolation that condemns an entire community to alienation.

Often the traps of poverty also include the "smaller vicious circles" of "drugs, crime, prison and further poverty" (Moltmann 1991 : 330).

### 8.3.2 Death in the Inner City

There are many concrete expressions of death in the inner city. Increased poverty, as described above, is one very obvious expression of death. The failure or reluctance to include inner city people intentionally and whole-heartedly in decision-making about the future of the inner-city (subtle force), and the racial and cultural tensions in some inner city buildings, are also expressions of death.

The lack of moral leadership, the growing face of homelessness, the apathy of local government structures and even churches, are all expressions of death. Even more concretely, death is witnessed in the disinvestments from the inner city and into suburban developments. Death is witnessed in the closure of inner city churches and the withdrawal of banks from inner city residential communities. Death is witnessed in the housing decay and break-down of families.

And somehow a public theology will have to respond to all these expressions of death in the midst of the inner city. The problem that we will have to overcome first, however, is our inability to sense death in our midst. As was indicated earlier in this chapter (cf. 3.2), we have perfected the goal of self-actualisation, but we have lost the capacity to identify and mourn death in our world.

### 8.3.3  Death Within Us

Our moral negligence and apathy is the result of the death within ourselves - within the royal or dominant consciousness, within the church and within our own hearts.

> ...the soundless death of the apathetic soul.                    (Moltmann 1983 : 124)

Terms such as "compassion fatigue" are provided as sophisticated alternatives to "death". The bottom-line is that we ignore or refuse to know the contrasting realities of the city, since they challenge not only the status quo, but our own life-styles and comforts. And slowly we are dying from within without even noticing it. Because the lack of a clear and transformative vision for a just society will have as a result that we perish (Proverbs 29 : 18).

As Brueggemann (1978 : 46; chapter 5 [3.1]) said, the royal consciousness within us leads to numbness, especially numbness about death. We don't even notice the death around us, because we are often not immersed deep enough in the sordid realities of the city. We live rather superficial lives moving from home to office and from office to home, without touching base with the death on the streets. There is a grave lack of moral leadership, assuming responsibility for the eradication of poverty. We have died from within.

Du Toit (1997 : 295) raises this important question :

> How serious is poverty talk ? We are philosophical about poverty, or religious, capitalistic, or perhaps socialistically minded - but never really serious.

The death within us is often fed by the so-called "self-fulfilled prophecies" of the media and others, proclaiming that the inner city is due to become a slum, and then we believe that and we do the right things - withdrawal and disinvestment - to ensure that this prophecy indeed becomes true. Such prophecy is usually based on wrong perceptions of the city. These perceptions often feed our fear, withdrawal and apathy. The crime generalisation, the fear to stand up against wrong and to fight for what is right, the myth that we cannot fight "city hall" (Conn 1987 : 153-190), the fear that continuous withdrawal of neighbours and significant others, will lead to even greater poverty and isolation, are all contributing to a feeling of despair.

> Such fears similarly bring the ultimate paralysis : the belief that the city can no longer bring life out of death.
>
> (Russell 1988 : 21)

We have to face the death within us, before the life-giving Spirit can blow through us. And once we face death, we have to allow the Spirit to create within us an alternative imagination, a vision for overcoming death in the inner city. That is the task of a public theology.

## 8.4    Seeking Life, Grasping Power

### 8.4.1   Power : Defining the Concept

Power is a central concept in the development of a public theology. The church in the public arena needs the capacity to identify power and understand its dynamics and effects on urban people and communities. Some people are powerful and others are powerless. Some systems have power to dictate the outcome of urban development programmes, to the extent of marginalising other systems. For urban ministry to be effective, we need to grapple seriously with the issue of power.

Deist (cf. 7.6.3) has indicated that people usually seek to restore life by reverting to power. I would suggest that this is also true in the inner city. However, creating powerful mechanisms to overcome death, is often taking us even further away from life.

Van Jaarsveld (1985 : 252) provides a definition of power (loosely translated from Afrikaans):

> Power is the ability to act and to give direction to behaviour. The more power a person has, the greater is his or her ability to influence the behaviour of the people through his or her own actions. Power expresses itself in political, social and religious spheres. The question arises : Who is in control of these spheres ? This leads to the problems of political domination, social privilege and economic interests.

The Webster dictionary provides a simple definition of power as the "capacity to act" (cf. Pierce 1984 : 32). Power in itself is not supposed to be a problem. Theologian Walter Wink (1984 : 5) writes about power and states clearly that it was created by God and is to be used for the well-being of people and society. It is supposed to be the capacity to act for the well-being of all. The problem with power in the city, however, and anywhere else for that matter, is that it tends to corrupt and that it gets corrupted (cf. De Beer 1998 : 78).

Dorr (1984 : 65) identifies four pyramids of power in modern society. The first pyramid is that of 'money power'. At the top of this pyramid is a small number of companies, countries and individuals who control the economy to a large extent.

The second pyramid represents 'political power' and a few political leaders are at the top of this pyramid. Dorr refers to the third pyramid as that of 'idea power', and people and organisations who influence thought and feeling (the media, educational institutions, etc.) dominate this pyramid. Dorr (1984 : 65) refers to the fourth pyramid "as those who hold what might be crudely called 'God power'". The religious leaders (bishops, moderators and clergy to a lesser extent) are at the top of this pyramid.

According to Dorr the base of all four pyramids is typically represented by community people with little power or access to decision-making processes. The people at the top negotiate and exchange power between them. It usually excludes the majority of people at the bottom of the pyramids. The powerful people are those with the voices, and those at the bottom are voiceless - and often completely ignored. In the inner city this reality has to be accounted for in our ministry structures and approaches. When we deal with inner city poverty, we need to consider the relationships of power very carefully.

David Sheppard (1983 : 12), former Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, provides a different analysis of power. He suggests that society in a developed country such as Britain is shaped not like a pyramid, but like a diamond.

> In other words the majority and their votes are to be found somewhere in the middle, with a stake in keeping things as they are.

Ezekiel 22 offers a striking account of those with power, i.e. the politicians, the business sector, the religious leaders, and the people themselves, all abusing their power and exploiting the poor. Even the prophets have become quiet as they condone the status quo. In the midst of this situation God is requiring somebody to stand in the gap... but cannot find such a person.

The greatest danger is when the church itself succumbs to power. Philpott (1993 : 96-97) quotes from a poem by Assmann, suggesting that the greatest evil is power clothed in sacred forms - this is the true idolatry. With creeds, laws and prayers, the church is able to destroy people in the name of the Lord. A public theology will have to be intensely self-critical, to identify and exorcise the idols within.

A closing remark is that we should not avoid power. Power is essential to overcome poverty and powerlessness in the city. In the South African struggle for liberation the familiar slogan, Amandla !, was answered in the response, Ngawethu ! Philpott (1993 : 98) refers to this in his book, *Jesus is tricky and God is undemocratic !*, quoting from Albert Nolan. Amandla implies power *with* rather than power *over*. The response, Ngawethu, emphasises it, since it means : Power is ours, yours and mine. It is about the collective power of people who work together for the harmony and well-being of all. This is the kind of power that this study is interested in.

### 8.4.2   Power, Politics and Planning in the City

I briefly refer to the work of Brueggemann (1993 : 6-7) to further explore the notion of power in the city. He uses the poem in Isaiah 2 : 6-9 to expose the city and its empty search for life. This poem represents public theology at its best, says Brueggemann, since it addresses not only the religious groupings, but the city as a whole. In this poem all the role players in the arena of urban management is addressed, whether they are believers or not. The prophet warns against those things that they gather in the city that will not be conducive to its sustainability and communal well-being in the long term. It is a criticism of urban public policy.

Brueggemann (1993 : 6-7) suggests that the prophet is addressing a city managed from the top-down with power concentrating in a small elite, consulting widely, but exploiting the poor. Brueggemann says that "a city *excessively full* will... become a city *starkly empty*" (1993 : 6). This is indeed a harsh prophetic warning that all cities of modern times should hear and respond to. With this phrase he also introduces the theme of sustainability which is an emerging theme in theology and urban development theory alike. Brueggemann's warning is an important contribution towards a sound urban public policy.

A very simple definition of public policy suggests that it is "whatever governments choose to do or not to do" (cf. Dye 1975 : 1). In other words, all the actions of governments, including the decision not tot act upon certain issues, are defining their public policy. The task of public theology would include a criticism of public policy as well as constructive contributions towards shaping public policy. This is what the prophet does in Isaiah. I will return to Brueggemann and Isaiah shortly.

Agreement on public policy for the city is reached via different avenues, depending on the nature of power and politics in that city. Goldsmith (1980 : 16-21), in his book *Politics, Planning and the City*, identifies various approaches to urban governance.

Aristotle suggested that every citizen should participate in the affairs of the city (Goldsmith 1980 : 16), over against the apathy of citizens. This has led to democracy in its modern form. He urged for a participatory democracy (or an inclusive democracy), which is citizen participation at its best, implying access to decision-making processes right down at grass-roots level.

Goldsmith feels that participatory democracy in this sense is more possible in smaller areas, but in the modern-day city this kind of democracy becomes increasingly difficult. This difficulty has led to the idea of a representative democracy, where an elective representative acts on behalf of his or her constituency.

The complexities of modern cities have once again caused a modification in the representative model, and today the concept of broad consultation with organised groups within the city is becoming more common. Goldsmith (1980 : 19) speaks about this as consultative government, or a pluralistic view of the city, citing New York City as the best example of this model. The problem is that this often becomes an exclusive exercise, when certain groups have access to decision-making processes, while others are kept at bay. Goldsmith identifies this tendency in New York City, saying that Puerto Ricans and African-Americans often remain excluded from the consultation process with

regard to certain major policy-making decisions in their city.

The consultation model is built on the notion of consensus within society, as well as the possibility to ensure agreement between diverse interests. This emphasis on consensus and stability has led critics of this model to the conclusion that it is implicitly in support of the status quo.

In response to this pluralistic view of the city, the elitist view emerged amongst Marxists and neo-Marxists (Goldsmith 1980 : 20). They assert that the status quo is enforced by a small ruling elite, which could come from the different power pyramids. This would also imply that consultation is an artificial exercise. The small elite governs to protect their own interests, which are the capitalist means of production. The advocates of this view conclude that this is an implicitly exploitative system where a small elite rules at the expense of the masses of working-class or unemployed people.

The concentration of power - policy-making and executive - will vary from the one model to the other. In the context of this study I would like to suggest a model of participatory democracy as goal, allowing people at grassroot level to participate in the management of their own communities. Participatory democracy redistributes power to be collective and shared by all the people of the city, ensuring collective decision-making with regard to public policy and the implementation of development projects for the common good of the city, including its poor.

I do not agree with Goldsmith that this is impossible in large urban areas. In fact, I believe that this could be the most responsible way to manage urban, and also inner city, communities. The consultative model is often displaying either favouritism or tokenism, whilst the representative model has not proven itself in terms of bottom-up transformational processes required in the inner city. There is also a ground-swell of advocates for a more radical participatory model.

A participatory democracy would rely heavily on the principle of consensus in order to ensure healthy communities. Although criticism of consensus as principle makes sense, participatory democracy is working for the common good, which differs from the consultation model where co-optation and tokenism is often the way to reach consensus (for the sake of the status quo). The participatory model, in my view, would often include conflict and protest as the way to get consensus, as the way towards the common good. In participatory democracy, as I suggest it here, the most vulnerable will have a voice in policy-making processes, and without effectively integrating them into society, democracy would be a fallacy.

Town planners often plan only in order to maintain the status quo. As officials of the local government they are merely administrators of establishment values. Their planning often falls in line with the dreams for more power, prestige and glory, evident in the kind of developments promoted at the expense of human-scale cities. A public theology would continuously expose such activity, and call for greater participation and ownership of the city's decision-making processes.

In Isaiah 2 Brueggemann (1993 : 7) identifies a "'fourfold' filling of the city". Cities

are characterised by diviners, silver and gold, horses and chariots, and idols, all being present in abundance. These symbols, to Brueggemann, represent the technically competent consultants (diviners) who represent outside concerns; the economy (silver and gold) which is based on commodity accumulation, with banks growing at the expense of the poor; the increased self-securing of the city (horses and chariots) in which "(M)any of the horses and chariots in the end, of course, are no longer to be used against external enemies but to patrol and guard the internal inequity, to keep the disadvantaged from appearing in their odd ways to take a share" (Brueggemann 1993 : 8); and the signposts of power, technological advancement and self-sufficiency (idols).

He speaks of these as greedy economics, anxious armaments, preoccupation with technique and distorted religion, all contributing not to life, but to the death of the city. The city was filled with impressive items, yet failed to restore life to the city. This is indeed one way to manage cities and it is a very common way, even in our cities today. By reverting to power we seek to restore life. The reality of this poem and Brueggemanns' interpretation of it, rings very true in the inner city of Pretoria today.

A large portion of the budget for the inner city is taken up by outside consultants, proposing how the inner city should be developed. Banks are operating without a conscience, and their withdrawal and "red lining" of the inner city, are having very destructive effects. The largest single item on the budget of the inner city is safety and security, and millions are spent on the employment of additional security personnel and the implementation of additional crime prevention strategies. All the newspaper articles (June-July 1998) express the overwhelming response of praise for these measures. Looking from the bottom-up, however, many homeless people are beaten up without cause or reason by the newly employed security personnel. The belongings of homeless people are burnt to ashes by the city's security people. We are indeed using our own mechanisms to destroy our own. And the poorest of the poor are without a voice to express their pain.

Perhaps it is important to clarify that safety and security, economy, technology and knowledge, and religion, in themselves are not evil (obviously). These are God-given assets given to serve humanity. Yet, when they are perverted to serve the interests of a few, and to become powerful mechanisms of control and exploitation, they need to be redeemed.

God's response to these mechanisms of power, when perverted, is demonstrated in Isaiah 3 : 1-15. God's intervention, as was implied earlier in this chapter, is often active, radical and even harsh. God is "taking away"; He is "seizing, confiscating, removing" (Brueggemann 1993 : 9). The well-ordered city is not immune against God's justice. As God takes away leadership, money, guards, and advisors, the city is literally turning against itself and becomes a symbol of deprivation and decay. As Brueggemann (1993 : 9) says, the city "wasted its mandate" and God responded to that. Referring to Is 3:24-4:1 Brueggemann (1993 : 14) speaks of a "negative transformation" of the city. Instead of glory and power, God has inverted that into helplessness and shame. The city is now pictured as a raped woman (cf. Russel 1988 : 20-21), completely disillusioned and defeated. The signs of such defeat are

visible in the remainders of the apartheid city. We desperately need an alternative imagination that will serve their resurrection.

The irony is that our attempts to gain life in the city through gaining power, might lead to our own destruction. The industrial explosion have become an ecological time bomb in places like Mexico City and elsewhere. The effects of inner city withdrawal and the parallel suburbanisation has condemned the inner city of Johannesburg to slum formation, and the costs of urban restoration are much higher than what prevention would have been. Spending all our money on safety and security, at the expense of a budget for social transformation, might land us with increased crime rates and less money for crime prevention or social development in future.

We use our power to fill the city with items that carry within them the seeds of self-destruction. A public theology has to point to a new way of restoring life in the city, contrary to the usual way of power. Not that power is not important. Power remains the capacity to act and transform. But a public theology will have to engage with the powers that be, calling for a new distribution of power, for a listening ear to the cries of the powerless, for collective power that will indeed facilitate the well-being of all people. Power remains a God-given reality to be used for the common good. That is what a public theology should search for wholeheartedly.

### 8.4.3  The Powerless

Linthicum (1991 : 10) asserts that poverty "is not so much the absence of goods as it is the absence of power". Excluding people from material opportunities, such as shelter, employment and education, as well as excluding people socio-politically from the possibility of self-determination, or collective or participatory democracy, are marginalising people to positions of powerlessness and voicelessness.

Sheppard (1983 : 12-13) refers to the words of a young black man from inner city London, saying

> Some of us look up from where we are, and see a network which exists, where decisions are taken which affect our lives. We should like to have some part in that network.

Friedmann provides a very good analysis, proposing the (dis)empowerment model of poverty. He suggests that poor or marginal people lack the *social power* to improve their own circumstances. He suggests that access to power is limited or allowed by economic and political forces. These forces have financial resources or the law on their side, and often these resources are used at the expense of communities and people. Friedmann then suggests eight bases of social power, which are the means to ensure healthy lives to households and communities.

Disempowerment, in the model of Friedmann (1992 : 66-71), is the lack of access to the bases of social power. The extent of powerlessness would depend on the extent of exclusion from these bases. Gutierrez (1988 : 8-9) indicates that the face of poverty includes racism, sexism and discrimination against minorities. Powerlessness in communities is also caused by discriminatory policies or

practices.

This study is viewing the city from the perspective of the poor and powerless in the inner city. Public theology would stand with powerless people and advocate on their behalf. Public theology would seek to build upon the capacities of powerless people and communities, encouraging them to take collective responsibility in society. Public theology would advocate for inclusive democracy, that would allow for the most vulnerable to participate fully in public decision-making processes. Public theology would advocate for access to the bases of social power.

It is my assumption that powerless people can be agents of change. The prophets, Jesus and modern secular writing, all agree that powerless people indeed have the potential to affect great change in society. The poor has the capacity to transform the inner city from the bottom-up.

In 4.2 I have introduced the  possibility of hope in hopelessness. Here I introduce the power of the powerless. The prophets have continuously offered an alternative imagination from the margins. Alternatives to the dominant consciousness or the status quo emerge from the margins of society, because from there one has an "outsider's view" on evil and its effects.

Jesus continuously affirmed powerless people, placing them at the centre and exposing evil in society through the eyes of these marginal ones. He confronts the hypocrisy of the male, religious leaders through the adulterous woman in John 8, showing solidarity with the woman against the fierce prejudice of the men. The child in Matthew 18 is held up by Christ as exemplar of what a follower of Jesus should be like. The disabled man who was healed on the Sabbath, becomes the medium through which Jesus confronted evil in Luke 6. Jesus confronts the powers that be, suggesting that they destroyed life and perpetuated evil (verse 9), whilst He is demonstrating the exact opposite.

The power of the powerless is most strikingly embodied by Jesus himself. Crucifixion meant  dishonour and shame in terms of the values of Jesus' time (cf. Moltmann 1991 : 327). Yet, Jesus died as an outcast between two criminals, on a cross outside the city's gates. But the crucified Jesus was exalted to be the Lord.

> ...the glory of God does not shine on  the crowns of the mighty, but on the face of the crucified Christ...

> The rule and the kingdom of God are no longer reflected in political rule and world kingdoms, but in the service of Christ, who humiliated himself to the point of death on the cross.

> (Moltmann 1991 : 327)

In Jesus we discover the power of the powerless, because God empowers and exalts those who are humble.

The base ecclesial communities in Latin America is a movement of the poor, imagining and working for a new society, and impacting upon their world in an amazing way. The marginal masses of South Africa have kept alive the vision of a new nation, and the transformation was effected to a great extent by the persistence from the bottom-up.

Girardet (1992 : 118) suggests that the poor are even the most equipped to shape and manage cities in transformative ways. He refers specifically to the housing arena.

> Real cities are made by the people who live in them, not by remote bureaucracies; people are perfectly capable of articulating their needs and have the skills to fulfil them. Real communities, too, can only be created by their inhabitants; they cannot be made artificially. Cities in the developing world, in particular, show that in the face of extraordinary adversity people are able to find solutions to the problems they face. Many examples prove that where self-determination replaces unresponsive authority, people improve their circumstances come what may, particularly in housing.

The assumption of this study is not that power must be exchanged necessarily, since a reversal of power does not guarantee the responsible use of power. Rather, I suggest that we discover power in new ways. That we discover the power of the powerless, and the gifts of the weak. That we, in the church, discover the power of self-giving love and faithfulness in the example of Jesus. And that we, as we seek to serve humanity in the city, work for power to be distributed in new ways in order for the poor to participate as citizens contributing to  society.

Even if the powers that be are reluctant to share with those on the margins, the process of redistribution should continue. Often, where power is not shared, a process of collective self-empowerment occurs where powerless people, sometimes with the support of external agents, work towards their collective self-empowerment, the re-affirmation of their dignity, and their re-integration into society.

### 8.4.4  The Church, Power & the Covenant

Gregory Pierce (1984 : 36), in his book on Christian activism, argues that power can be used for the benefit of the city and its people,

> and to counter exploitative power which is an inversion of God's intentions.
>
> (De Beer 1998 : 78)

Pierce (1984 : 36) says

> Power tends to corrupt, as does money, sex, good looks and television. It means that people of good will must be careful and reflective about what they are doing - and why. As Pastor Johnson points out, '...the failure of people to use their power inevitably increases the power of those who already possess power. The failure to use power is therefore irresponsible, cowardly, and - again - complicity in the injustices of society'.

The church in the public arena is supposed to use its power in appropriate ways, countering the power of those who exploit power and use it irresponsibly (De Beer 1998 : 78). The church as covenant community should once again be a central paradigm within a public theology.

The covenant paradigm is subversive, directed against a theology that knows too much, a church that is too triumphant, a God who is too strong, and a ministry that operates too much on the basis of strength and success (cf. Brueggemann 1994 : 43). A covenantal paradigm is proposing a humble walk with God, covenantal interdependence, solidarity with the powerless, and pilgrimage within brokenness. It shouts against our success theologies and suburban church models. Instead of having all the answers, it deals with the most pressing questions of the city.

The covenantal paradigm is emphasising that power as we use it to gain life in our cities, is often futile. It is a paradoxical power, a surprising power, a power from the bottom-up that will transform the city. In Hosea we discover God as an embracing God taking us back every time, even though we do not deserve it. He gives away his power to embrace us again and again, knowing that real power lies in faithfulness (Brueggemann 1994 : 45). It is in the faithful relationships of covenantal interdependence, of solidarity between the church and the poor, that a hopeful imagination can emerge, and powerful actions be taken to transform broken inner city communities.

The covenant is about God's solidarity with people. God's solidarity calls us into relationships of solidarity with God and with one another. Brueggemann (1994 : 53) identifies three elements in such a covenantal community, i.e.

- God who moves toward us in covenant (Hosea),
- a community that practices the covenant by solidarity, and
- a world yet to be transformed into the covenant, by the dismantling of imperial reality

The alternative community will challenge exploitative power through solidarity with the powerless. It will advocate for power that is distributed in such a way that all members are treated with dignity, have access to social goods and to social power. Redistribution of power should be based on social analysis and social criticism. Brueggemann (1994 : 59-60) refers to Genesis 47 : 13-26 as such a social analysis and social criticism. This story is more than the story of agricultural development. Those who are without means of production are forced into a situation of economic bondage and reduced to subjects of other people's hand-outs. In this specific passage no mention is made of God. It is a purely social analysis of how political power, not committed to covenantal relationships and values, reduces people to helplessness and dependency.

Through solidarity with the poor, the church is confronting the powers that be, calling them to include the poor on their agenda and in their decision-making processes. And when that happens truly and effectively, empowerment and social

justice could be facilitated.

Theologically, the covenant paradigm is a powerful hermeneutic key for understanding, confronting and transforming power in the city.

> As covenant is a memory rooted in the old traditions, and as it is an impetus for present practice in concrete ways, so it is also a resilient vision in the Bible that God's covenantal ordering of public life will prevail over exploitative, oppressive and inequitable systems.

> (Brueggemann 1994 : 65)

The power of the cross is the metaphor for understanding the power of the church in solidarity with the poor. It is a paradoxical power, affirming that the downward journey into the city might be the journey of transformation, offering resurrection to dying communities. We are reminded by Moltmann (1974) that the risen Christ reigns from the cross.

### 8.4.5  Prophetic Ministry

Earlier in this chapter it has been suggested that the church as servant community should also have a prophetic ministry (cf. 6.4.3).

The inner city church in solidarity with the powerless has a prophetic role to play.

> (T)he most important political task of the church is simply 'to tell the truth'.

> (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 41)

Truth-telling is the substance of prophetic witness and ministry. It is to analyse and expose the effects of political or public policies on the poor and its long-term-effects on society as a whole (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 41).

Luther asserted that the task of the church is to criticise those in power when they act injustly and do wrong, not being silent about the truth in their presence, but actually exposing them in the mirror of the truth (cf. Moila 1990 : 25).  On the basis of Luther's teachings, Moila (1990 : 27) suggests that God is always interfering with politicians, questioning their actions where they do not serve justice and humanity.

> He is indeed a nuisance to politicians, who usually invent a "God" of civil religion through the help of false prophets precisely in order to eliminate interference with what they do.

For the church to be prophetic in the city, there needs to be a clear separation between the church and the state, also as a corrective to the previous situation in South Africa. This does not imply the silence of the church, neither does it question the right of the church to speak into the public sphere. It is rather a question of *"when and how they ought to do it"* (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 268).

Referring to Isaiah 11 : 1-9, Brueggemann (1993 : 17-31) introduces the "winds of newness" that God wants to blow into the city. It is the wind of righteousness that will blow against destructive self-interest and selfish self-sufficiency, providing the poor and marginal access to political decision-making, economic opportunity, health care, housing and dignity. The prophetic task of the church in the public arena is to respond to God's Spirit blowing in unexpected places. It provides not only a criticism, but also a new imagination for a transformed city.

The wind of the Spirit wants to transform the inner city. Moila (1990 : 28) suggests that evil social institutions will have to

> be changed, dismantled and replaced in order that love and justice might be served.

The city has to be liberated from sin and the evil structures that "produce and perpetuate poverty" (Moila 1990 : 28) and other forms of social decay. The creative God is calling for creative social transformation. As church, we have to provide the alternative imagination and moral leadership to facilitate such transformation.

### 8.4.6 Partnerships for Change

The church in solidarity with the poor implies a creative partnership. Solidarity is not a top-down approach, doing things for people as if they cannot do things for themselves. Solidarity is rather a pilgrimage with people, in mutual expectation of the new city, learning from one another and acting as one. Solidarity is communal in nature, suffering with others (compassion), and working together towards a changed society (Moltmann 1983 : 107-112). On the premise of our covenantal interdependence, we should seek as church to engage in creative partnerships with poor communities and people of the inner city.

Girardet (1992 : 128) refers to the housing arena, saying that between half and three-quarters of new homes in developing-world cities are built by low-income people themselves. He cites mutual aid and self-determination as the critical factors in this process.

> People know their own needs and what they can accomplish with available resources...
> Support of mutual neighbourhood aid is the key for stable urban communities.

> (Girardet 1992 : 128)

The poor themselves are the key to the development and empowerment of poor or at-risk inner city communities. The church could become vital partners, supporting the initiatives of local communities, and working closely with them towards their well-being. In incarnational ministry, the we-they divide will probably be bridged as well, as *we* will work together towards the well-being of *our* communities.

The concept of partnership should not be limited to the church and the poor. We

were reminded by Nürnberger of the importance to create space for mutual interdependence to develop, and for those with power or wealth to respond to a calling for moral conversion.  The Church of the Saviour in Washington DC has a Ministry of Money, guiding resourceful people in terms of how they could affect situations of poverty and become stewards of God's resources in transformative ways - both in the United States and in the Third World. We need to help people like Zacchaeus to see Jesus and to share with those who have been marginalised or exploited. This could indeed become part of their own liberation.

> The ministry of the church to those in power is a ministry on behalf of the victims. Relating to those in power and to the poor are two sides of the same prophetic and pastoral coin, and ultimately the interests of both are interconnected.
>
> (Nürnberger 1992 : 14)

Critical solidarity with those in power is not to secure our own ecclesial interests, but to ensure that the vision of justice for all people will indeed be implemented. The role of the church is therefore  to help those in power to implement and use their power in responsible and constructive ways. Christians must engage in informed dialogue with those who shape economic, political, health, environmental, legal and welfare policies in the country (Nürnberger 1992 : 14).

Practically, such a partnership would imply working closely with wealthy or skilled Christians, as well as people in decision-making positions with a heart for the poor and for social justice.

Within the inner city community there is the opportunity for creative joint ventures between communities,  churches, local government, and the private sector. Too often partnerships are without integrity, however, characterised by tokenism or paternalism. True partnership should be based on the mutual understanding and conviction that we truly need each other. That local government needs the poor to develop healthy inner cities. That the poor and the rich need each other for their mutual freedom and wholeness. That the church needs the poor for its own circle to be complete.

Partnerships should not only be with those who are confessing to be Christians. The church could work alongside other people, even if they have other ideologies, towards the goal of true humanity and shalom in the city (cf. De Gruchy 1991 : 280-281). De Gruchy (1991 : 280) refers to the late Archbishop Romero who told his congregation in El Salvador :

> As Christians formed in the gospel... be careful not to betray those evangelical, Christian, supernatural convictions in the company of those who seek other liberations that can be merely economic, temporal, political. Even though working with those who hold other ideologies, Christians must cling to their original liberation.

De Gruchy (1991 : 280), in line with Romero, provides an "evangelical foundation for human liberation". It also explains how the church could indeed work in partnership

with others, without necessarily compromising one's own faith.

The church needs to connect with people in powerful places, Christian and non-Christian, to explore potential partnerships for social transformation. But the church also has a specific pastoral responsibility towards Christians in such places - to support them pastorally towards lives of stewardship, encouraging them to understand their position in the light of God's vocation, and to base their position on the foundations of discipleship. When the church could connect at a pastoral level - in relationships of solidarity once again - even with some people in power, this could provide an excellent platform for transformative partnership between powerless and powerful people.

Frank Chikane (Pretoria News; 10 July 1998 : 2) argued for a special "spiritual" ministry to "the historically advantaged" in South Africa, assisting them to deal with the new realities and to invest themselves in the reconstruction of the country.

Bruwer (1996 : 50), in his challenging book, *Beggars can be Choosers*, asserts that we should not think of the Christian community in terms of a triangular hierarchy with the church leadership on top and the poor at the bottom, but in terms of a circle of people with Christ being among them, being Lord and an equal at the same time. In the inner city the nurturing of such a circle of friends, including poor and rich, powerless and powerful, with Christ among us, could facilitate transformative actions. Note that it is not a hierarchy of power, but a circle of friends, where power is shared and dignity affirmed, both to the poor and to the rich.

It is Moltmann (1983 : 152) who writes about the power of friendship in the process of healing and liberation.

> Friendship is the basis of all mutual help, for friendship combines affection with respect. It is only on this basis of mutual recognition and esteem that necessary care does not appear patronizing, and help that is enlisted is no longer humiliating.

Jesus' ministry stood in the sign of friendship. In the South African situation I am convinced that the road to true reconciliation between races go through true friendships across racial barriers. And in the city we are challenged to develop friendships that will outlast the enmities and barriers that we have erected between each other.

Friendship is a key term in a theology of partnership (cf. also Gutierrez 1988 : xxxi). Friendship goes beyond the demonising of the rich or the patronising of the poor. Friendship, for Jesus, meant solidarity with Mary and Martha, with the child on his lap, and the woman at the well, with Nicodemus and with Zacchaeus. Although he opted for the poor and vulnerable, he did not opt against others, but engaged people in friendship. And his friendship transformed people. Because, as Moltmann (1983 : 152) says, "friendship combines affection with respect". If we can nurture a

growing circle of friends in the inner city, we will meet Jesus, the true friend, among us, and He will walk with us to the new city.

Theologically speaking, we need to view partnerships from a covenantal perspective, drawing from the humble God who walked in solidarity with broken people, from the humble Christ who suffered as a servant on the cross. The servanthood of the church could be best expressed in selfless partnerships, where the church might facilitate great movements of transformation, without ever getting the credit for it. But such is the nature of true servanthood.

## 8.5 Death and Resurrection in the Inner City : "Broadcasting the Seizure of Power"

### 8.5.1 The Gospel Dialectic

The strange paradox of the Gospel has been refrained often in this chapter. Those of us who want to gain our lives will lose it. But if we are wiling to lose our lives, we will gain it. Those who are exalted will be humbled, but those who are humble will be exalted. Or Mary's Magnificat in Luke 1 : "He has brought down rulers from their thrones but lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty".

In 4.2 I have discussed the possibility of hope at the point of greatest hopelessness. In 8.4.3 I hinted at the possibility that power could be released precisely from a position of powerlessness. In 7.6 the paradox of life and death in Genesis has been introduced, as well as the strange elusiveness of life when we grasp for it by means of conventional mechanisms of power.

Theologically, the gospel dialectic is most profoundly illustrated in the journey of Jesus to the cross, and in his subsequent resurrection. The question to be raised here, is whether a public theology and a public church could discover this same dialectic in the midst of struggling inner city communities. Could inner city decay be transformed into restored and healthy places to live in ? Could dying churches be transformed into life-giving communities of hope?  Could those who died psychologically and emotionally on the margins of society, be empowered to life ?

How should we speak about the cross and the resurrection in the inner city today ?

In 8.3 I referred to Moltmann who suggests that Christ has died in solidarity to the circles of death in society. A public theology in the inner city would affirm that the cross is raised at the point of decay, abuse and exploitation. Christ appears as the suffering Lord in the places of greatest despair. But can we go beyond that ? Does the resurrection of Christ offer hope to people and communities that often lost their capacity to hope ?

Van Schalkwyk (1996 : 54) speaks about this when she explores the role of the church in community development. She affirms that Christ is at work in the history of humanity, and therefore in the processes of inner city transition as well.

> Christ's saving work was and is done in the midst of historic reality, through his life, death and resurrection and the continuous re-enactment of this death-resurrection, or creation-recreation cycle in human and natural life.

This provides us with a good summary. We need to develop a *liturgy of life*, that will continuously re-enact the events of Christ's death and resurrection. As we die into the city in solidarity with the poor, we also anticipate the hope of the resurrection. As we mourn the brokenness in creation, and the broken image of God in humanity, we imagine the possibility of re-creation into God's image and shalom. As people of the gospel, the church in the public arena has the spiritual resources to deal with typical inner city problems such as decay and disinvestment, and to imagine a way out. Because, as Desmond Tutu says, we are prisoners of hope (Messer 1989 : 132) !

### 8.5.2  Dying into the City : Incarnational Community

In liberation theology talk of God and action for liberation are located within a broader framework, which is the following of Jesus (Gutierrez 1988 : 19). This study would like to locate the transformation of inner city communities within incarnational communities of disciples (Dulles 1987 : 204-226), who follow Jesus into the city.

The first step, as was indicated earlier in this chapter, is to face the death in our midst. Unless we as disciples of Christ face death, and we ourselves die into the city in solidarity and commitment, we cannot become agents of a hopeful alternative. A spirituality of inner city transformation implies the notion of "dying into the city". This, however, is not the courageous acts of an individual, but the communal journey of an incarnational community.

Jesus made it clear, as his death drew near, "that discipleship would include a share in his redemptive sufferings" (Dulles 1987 : 210). The way of discipleship is the way through the cross (liberation from) to the resurrection (liberation to), continuously enacted and embodied by disciples of Christ in today's cities. If we are serious about the transformation of the inner city, the real energy for sustained efforts to transform or to liberate, should be provided by a spirituality of discipleship, a spirituality of the way (Gutierrez 1988 : 19). Bosch (1994) speaks about this as a spirituality of the road.

Jesus' own road has been one of downward mobility as he left his heavenly home to dwell in our midst; as He walked on the road of suffering and humiliation, to seek victory over evil. And we are called to have the mind of Christ in Philippians 2 : 4-7. The passage in Philippians 2 is a metaphor for the church's incarnational presence in the public arena. Jesus is our model. Our challenge is to become incarnational

communities of disciples, living in solidarity with those who struggle, and seeking to make ever-deeper connections with those on the margins.

Moltmann (1983 : 134) suggested that the best thing we can do is to build up communities in which we will celebrate our common life, sharing our common suffering, dying together to the old life, and building up a new society. Incarnational communities in the city could indeed nurture a spirituality of transformation, enacting the death and resurrection of Christ daily. The kingdom of God takes the form of the cross in this world.

> The cross is the form of the coming, redeeming kingdom, and the crucified Jesus is the incarnation of the risen Christ.
>
> (Moltmann 1991 : 185)

Incarnational communities of disciples will be communities of the cross. It is in our incarnation into the city, our dying into the city, that we meet God in our neighbour and in the poor (cf. 6.4.2). As we identify in solidarity with those who suffer, we are confronted with death and called to die ourselves - to die to that which keeps us entangled to the dominant consciousness, to die to forms of ministry that is not life-giving but affirming the status quo, to die to those values that marginalise people even further.

Gutierrez (1988 : 30) refers to James 1 : 8 and 4 : 8 where we are warned against being "double-minded". The death of Jesus and the death of people today in oppressive countries, are caused "precisely by the coherence of message and commitment" (Gutierrez 1988 : 30-31). Jesus has demonstrated a single-minded devotion to the task at hand, and He died into our world. Likewise, we are called as church to demonstrate the same single-minded devotion, for the sake of the city and its people, and for the sake of Christ who died into the city, to bring hope and transformation to a dying world.

Gutierrez asserts that a spirituality of liberation (or transformation) usually includes the notions of poverty, solidarity and protest (Boff 1988 : 56). As we choose to live more simply and to resist the temptations of suburbanisation, our solidarity with the poor will increase. And as we journey in solidarity, we will have to protest against death in all its forms, where it is expressed all around us in the city. And this would, more often than not, imply the road of the cross.

Although newer theologies have laid much emphasis on the role of the human agency in transformation processes, at the root of this is the God of love, who became flesh in Christ and who has set us free in grace. The starting point for a public theology is ultimately the gracious gift of God in Christ. It is God who transform through his Spirit. But in his grace He has set us free to serve and to seek freedom for others as well (cf. Nouwen 1987 : 24).

The Biblical vision of the church is for the ultimate disappearance of the church

(Rev.21 : 22-24). This presents us with a useful metaphor for the public church, serving humanity in the city. The church is an interim institution, a mere fragment of hope pointing to the fullness of God's presence and reign in time (cf. Moltmann 1983 : 39; Küng 1968 : 87). The picture in Revelations is of the church being replaced by something much better, namely the never-ending and all-encompassing presence of God. This should be the focus of incarnational communities of disciples: to serve in such ways that the presence of God will be felt and discerned.

The kingdom of God and the presence of God go beyond the boundaries of the church. God wants to establish his presence in communities and in public places, even where the church does not reach. Küng (1968 : 87) warns against the trend of the church seeing "itself less and less as a temporary community". The church is equating itself fully with the kingdom of God, instead of acknowledging that it is only a sign of the kingdom. God's activities in history is not confined to the church, however.

Küng (1968 : 99) writes profoundly about this, calling the church to re-affirm its identify as a selfless servant of humanity, its enemies and the world. If the church is something different than the servant, it is losing its dignity, identity and reason for existence (Küng 1968 : 99). The church needs to recognise that it is God's reign and presence which should be ushered in, not the church's, and in doing so the church will discover its own significance. The church will find "in its insignificance its true greatness" (Küng 1968 : 99).

> The church would lose heart in the world altogether, if its worldly power were its only strength. But if its strength lies in the cross of Christ and in its own cross, then its weakness is its strength and it can go on its way fearlessly, conscious of the victory of the resurrection, guaranteed from the beginning. For the church was promised that only in losing its life would it find it.
>
> (Küng 1968 : 100)

As the public church serves in the city, hopeful signs of newness will appear. Often the role of the church in the transformation process will not even be recognised. Perhaps this is the road for the public church : to serve to the point of disappearance so that God's glory and presence might be known; to die to itself, so that the city might live - with new churches and new communities and filled with the presence of the living God.

## 8.5.3 Defeating the Powers

Cox (1965 : 110-111) suggests that God has defeated the powers and principalities of the world through the death and resurrection of Jesus. The church in the public arena is called to announce or "broadcast" this seizure of power. Power was created initially to be used by humankind for its well-being. Instead, we became captives of the same forces which we were called to manage. In Christ we are called to be freed from exploitative power and principalities, but also free to be responsible over and

for them. The public church cannot withdraw from the arena where power is at work, but needs to become witnesses to the defeat of power in its evil form, and proposes as an alternative that power be utilised for the well-being of all people.

### 8.5.4  Resurrection of the Inner City : Restoration to God's Image and Announcing God's Shalom

Discipleship, in the context of transformation, is more than a struggle for political or economic justice. It is about "a struggle against all forces of death... and a struggle for life in the fullest sense..." (Nouwen 1987 : 23). Nouwen affirms the centrality of Christ in any theology that seeks for transformation or liberation from death into life. The life and death of Christ, the message that Christ embodied, and the victory that Christ has achieved, are the central aspects of a spirituality and a theology of transformation (Nouwen 1987 : 24).

The church in the inner city, facing death and dying to itself, may never lose hope. We are reminded by the Gospel, that in dying we will live. The resurrection of Christ is a present reality that must be discovered and celebrated in the midst of broken urban communities.

We have to see the daily history of suffering and struggle in the inner city, from the perspective of Christ's resurrection. When we do that, death and struggle will not be inevitable anymore and we would not have to put up with it (Moltmann 1981 : 123). The resurrection of Christ, namely, is a protest against death in this world. The cross is the passion of God for those who have lost life, and the resurrection is the power of God to give back such life.

Moltmann (1991 : 332), in speaking about the violent circles of death, suggests that wherever these circles are at work, "a general syndrome of decay develops". I have already explored death in the inner city. I have located death in churches, communities, the dominant consciousness of society, and even within ourselves.

Romans 8 speaks about this "groaning" within ourselves and within creation for complete liberation from death and slavery.

> Yet there was the hope that creation itself would one day be set free from its slavery to decay (my italics) and would share the glorious freedom of the children of God. For we know that up to the present time all of creation groans with pain, like the pain of childbirth. But it is not just creation alone which groans; we who have the Spirit as the first of God's gifts also groan within ourselves, as we wait for God to make us his sons (and daughters : my insertion) and set our whole being free (my insertion).
>
> (Good News Bible 1976 : 195)

As incarnational communities in the city, we are confronted with decay and death in many concrete forms daily. The decay of housing facilities, the death of churches, the closure of businesses, the death of people on the streets.

Once we have engaged with death in the city and within ourselves from the perspective of the resurrection, the Spirit of God wants to create a new imagination within us. Resurrection, in Moltmann's (1983 : 124) definition, means rebirth to the living hope of something new, i.e. a passion for life, protest against death, and the new city of God.

God responds to the evil around us by his life-giving presence. In response to the evil forces that crucified Jesus, God raised Him from the dead (Moltmann 1991 : 179). In response to the groans of the city, the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of life, responds in similar ways. God wants to infuse us with a new vision for life beyond the circles of death.

> Jesus' resurrection makes possible the impossible, namely reconciliation in the midst of strife, the law of grace in the midst of judgment, and creative love in the midst of legalism.

> (Moltmann 1991 : 171)

Through the cross and death of Christ, He brought life and resurrection to the dead and dying (Moltmann 1991 : 185-186). Philippians 3 : 10-12 explains that we gain a share in Christ's resurrection, through our sharing in his suffering. Christ became our suffering representative, dying "for us" and "for our cities".

> Only Christ's representative suffering and sacrifice 'for them' in his death on the cross brings hope to the hopeless, future to those who are passing away and new right to the unrighteous.

> (Moltmann 1991 : 186)

The resurrection becomes our foundation for a new, redeemed existence, owed to the grace of God in Christ (Moltmann 1991 : 187). The resurrection is more than a protest against death. It is also a feast of life, celebrating the city of life over death.

> Easter is a liberating feast. Where it is celebrated, people must eat and drink.

> (Moltmann 1983 : 125)

Philippians 2 also sketches, not only the suffering Christ, but exalts the risen Lord. Where the suffering Christ incarnates himself with suffering inner city people and communities, the impossible becomes possible, and the power of the powerless, crucified Christ becomes our hope of resurrection. From our own connectedness with death around and within us, we are drawn into the new imagination of God's Spirit, imagining the possibilities of a city in the vision of Isaiah 65 or Revelations 22. We imagine a city where resurrection becomes a possibility, because the crucified Christ is in our midst.

> *We imagine the resurrection of fantasy and imagination,*
> *the resurrection of festivity and celebration,*
> *the resurrection of people in community,*
> *the resurrection of a moral and a public conscience,*
> *the resurrection of values,*
> *the resurrection of the church,*
> *the resurrection of dying communities,*
> *the resurrection of powerless people,*
> *the resurrection of the economy...*
>
> *And the resurrection of the presence of God in our midst.*

Gavin Taylor, minister of the Wesley Methodist Mission in Pretoria's inner city, is clear about this. Their church would have to die, before it will be resurrected in the new form that is required of an inner city church.

Hofmeyr House, one of the inner city buildings that has gone through tremendous problems, is slowly recovering. Through the resurrection of common values and grass-roots involvement, this dying building is slowly awakening.

Kangelani is a sectional title owned apartment building where there was at one stage no board of trustees, no caretaker, no house rules and more than R 60 000 of outstanding levies (payments for maintenance). Through the responsibility of one young man in the building, the owners were re-organised, a board of trustees elected, a caretaker appointed, house rules strictly implemented, and 30% of the outstanding levy payment recovered within a month. A new culture is slowly emerging based on common values and shared responsibility... and a building is resurrected to life.

The Tapestry Community in Atlanta, Georgia, is an example of transformation in a dying inner city. Situated on the old garbage heap of town, people from different races and different incomes have made Tapestry Community into a model community, based on communal responsibility and the principles of self-help, partnership and reconciliation. A dying inner city area has been resurrected (cf. chapter 3, 3.2).

Bethel New Life is a community-based ministry on the West Side of Chicago, that emerged from the ministry of the Bethel Lutheran Church (IUA 1998 : 7). Today it is the largest employer in Chicago's West Garfield community, contributing significantly to the community economic development of West Side Chicago. It started out with the development of small community-based enterprises, that have grown into larger employment-creating and income-generating initiatives. From the bottom-up the economy of that area is slowly revived and resurrected. In the driver seat is the local community and its people, and they have generated the support of larger corporations and local government structures.

Reba Place Fellowship in Illinois is an intentional community of people from different races and economic backgrounds (cf. Sider 1990 : 176). Living in close community and from a common purse, they are impacting the community of Evanston, Illinois, dramatically. Not all of the members of this Fellowship are in full-time ministry, but everyone is committed to a life-style of greater simplicity and sharing. Besides a small group of core staff members, Reba Place also includes a larger group of working people who contribute large portions of their monthly incomes into the common purse. Based on the principles of Acts 2 and the additional resources available, they impact the local economy and especially the housing scenario significantly. They buy up abandoned buildings and support families at risk of losing their properties. In this way they are continuously extending to those at-risk, serving humanity in the city, and seeking the shalom of their community. They go beyond the death of struggling families, and facilitate their resurrection.

The base ecclesial communities of Latin America has grown from the struggles at the grass-roots,

into a formidable movement affecting theology globally, and working towards the transformation of communities and systems, believing in the resurrection power of Christ.

It is noteworthy that most of these examples of hope and resurrection come, not from the top, but from the places of great vulnerability and often powerlessness. Bob Lupton (1989 : 119-121), as was mentioned earlier, identifies solidarity with the poor, racial diversity, intentional sharing at the economic level, and the notion of community, as characteristics of the new work that the Spirit is doing in cities globally. It is where we are in touch with the circles of death that keep us apart and powerless, that the Spirit gives new vision of an alternative reality.

In the context of this study resurrection becomes the theological metaphor that informs our understanding of transformation. Transformation is more than artificial renewal. It is bringing back to life that which was dead. It implies the same kind of radical intervention that marked Jesus' resurrection or that of Lazarus, or to a lesser extent the healings and acts of multiplication performed by Christ.

> The task of the church, whose theological responsibility is to restore justice and affirm human dignity within the context of God's impending reign, is to join with others to ensure that the 'new' which emerges in those regions where renewal now seems possible, is a qualitative improvement of the 'old'.
>
> (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 2)

What he refers to on a broader scale, I apply strictly to the inner city environment. In the face of urban renewal possibilities, it is the task of the church to ensure that the new is qualitatively better than the old. Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 2) suggests that the "new" does not have any guarantees that it will be qualitatively better. One system of control could be transferred for another. One form of domination could be exchanged for another. Or the renewal that comes could be very superficial, touching only on the surface, without addressing the roots.

In the inner city it is vital for the church to ensure that urban development is not superficial,  but really amounts to the transformation of the old into something radically new.

Recent developments in Pretoria's inner city, such as the Berea City Shopping Centre, beautifies the gateway leading from the city, but does not necessarily transform Berea. The businesses of this centre are not necessarily in line with the concrete needs of the surrounding community, and this development does not contribute to the welfare of its people, to alleviate poverty or to increase household incomes. Where urban development does not transform the lives and situations of the most vulnerable in communities, their need to be questions about its success.

The task of the church is to ensure that we turn away from domination, greed and exploitation, "to an age of communal sharing *and* personal fulfilment" (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 2). The church in the public arena will have to confront the idols of the time, and point to a new way of sharing and responsible stewardship of God's urban resources.

Theologically renewal begins with redistribution.

(Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 194)

The community of resurrection was marked by their intentional sharing with one another (Acts 2; 4 & 5). Through sharing they have challenged and transformed the dominant culture, and provided a new vision of what could be. Through a life of sharing and service, the restoration of humanity in God's image becomes a possibility, and signs of God's shalom could appear in the city. The restoration of humanity in the shalom of God, are signs of true inner city transformation.

A public theology should continue to identify signs of death in the city, addressing the numbness that wants to conceal these realities. But public theology has to go beyond being prophets of death, by offering prophetic and hopeful alternatives, based on the possibility of resurrection. We may not conform to the present death in our cities, or the negative perceptions that are dominant. We have to offer the vision of Isaiah 65, where the past is transformed when God creates something new. We have to serve in such ways that the presence of God will be made known, even to the point of the church dying to itself. It was through the cross that the glory of God became visible in the resurrection of Christ.

## 8.6    Seeking the Shalom of the City

### 8.6.1  Wholeness, Life and Community : The Challenge of a Public Theology

Public theology should always seek the shalom of the city in which it operates. Linthicum (1991 : 86) refers to shalom and suggests that "peace" as a translation is inadequate. The notion of shalom "encompasses the manifold relationships of daily life" (cf. also Gutierrez 1988 : xxx). In different translations of the Bible different words are used to translate shalom, such as "peace", "welfare" and "prosperity".

Linthicum (1991 : 86) goes on to define shalom as

> A state of wholeness and completeness possessed by a person or a group that includes good health, prosperity, security, justice, and deep spiritual contentment.

A public theology will seek for such wholeness in the inner city, i.e. wholeness in relationships and wholeness in all of life's different spheres (spiritual, interpersonal, economic, political, social and psychological). In areas of brokenness, the church is called as agents of God's shalom, whether the issue is crime, slum housing, unemployment, racism, or spiritual forsakenness. The church is called to be agents of wholeness.

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 23) describes theology as

> an attempt to understand the human quest for *wholeness* in all its possible dimensions.

We can go one step further and say that public theology is not only hermeneutic in nature, but also plays a pro-active role in facilitating such wholeness.

Wholeness implies the presence of life, and the absence of death. A public theology will develop life-giving institutions and activate life-giving processes, to protest and overcome death, and to celebrate life and healing.

Linthicum (1991 : 86-87) is of the opinion that personal and communal peace, social justice, and a relationship with God, are closely related in the Old Testament. This makes sense in terms of the spirituality of transformation that I suggested earlier in this chapter, where a humble walk with God, tender love to each other, and justice in society, are interrelated. These three elements are vital in ensuring a city where the shalom of God is evident. Where God's presence is absent, we cannot speak of wholeness in the city. Where peace among people are absent, we cannot speak of wholeness. Where society is fundamentally unjust, we cannot speak of wholeness. These three aspects belong together.

Wholeness in the city implies new life and the resurrection of community. In the context of this study it would mean the recovery of the concept of covenantal relationships, calling for intimacy with God, with each other and with creation. Translated it would mean a new walk with God as servants, a new community of tenderness and sharing, and a new society of justice and sustainability.

Therefore a public theology should call for a conversion to the humble God, who meets us in the eyes of the neighbour and the poor. It should call for humanising dehumanised people and places. It should call for a city organised on the basis of social justice. This threefold conversion in itself provides the basis for wholeness of life and wholeness in communities.

Jeremiah 29 : 4-7 is a powerful metaphor for the church in the public arena. In fact, even the language employed in this text, is a public language virtually devoid of "churchy" phrases or imperatives. God's people in exile in a foreign city, are told to work for the shalom of the city to which they have been brought in exile. This simple phrase contains the sum total of their calling : "To work for the good (the shalom) of the city". It does not spiritualise about religious gatherings to be hosted, or sacrifices, rituals and worship to be offered (cf. Linthicum 1991 ; 163). It uses "secular" language, speaking in very normal and human ways about marriage and children, about building houses and planting gardens. It is a calling to become part of the life of the city; to make the city home.

God calls his people in Jeremiah 29 to "work for the good of the city". That is a summary of what a public theology in the city should be about.

We can also say that this is a metaphor calling God's people to become an incarnational community, working for the well-being of the city. Jeremiah 29 was a

calling to God's people to serve to the extent of losing themselves in the struggle for wholeness. It was a calling to die to their own aspirations (of leaving Babylon) for the sake of the interests of that city. And then there is the promise : If you work and pray for the wholeness of this city, you too will experience wholeness. Again I hear the gospel dialectic from the rivers of Babylon, where believers cried because they could not sense God's presence (Ps. 137). And God responds to them saying : "If you give yourselves for that city, I will give you a new future. And once again, you will experience that I am present" (cf. Jer.29 : 11).

Jeremiah 29 speaks of a focus on the interests of the city, and usually this is an overwhelming prospect . But it is balanced by a very human touch, calling people to merely *live* in this city - as families, as children, as lovers. A public theology could be so absorbed by the pain of the cross, that we lose sight of the resurrection. As we seek wholeness, we need to celebrate the signs of life on the way. Incarnational communities should not be dull places, overcome by pain and misery, but should be joyful places celebrating life, even where we find it in the midst of death.

Jeremiah 29 provides us with a fine balance between "being" and "doing". A public theology should help inner city Christians *to be* God's people in the city. It should also help inner city Christians *to do* what is good for the city.

### 8.6.2  Social Justice

Social justice is an important element of wholeness in the city. Brueggemann and Linthicum both refer to a politics of justice as God's intended vision for urban politics (cf. 4.3.3). The church in the public arena should be intentional in advocating for a society reflecting such economic and political justice.

But what is justice ? Brueggemann (1994 : 175) suggests that justice is dealing with the question of social power and social access. It concerns itself with systems of social production, distribution, possession, and consumption. Brueggemann (1986 : 5) suggests

> that there is a right distribution of goods and access to the sources of life.

An unjust society would deprive people from access to sources of life, and from participation in public decision-making processes, and would systematically marginalise people to exclusion at the fringes of society.

Brueggemann (1994 : 176) further indicates that we cannot experience God's justice outside of the actual justice manifested in society. In other words : if society is fundamentally unjust, it raises questions about God and God's presence. God reveals Himself in history and concerns Himself with issues of justice and injustices as they express themselves in the city.

> Any critique of God's justice must be a critique of the social agency through which that justice is made concrete.
>
> (Brueggemann 1994 : 183)

It was William Temple who referred to the banners of workers and unemployed people, shouting it out : "Damn your charity - we want justice !" (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 243). Social justice is more than individual acts of charity (cf. Sider 1990 : 65-72). The prophetic call in the Old Testament was indeed for something more fundamental, more encompassing and more lasting, than the mere short-term acts of charity. It was for fundamental social transformation, which included the reality of social justice.

Social justice includes certain social entitlements (cf. Brueggemann 1986 : 16). Honouring the basic rights of human beings in the South African context, would be one expression of social justice. Where the individual is obtaining his or her right at the expense of somebody else or the community, it raises certain questions, however. That is why Villa-Vicencio (cf. 8.2.4) suggested that freedom of choice should be curbed to ensure communal well-being.

- **Social Justice, Economy and the Market**

We need to distinguish between economic rights, and civil or political rights (cf. Pieris 1988 : 162). The first category emerged in Marxist circles and the second in Western democracies. In post-apartheid South Africa, this distinction is made very clear in peoples' right to vote on the one hand, contrasted by an ever-increasing polarisation between the rich and the poor. The question of economic liberation is asked in the current situation. The need for a combination of both categories are clear, as political freedom without access to sources of life, are virtually without meaning. It still does not amount to social justice in the full sense of the word. From the perspective of the inner city, political rights without access to land, housing or economic modes of production, is mere symbolism without substance.

In fact, for some homeless people in Marabastad, political rights have landed them in a position of political co-optation, making them dependent on their political patron and almost neutralising them not to participate in actions for social justice.

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 201-203) suggests the importance of ownership of the means of production, as well as democratic control over land and factories, as fundamental to a political economy that will facilitate real social justice. The democratisation or socialisation of capital becomes an important category. He suggests the democratisation of society to the point of full participation in public decision-making processes that affect the well-being of communities. He refers to the street and area committees in black South African townships as a model of democratisation to the grass-roots level. That is also the suggestion of this study : that communities in the inner city will be organised to the point of affecting political and economic decision-making that will determine the future of their communities and community members;

that grass-roots communities will take the driver seat in local community development.

To reconstruct urban communities, Isaiah suggests that we regard the economy in such a way that all neighbours will have a full share of the benefit. The real test is whether "the least of these" benefit from urban development (cf. Brueggemann 1993 : 72). Brueggemann (1993 : 72-73) made the radical statement that the key issues of urban worship is not liturgical, but economic. When the prophet speaks about the city's future, the key issue is how the economic resources of the city will be managed, deployed and shared. To refrain from these clearly economic categories, is to hide our disobedience and avoidance of the real thorny issues at stake here.

Contrary to the belief of the dominant consciousness, the key to successful urban re-development does not necessarily lie with the market, or with keeping important role players from withdrawing from town. The key lies in the poor neighbour.

> God's precondition for a safe city and a functioning economy, moreover, is the care of that neighbor.
>
> (Brueggemann 1993 : 73)

We need to evaluate urban development from the perspective of the empowerment and integration of the poor neighbour as contributing citizen into society. There are vast resources within poor inner city areas that are unutilised, because of our prejudice, middle-class values, and affinity to power. We exclude those who do not fit our narrow mindsets, and we lose much ground in the process.

A conflict between public theology (or the public church) and economy is inevitable when systems in the city deny people of access to basic necessities and sources of life. This absence of social justice in the city, evokes a prophetic response from public theology. The dominant culture often preaches that market forces should be allowed to dictate and that welfare should be kept at a minimum (cf .Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 218). This trickle-down theory has proven to be a myth, not recognising the complexities and the inherent or fundamental injustices within the market-driven economies (cf. Jim Wallis; SCUPE Congress on Urban Ministry; 25 March 1992).

Modern markets have organised individuals into productive units, under the control of other individuals who make profit at the expense of "their" productive units (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 208-209). These profits are not necessarily invested for the creation of more jobs, but utilised for the accumulation of more wealth for the individual person deriving the profit (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 214). Those who do have access to employment, are often exploited in the market economy through low wages and poor working conditions. Furthermore,

> ...profits are channelled away from the local economies from which their communities could benefit, enriching the economic centre at the expense of the periphery.

> (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 214)

Who will benefit from the Lake Project to be developed in the inner city of Pretoria ? Where will the profits be channelled ? Or a huge shopping centre development in Mamelodi or Soweto ? Would it make a fundamental difference to the local economy and local people, besides providing a good service closer to home ? Or is it rather an exploitation of purchasing power at the expense of the purchasing community, enriching the rich developer who channels all the profit to his or her own personal bank account ?

Besides the question of profit derived from developments, the way in which markets are determined presents us with another question. This has been raised already in chapter 4 of this study (cf. chapter 4; 2.5.3.4 - 2.5.3.5). It also plays an important role in the question of inner city housing.

> The marketplace seems to be neutral, but this is not the case. Market powers are artificially determined. There is an in built discrimination in which the market favours some and impedes others. But the market is a structure - not a fixed, God-given entity. It can be changed.
> (Du Toit 1997 : 303)

It is the conviction of this study that we should not regard the market as the final word. Where market forces lead to unjust urban structures and the lack of access to housing and other resources for the inner city poor, it needs to be criticised with boldness, whilst offering bold alternatives.

The idolatry nature of the market is evident in the way in which it has commodified every dimension of society. Mofokeng (1991 : 67) speaks about this when he says

> The most radical change that has happened to our society since the 19th century is its transformation into a market society. This means that every dimension of our society, including our being, thought patterns, social attitudes as well as attitudes towards material things, speech and values, has been deeply penetrated by the most powerful element of that mode of social existence, namely commodification.

Mofokeng (1991 : 67) is convinced that the market economy is questioning the fundamental values that sustained the poor throughout the ages, namely sanctity of human life, the essence of community, and solidarity as basic way of interaction between human beings.

Du Toit (1977 : 304-305) suggests that the assets of the hidden African market, with its embedded African values and ethics, need to be retrieved and build upon - and in the African inner city this could be invaluable. Mofokeng (1991 : 67) is not so sure that we can simply call for a return to African values, because much of what used to be known as African has also been affected by the "distorting and perverting power

of the market". He (1991 : 69-70) is in agreement, however, that the norm of communality and solidarity remains, and we need to develop local communities and economies on that basis.

Wholeness in the inner city cannot be achieved without social justice. And social justice will not be achieved if we idolise commodities and idealise the market uncritically. The foundation of social justice, and therefore shalom in the city, should be found in a return to our covenantal roots.

### 8.6.3 Inclusive Communities from the Bottom-Up

- #### The Current Polarisation

The increasing gap between rich and poor, and between the powerful and the powerless, leads to increasing problems of marginalisation. This threatens the reality of democracy and Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 239) hints that social inequality might eventually even lead to the death of democracy. Even in a political democracy based on individual human rights, an economic elite might emerge dictating the economy at the expense of the majority of people. Such a small but powerful economic elite might also have a significant impact on the nature of politics. This is a threat to democracy in the true sense of the word.

When people are not given the opportunities "to share in the creation of a better world", as "their God given obligation" (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 239), if they are systematically excluded from economic options and processes, it hinders transformation and calls for prophetic intervention.

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 82-84) recognises two notions of human dignity. On the one hand there is the affirmation of individual dignity, expressed in individualised human rights, and prominent in democratic liberalism. On the other hand there is the social perception of humanity which has the broader societal concerns at heart. The one school (libertarian) reduces human dignity to the free choice of the individual, and the other school (egalitarian) insists that human dignity involves more than individual free choice or human rights.

These two notions reflect two world-views. The one is "individualistic and choice-oriented", and the other is "communal and substance oriented" (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 83). The real challenge is to balance the individual and communal needs and concerns. How can these two views or visions of society be integrated to transform economic and political democracies. The current polarisation in society is a clear result of the world view affirming human rights as expressed in the individual's freedom, but often at the expense of communal well-being. This individualist culture has even been transferred to the global arena where individual nations make decisions about war or nuclear armament without consideration for their neighbours in the rest of the world.

In the inner city choices are made that affect inner city residents detrimentally, but with a positive impact on suburban commuters, the formal business sector, and so forth. We are still far from a broad-based affirmation of our covenantal interdependence.

- **Between Exclusivist Tendencies and Inclusive Community**

In Isaiah 56 : 3 some people wanted to keep closed boundaries, maintaining an exclusive community. Brueggemann (1993 : 52) refers to this passage, speaking of "a very narrow, exclusivist view of the neighbourhood", keeping the neighbourhood and its resources for "your own group". People in the inner city often face such marginalisation and powerlessness, being excluded from society.

In terms of urban management, the mechanisms often employed to secure having "enough for ourselves" are that of exclusion (Brueggemann 1993 : 59). Exclusion combined with power has the potential to marginalise certain groups to the point of total despair.

A faith perspective on the city would oppose exclusion as mechanism for urban management. A faith perspective will assert that the contrary is true, namely that inclusion will end scarcity, generate fruitfulness, and lead to abundance. As we share with one another in interdependent and inclusive communities, the abundance will be distributed fairly and poverty eradicated. At present abundance is concentrating with a few and scarcity with the masses. The Biblical goal of stewardship is that of equality as described in 2 Cor. 8 : 13-15.

Brueggemann refers to Isaiah 56 : 1-14, suggesting that the same dynamic is at work in modern-day urban environments. The debate is not as much between liberals and conservatives, but rather about inclusivity or exclusivity. It is about access, or the lack thereof, to power and the fundamental resources of life (Brueggemann 1993 : 61).

Brueggemann (1993 : 61-64) describes exclusivity by locating the problem right at the heart of Christian worship. Referring to Isaiah 58, he suggests that active worship without justice is to opt for our own vested interests rather than the delight of God. God finds delight in justice and equality, in compassion for the poor, and inclusion of the strangers. God finds delight in covenantal communities. Exclusive communities are based on our vested self-interests and not on the desires of God.

Isaiah 58 applies economic categories to evaluate the integrity of worship. To reach out and include or embrace others, becomes the test for true worship or spirituality. Once again the poor, the hungry and the homeless become our measure. This text calls us to practise neighbourliness among those who are "less qualified" to be neighbours. Brueggemann (1993 : 69-70) makes an important comment very

appropriate to inner city public policy, when he suggests that we implement a human infrastructure that will redefine and include "all the needy as legitimate, eligible neighbours".

The problem with the dominant consciousness is that these "other" groups are so "unlike us in their otherness that they constitute a threat" (Brueggemann 1993 : 66). And because we see them as threatening we exclude and marginalise them, often very intentionally. The prophetic vision is an alternative vision, challenging the dominant consciousness of exclusivity based on class, gender, economic and racial factors.

Brueggemann (1993 : 66) suggests that the principle of the Jubilee is recaptured in Isaiah 58. Instead of excluding some in an effort to retain ownership, power or wealth, this text calls us rather to apply the Jubilee principle, which is rooted in stewardship, sharing and mutuality. There is a promise accompanying this suggestion. The promise is that only then, when we include the poor on our agenda, will we know God's presence among us. And if we refrain from this, we might carry within us the seed of our own self-destruction.

Brueggemann (1993 : 68) asks the rhetoric, and disturbing, question :

> Does the text negatively suggest that if there is no sharing of our bread, our house, our self, there will be no real communion and we will live a deathly absence, alone in a world left to its diseased destiny ?

Conversion to God will be tested in our conversion to our neighbour in the public arena (also economically). The polarisation that marginalises and excludes some and leave this world with extreme disparities between poverty and wealth, could be addressed only through inclusive communities. Brueggemann (1993 : 66) is of the opnion that human solidarity in community has the potential to

> override(s) the fracture caused by the ruthless manipulations of the market.

The notion of inclusive communities will refer at grass-roots level to local communities of faith or local geographical communities. At a metropolitan level it will refer to the integration of the central business district, inner city, suburbs, urban townships, urban informal settlements, and even peri-urban areas (e.g. Winterveld and KwaNdebele).

Inclusive communities refer to covenantal interdependence between people and a local, metropolitan, regional, national and global level.

- ## Opting for the Poor

In order for inclusive communities to be developed, we will have to start by opting for the poor. Those who are usually excluded need to be affirmed, before we can even imagine inclusive communities.

A commitment to the poor is ultimately not decided by human compassion, ideology, or even our own experiences of poverty, but "in the God of our faith" (Gutierrez 1988 : 14). It is God who cares for the poor (Sider 1990 : 47-63; Linthicum 1991 : 90-94; 99-104; Müller 1994 : 85; Sheppard 1983 : 9-18; Wallis 1994 : 161-174). And the prophets, the psalms and the gospels, are like refrains repeating God's concern for the poor. Different authors make it clear that an option for the poor does not imply rejection of the rich (Dorr 1984 : 78; Sheppard 1983 : 9-18; Gutierrez 1988 : xxv-xxvi; Sider 1990 : 61-63; Bosch 1991 : 104; 435-436).

> Nobody is excluded. But the poor are given preference and special care because their need is greater.
>
> (Dorr 1984 : 78)

Although God does not reject anybody, he is not neutral either (cf. also The Kairos Document 1985 : 17; Cloete & Smit 1984 [The Belhar Confession]). God positions Himself on the side of the poor "because of their special vulnerability" (Sider 1990 : 61) and because of his disapproval of the current extremes of wealth and poverty. We can almost say that God is an "affirmative action" God, affirming those who are excluded, vulnerable and desperate.

Opting for the poor is also not directed against a particular people, but rather against structural arrangements that are fundamentally unjust (Eph.6 : 10-20). Obviously people represent those arrangements, however, and therefore people should be called to conversion and accountability. Dorr (1984 : 79) suggests that such a conversion would imply for those on the top, a recognition that current structural arrangements are not fair, and a commitment to work, in solidarity with the poor, for the transformation of current structures. He warns realistically, though, that such a conversion of the rich is exceptional and not to be taken for granted.

Bosch (1991 : 102) describes how Luke contrasted the responses of the rich young ruler and of Zacchaeus to the calling of Jesus (Lk. 18 : 18-30; 19 : 1-10). Zacchaeus chose another lifestyle, while the rich young man turned away from Jesus. This might happen all too often. Dorr (1984 : 79) reminds us, however, that

> It is not primarily through the conversion of the rich and the powerful that God establishes his Kingdom.

The active presence of the church with the poor has, in the words of Schillebeeckx (1988 : 137) universal meaning, as it relates not only to the poor themselves but it also offers an opportunity to the rich and powerful to commit themselves to a

position of solidarity. When we fail to act altogether, we are actually condoning the status quo, participating in the exploitation of the poor, and attacking the roots of the common good (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 283-284). Therefore, we are all called to act on behalf of those who are currently sidelined.

The inner city church, if positioned on the side of the poor, cannot allow for market forces (or any other forces for that matter) to marginalise those who cannot compete or get access to the market economy (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 249-250). If the means of production are concentrated in the hands of a small elite, and do not serve the interests of the poor, or if housing is out of reach for those who are homeless, the church has to intervene prophetically.

To opt for the poor in the inner city would imply that the church evaluates public policy through the eyes of the most vulnerable. Wallis (1994 : 174) cites a good example, referring to a Catholic diocese in Michigan.

> They have decided that before making any decision as a diocese regarding programmes, buildings, or events, they will ask one simple question : How will this affect the poor ? What a revolution would occur if public policy decisions were subjected to the same process !

Opting for the poor is a vital affirmation of an excluded group of people. Once this option is implemented consistently, and this is a prerequisite, we can start to build inclusive communities, and ultimately, an inclusive society.

- **Inclusive Communities and Inner City Transformation**

Inclusive communities will be able to express the principles of a communal economy, and integrate principles of stewardship, sharing and jubilee within its make-up. Inclusive communities at the grass-roots level could become vital catalysts of transformation, not only locally but in the entire city.

The ministry of Jesus was characterised by the restoration of people to wholeness, and their subsequent re-integration into society. Jesus did not deal with the poor "at night" only, but called them to the centre of his work and re-integrated them back into society. Restoration is not complete when people are still excluded from community. After healing people or exorcising the demon-possessed man, Jesus placed them back in their own families.

Jesus also did not deal with the rich and powerful only "at night", but interacted very publicly with Zacchaeus and joined him for a meal at his home. Jesus restored Zacchaeus to wholeness, this time in a different way by offering him the opportunity to do restitution for what he has done wrong. Through doing this, Zacchaeus became part of the inclusive community of Jesus' followers.

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 243) envisages socio-economic transformation at the grass-roots level through the creation of a diversity of programmes, processes and

projects. At the heart of such a transformational process should be the mobilisation of grass-roots people to take responsibility and ownership of their own processes of social and economic transformation.

But inclusive communities should also include the spiritually and morally converted who are resourceful. They would become stewards of God's resources entrusted to them by sharing these in communities of need. Inclusive communities, joining the poor and the rich together, could become wonderful signs of hope in struggling inner city places. In the inner city a process of mutual empowerment and liberation within inclusive communities, will lead to innovative initiatives that could form the backbone of fundamental transformation.

This could include technical training and capacity-building, urban services to reintegrate the poor, democratic community-based action groups and lobby forums, and support for grass-root institutions intended for the maximum democratic participation in community building processes.

An alternative vision for society could remain mere "romantic rhetoric" (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 251) if it is not supported and sustained by a broader ground-swell which is supportive of social justice and societal transformation. Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 251) refers to this in the broader context of nation-building and reconstruction, spelling out the need for a broader cultural renaissance to carry and sustain such a vision. This is equally important on a smaller local level, within inner city communities. The inner city church should continue to build inclusive communities, inviting a diversity of people to participate in the rebuilding of inner city society. *Inclusive community* could be understood here in a narrow sense as people of faith journeying in solidarity with one another for the sake of the inner city and its poor. *Inclusive community* could also be understood in a broader sense to include all those who are committed to the transformation of the inner city to include the poor and vulnerable members of society. In this study it refers to both.

### 8.6.4  An Economy of Community

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 204-205) refers to the book of Douglas Meeks (1989), God the Economist, in which he defines the economy in its literal sense as the management (or law : nomos) of the household (oikos). In the context of this section, it implies the management of the public household in the inner city. Public theology has the role to ensure that the values of God's household are expressed through political economies.

In the inner city, a public theology will scrutinise economic development plans for the city, evaluating these in the light of the values of God's household. Economic management, from a theological perspective, is about ensuring the best possible livelihood for everyone. Public theology will evaluate economic management practices from the perspective of "the poor neighbour" in the inner city.

> It is about liberating economic structures to ensure that no one is exploited or treated as 'strangers and aliens', incorporating everyone into the 'household of God' (Eph. 2 : 19-22).
>
> (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 219)

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 232) motivates the church's intervention in economic matters from a theological perspective. He asserts that ethics and human rights should take precedence over economics and democratic intervention in economy might at times be vital. If economics are exploitative and exclusive, there is a need to intervene on behalf of those who are exploited or excluded.

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 232) is of the opinion that the political economy should be left to neither market forces nor social-scientific forces. To do so will be

> ...to turn away from the God-given calling to participate in the transformation of society.

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 232-233) puts it even stronger, saying

> It is to abdicate the human spirit to impersonal and manipulative forces which destroy and confine the capacity of people to share in the shaping of their own destiny.

In the end, the real issue is not that of either socialism or capitalism, or even a mix of these two systems, but rather the issue of economic justice. Economic justice and transformation should always be a central element in a public theology (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 231).

Public theology would not only criticise economic development plans if they are exclusive, but once again public theology would have to go beyond that, suggesting mechanisms that will ensure integrated economic development initiatives, that will empower the poor and include the marginalised.

It has been asserted already, in a theology of community (cf. 7.7.1), that we need to seek for an *economics of community* as the way towards an economically just society. Wallis (1991 : 179-185; 235-236) suggested community as the moral foundation for economics and economic justice. This is echoed by John Cobb (1992 : 72-73), Walter Brueggemann (1991 : 19), and others, suggesting community as the key to an alternative economy. Brueggemann suggests that we recover the covenantal motif as key to a public language that will facilitate social and economic justice.

Cobb (1992 : 74-75) suggests the decentralisation of both political and economic power. He argues that this could lead to greater ownership of local communities by the people, and therefore a greater collective responsibility for its future. He breaks this notion down to the level of face-to-face communities where people can interact in close personal relationships. This correlates to the suggestion of participatory democracy down to the grass-roots level, suggesting that the best way to manage

our cities is to ensure maximum participation from all its citizens.

The decentralisation of authority to the local level, and the empowerment of local community people to implement strategies and to manage their own communities, make sense. Urban neighbourhoods and the nuclear family as the smallest face-to-face communal unit, become rather fragile in urbanised settings as they are dominated by the larger economy. Decentralisation of political and economic power could strengthen the social fibre of urban communities once again and facilitate the well-being of all people. Cobb (1992 : 75-76) cites the example of businesses being locally owned and managed, and therefore having a long-term commitment to an area because their roots are there.

> If public policy is to encourage community it should encourage this type of business and discourage the absorption of local businesses into national corporations.

Wallis (1991 : 181) challenges the dominant consciousness with regard to inner city developments, asking :

> Why is real estate speculation that displaces the poor regarded as shrewd investment rather than an unacceptable antisocial behaviour ?

He responds to individualism that guarantees the well-being of some individual owners, while large numbers of people on the other side of town, are excluded and systematically marginalised as the city gets developed. Wallis (1991 : 181-185), in response, calls for co-operatives, the redistribution of resources, land reforms, and so forth. In response to both socialism and capitalism, Wallis (1991 : 184) suggests a participatory or communal way for economic development.

> Giant conglomerates and centralised bureaucracies both seem to be enemies of genuine citizen participation in economic decision making.

An economy of community requires a fundamental shift in thinking, allowing ethical considerations to override market forces. When development is considered, the question of the poor and their integration into the city will be posed. Top executives or business owners would reduce the gap between themselves and their employees, starting right at home (Wallis 1991 : 180).

Wallis argues that we should once again stress the human incentives in alternative economies, which actually outweigh financial incentives. The problem is that these so-called human incentives have become "foreign in the contemporary marketplace" (Wallis 1991 : 180). Wallis refers to ecological advantages and the well-being of the poor as such human incentives for alternative development strategies and practices. These human incentives should become vital considerations in an economy of community. An economy of community is human-scale, interdependent, environmentally sensitive, and sustainable. The poor become the central category and yardstick for our economic performance in a communal economy. It is important to think of an economy of community, not only in local but also in global terms.

Globally, rich nations are disempowering poorer nations. The individualism of the West and their commodification of life, have led to a complete breakdown of a covenantal understanding of global humanity. We do not appreciate anymore that we belong to the same global village,  and that we are therefore dependent on each other.

Besides being rooted in Biblical metaphors such as stewardship, Sabbath and jubilee, the Christian community that seeks to develop the notion of a communal economy, has "three strategic moral priorities", according to Pieris (1988 : 163), namely :

* the needs of the poor should take priority over the wants of the rich
* the freedom of the dominated should take priority over the liberty of the powerful
* participation of marginalised groups should take priority over the preservation of an order that excludes them

This is to radicalise the task of the Christian community; yet, it is still in line with the teachings and actions of Christ Himself. In terms of an inner city praxis for ministry, it paves the way for genuine transformation of social, economic and political processes. The first real challenge, however, is the question of how the church could be conscientised towards embracing these moral goals. The church itself would have to undergo a fundamental transformation process.

Sider, Wallis, Brueggemann, and others base their suggestions for a communal economy on fundamental Biblical metaphors. A public theology needs to recover these metaphors as resources to inform our presence and ministry in the public arena.

## 8.6.4.1      Stewardship

Social and economic justice will always be a central component in facilitating God's shalom in urban communities. Economic justice is a sign of the kingdom and of wholeness. In recovering Biblical metaphors or images, we are discovering the signposts of an alternative economy.

The Bible asserts that everything belongs to God, and we are called to be the temporary  stewards of God's resources. We all belong to God and central to our stewardship is the notion of sharing with one another.

> Stewardship is one of the central theological categories of any biblical understanding of our relationship to the land and economic resources generally.
>
> (Sider 1990 : 66)

A public theology has to hold up a theology of stewardship, advocating for sharing in solidarity, responsibility, creativity and freedom.

In the inner city it implies that we are called to be managers of God's urban resources. The inner city church in the public arena therefore has to ensure that :

- these resources are shared in solidarity with the poor
- these resources are utilised in ways that will serve all of humanity equally, not enriching some at the expense of others
- these resources are utilised in sustainable ways for future generations
- these resources are utilised creatively, multiplied and shared in ever deeper ways
- these resources are shared freely, implying the liberation of the rich from their money and possessions, and the liberation of the poor towards sustainable living.

Brueggemann (1993 : 3) writes about the management of God's urban resources and he uses the book of Isaiah extensively for this purpose. He argues that First Isaiah is the book of Jerusalem under attack, Second Isaiah is the book of Jerusalem displaced, and Third Isaiah refers to Jerusalem restored. He traces the history of God's people in Isaiah and indicates that the management of God's resources was crucial all along.

> Moreover, risk, surveillance, and joy in every city, as in beloved Jerusalem, depend on the management of God's resources.
>
> (Brueggemann 1993 : 4)

The future of the city, according to Brueggemann (1993 : 74-75), hinges on either the

> redeployment of resources according to God's large passion for the hungry, homeless and naked - or endless self-serving that yields no communion, no light, no vindication, no healing, no water, no feeding, no delight, no nothing.

Brueggemann (1993 : 75) continues :

> The future hangs on a slice of bread, a welcoming bed, a shared coat.

It is in sharing that the city will find its future. It is in giving away that we will gain our lives. It is in responsible stewardship that we will discover the key to urban restoration. A moral and a political conversion is required, that will call people away from themselves and into relationships of covenantal interdependence. Stewardship is at the heart of an economy of community.

At its deepest theological level, the task of stewardship is to fulfill the mission that God has for us on earth, namely to restore creation to its original intention. This corresponds with the task that we have to humanise dehumanised inner city areas and people. As people discover themselves as created in God's image, they are set free for a life of stewardship and sharing. Central in the process of restoration,

> is the very creatures that have been denied their place in the fruitfulness.
>
> (Brueggemann 1993 : 73)

## 8.6.4.2      Jubilee, the Sabbatical Year and the Sabbath

A theology of inner city transformation will have a special bias towards economic transformation which benefits the poorest of the poor in the inner city. It will anticipate the year of the Lord and celebrate Jubilee in the city (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 43). The Biblical notion of Jubilee implies the inversion of injustices and the restoration of land to its former or legitimate owners.

Leviticus 25 introduced the concept of the Jubilee. Every fifty years all land was to be returned to the original owners. These laws went beyond the normal property law which protects the rights of individual ownership. Rather, the Jubilee was introduced to ensure justice for all, and not only for the few. The idea behind this was God's desire for all people to have equal opportunities and to experience his shalom - therefore land ownership was equalised every fifty years. The theological basis of these guidelines was that everything belongs to God (cf. Sider 1990 : 66-67). Therefore, we cannot exclude some people from what is fundamentally God's property.

> Because (God) disapproves of great extremes of wealth among his people, (He) ordains equalizing mechanisms like the year of jubilee.
>
> (Sider 1990 : 67)

Sider asserts that the Jubilee principle prescribes justice, which is a fundamental restructuring of society to provide equal access to social resources. Justice goes beyond charity, which is often exemplified in handouts which make people dependent. The Jubilee became an institutionalised right given to the poor. It underlined the importance of institutionalised mechanisms that will promote and ensure justice (Sider 1990 : 67). Through the principle of Jubilee, the poor were helped to help themselves and to earn an own living. It, namely, required a redistribution of assets "so that everyone has the resources to earn their own way" (Sider 1990 : 135; cf. also Linthicum 1991 : 99).

In line with a proposed economy of community, the Jubilee principle contrasts with both capitalist and socialist economies, affording people the opportunity to participate in the economy through the creation of own opportunities on the one hand, and challenging a monopolising of ownership in the hands of a few on the other.

The Jubilee principle has been carried into the New Testament. The transformed relationships reflected in the first Christian community is an expression of this principle. Jesus himself quotes from Isaiah 61, which alludes to Leviticus 25 and the year of the Lord's favour, or the Year of Jubilee. Jesus announces that, in Him, the Year of Jubilee has arrived. *Now* is the Year of Jubilee, the year of redistribution and restoration, the year of the Lord's favour (cf. Moltmann 1983 : 71-78; Dorr 1984 : 90-91; 94).

Moltmann (1983 : 75) refers to the Year of Jubilee, saying that it is an announcement of the

> true liberation of the whole of life : soul and body, the individual and the community, human beings and nature.

God comes to us in and through Jesus, and in Jesus the Year of Jubilee has come. As members of the new community of disciples, we have to find ways to contextualise the Jubilee principle to our cities.

Also reflected in Leviticus 25 is the concept of the Sabbatical Year. Together with the Jubilee these two mechanisms were ordained by God to facilitate social and economic justice. The Sabbatical year implied that people were able to work hard for six years, to cultivate their land and to use its benefits. But in the seventh year slaves, the soil and debtors had to be liberated. Sider (1990 : 68) claims both an ecological and humanitarian purpose in this law.

In the African context Archbishop Winston Ndungane has provided leadership to the Jubilee 2000 movement, calling for the North to consider canselling the debts of the South. Ndungane and others are consistent in calling for the Jubilee principle to be applied today at a local, regional and national level in South Africa, but also at an intercontinental and global level.

Brueggemann (1993 : 51) speaks about Isaiah's programme for urban resource management, or for the rebuilding of the city. When the prophet sets out his programme, he says the following :

> do justice and righteousness
> receive liberation and deliverance
> keep the Sabbath and do no evil

The last phrase seems to be somewhat out of place in the prophet's programme. Justice, righteousness, liberation and deliverance, are somehow connected. But why does the prophet give such importance to the observance of the Sabbath ?

Brueggemann (1993 : 71) explains this in economic terms, referring to the commodification of all of life. To disregard the Sabbath is to "reduce all of life to... production and consumption". Isaiah calls specifically for the observance of the Sabbath as a mechanism to ensure communal economics and social justice. This implies, namely, a break in the vicious cycle of productivity, the one-sided accumulation of commodities, and the estrangement of the neighbour and the city itself. The Sabbath serves as a reminder that everything belongs to God and that all our properties and belongings are only borrowed. The Sabbath is also reminding us of God's restorative grace, wanting to restore us to himself, to each other and to creation. The one-sided accumulation of commodities leads to a breakdown of communion with God and each other, and the vicious cycle of productivity leads to

unsustainable patterns that kill God's earth.

The Sabbath is symbolic of life, but not the life gained by exploitative power or financial control. The Sabbath is symbolic of a life not defined and organised around the utilitarian value of commodity success, but around neighbourliness and community (cf. Brueggemann 1993 : 50-51). Accumulation of wealth and property easily leads to exploitative patterns as we have to reach our goals at the expense of others. For Brueggemann (1993 : 71) the Sabbath is a reminder that we belong together, and therefore we are not supposed to exploit each other.

> (S)abbath is a barrier against exploitative self-interest.

Economic management in the city should envision a socially and economically just society, based on the teachings of the Sabbath, as well as the Sabbatical and Jubilee years in Leviticus 25 (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 219). These notions include redistribution, restructuring and release of those who are oppressed, in order for greater freedom for all people to participate in society.

Restoration, in the definition of Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 220), is central to the Biblical vision, and involves "joyous sharing" on the basis of covenantal relationships. Instead of dehumanisation and servitude people are empowered within a sense of community and economic opportunity.

Wall (1987 : 113) says that Jubilee economics is grounded in grace and not in greed. It is about the development of structures that will facilitate sharing and redistribution,

> in order to build a society that bears witness that God's mercy transforms all equally.

The underlying principles discovered in the year of the Jubilee and the sabbatical year, and the notion of grace, should transform the church into an institution that will facilitate justice and shalom in the true Biblical sense of the word. Sider (1990 : 213) calls the church to discover contemporary and concrete models for applying these principles in today's world.

> I hope and pray for a new generation of economists and political scientists who will devote their lives to formulating, developing, and implementing a contemporary model of Jubilee.

### 8.6.4.3    God's New Community

Jesus established a community of disciples when He was on earth. This new community of Jesus carried within them the values of God's kingdom and demonstrated an alternative lifestyle. In the new community of Jesus all relationships, even economically, were transformed (cf. Sider 1990 : 72-73; Mayson, in De Gruchy 1986 : 145-147).

Draper (1994 : 40), referring to the readings of Horsley and Marcus Borg, suggests that the Jesus movement originated within a context of Galilean peasantry and as a response to social and economic disintegration and threats of landlessness. Jesus' teachings and lifestyle offered the potential of renewal within family and community relations. Jesus offered solidarity, forgiveness of sins, liberation of the oppressed, and the restoration of women and children. Although all of these actions caused discomfort and anger on the part of the dominant classes, it paved the way for transformation and those who followed Christ became part of a transformed and a transforming community.

Jesus, his disciples and the women who cared for them, shared a common purse (John 12 : 6).

> They shared a common life according to the material resources and needs of each one, including the sharing of meals and possessions. The racial and religious barriers between Jew and Greek, the economic and class barriers between slave and freeman, and the barriers which parted men and women were conquered. Their style of life was transformed and transforming.
>
> (Mayson, in De Gruchy 1986 : 146)

Their security was no longer to be found in individual ownership, but in their belonging to a community of sharing and love (cf. Sider 1990 : 72-74). In Jesus and his community the patterns of the covenant were recovered and deepened.

The same pattern is repeated in the first church in Jerusalem, as is evident in the deep level of sharing among them, as surplus income was given to the needy, land sold to assist the poor, and so forth (cf. Acts 2 : 43-47; 4 : 34-37). Again, as with the principle of Jubilee, private property was not prohibited; yet, the poor became the yardstick to measure what was fair and reasonable. Within the community of believers, great economic disparities were just not acceptable. The economic koinonia established among believers was transferred to the global church as well, as Paul develops interchurch networks for mutual aid (Acts 11 : 29; 2 Corinthians 7-9).

Sider (1990 : 83) writes about global disparities.

> The dollar value of the food North Americans throw in the garbage each year equals about one-fifth of the total annual income of all the Christians in Africa.

The Biblical vision on such extreme disparities is that of economic koinonia, or an economy of community, where both at a local and a global level we affirm our interdependence and engage in relationships of covenant, solidarity and sharing.

The purpose of sharing within the community was for equality among believers. Paul uses the example of God's provision of manna in the desert, reminding us that equal portions of manna had to be distributed to all people (Exodus 16 ; 13-21; 2 Cor. 8 : 13-15). In the same way, we are called to share with one another so that there may

be equality. The prophets, Jesus and Paul were consistent in their teachings. They all called for greater equality amongst God's people, and for mechanisms of sharing and koinonia that would ensure equality and access to the sources of life.

### 8.6.4.4    In Summary

An economy of community, from a theological perspective, should be based on the affirmation that Jesus indeed introduced a new community in which kingdom principles had to be lived and shared. An economy of community will include the principles of stewardship, jubilee, Sabbath, and will seek contextual applications in the real situation of the inner city. The task of a public theology in this regard is to explore with the church and communities appropriate mechanisms to ensure responsible stewardship and sharing, as well as the distribution of resources in ways that will facilitate equality and justice.

### 8.6.6  Agents of Shalom

God calls various human agents to become co-builders of the city of shalom. God is at work outside the "sacred" sphere and calls the public church to be involved there with Him, seeking the welfare of the city. If the church is serious about God's love for people, it will be reflected in its consistent endeavours for economic transformation, social justice, and shalom in the city.

> ...the Church is called to reflect God's character in the world. Whether anyone will respond or not, God loves thing like mercy, justice and truth, and hates things like greed and oppression. Reflecting this character of God will mean that the Church must risk losing its innocence by becoming involved in the corporate life of cities. It must sometimes take sides, even if that leads to great unpopularity rather than growth in the number of worshippers.

> (Sheppard 1983 : 18)

For the church it is not a question of promoting any specific ideological perspective, either politically or economically, but it is rather asking : what can give best expression to the gospel being good news to the poor ? (cf. also Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 253).

> A theology of reconstruction is about facilitating, promoting and supporting such actions that make and sustain human life in the best possible manner.
> (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 274)

A theology of inner city transformation will have these objectives in mind : to facilitate, promote and support human life in the inner city. It is fundamentally a theology of hope, rooted in a Biblical vision, and contributing in a positive and constructive way to the social, economic and political environment of the inner city. It moves beyond criticism or resistance, to offer alternatives and to build signs thereof.

> A theology of reconstruction is not an exact science. It is a creative and imaginative art, grounded in the hard realities and inevitable contradictions of human life and political manouverings.
>
> (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 274)

In the work of Harvey Cox (1969), *Feast of the Fools*, he manages to recover imagination in theology as he envisions new possibilities beyond the current crisis. The church in the public arena will have to propose imaginative and visionary scenarios of what the city could be like. It then has to mobilise people into this new imagination, for it to become an agent of God's shalom.

Although all power belongs to God, God chooses to work through the human agency (cf. Philpott 1993 : 101). God acts through individuals, groups, churches and organisations. He acts within a given human history, and not outside of it. That is the incarnational nature of God's intervention, becoming flesh and working through us. Brueggemann (1993 : 24) speaks in a challenging way about the human agent that will manage a just city.

> This authorized, empowered, breathed-on human agent will manage the resources through a passionate righteousness for the poor, a zealous equity for the meek. The human agent breaks with all the patterns of royal privilege and established preferential treatment, because the wind has blown him beyond privilege and preference into the needful, stammering company of the poor and the meek.

As was suggested before, shalom in the city should be facilitated through partnerships drawing a diversity of human agencies together. Seen from the perspective of the poor, I suggest that one of the primary agents of inner city shalom would be the poor themselves.

The poem in Isaiah 65 ends with a little child - innocent, "ungreedy" and "unexploitative" (Brueggemann 1993 : 26) - leading and reconciling creation. Could this child be a metaphor of the poor and marginal, of the small people of this world who will dismantle the passions of greed and exploitation, exposing us to ourselves, and leading us out to new places ? Brueggemann imagines such a new order where a child will lead us away from our own fear to new places of shalom.

Where we are drawn into inclusive communities with the poor and vulnerable, we will all be exposed to our own greed and exploitation, and we will be led to become agents of God's shalom in the city.

Some would criticise the importance given to the human agency as we seek for God's shalom in the city. They would see it as a result of human arrogance and pride and therefore a humanistic development by definition. They would reject it, asserting that it does not recognise the fallen nature of humanity, which destroyed the image of God within us (cf. Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 121). De Gruchy (1991 : 280) would probably respond to this by reminding us that the liberating grace of God remains at the core; this grace remains the power motivating us for prophetic

witness and struggle. It is the human agency, drawn by God's grace and still in the process of being transformed and recreated into God's image, that steps out to meet with God in the public arena.

Brueggemann (1993 : 49) offers as mandate for city managers the text in Isaiah 56 : 1-2. A word pair - "mispat" and "sedakah" (justice and righteousness) - is used to mandate agents of change in the city.

> Together they refer to a communal practice whereby all members of the community are guaranteed, by their membership, all that is needed to live a good life.

This is a word pair of communal care, distinguishing the ethical life of Israel and giving hope to the city. As a result of justice and righteousness God will save - or liberate - and deliver. This is vital for our understanding of managing the city. Our human justice-righteousness and God's liberation-deliverance go together. The one cannot do without the other (Brueggemann 1993 : 49).

God calls human agencies to work with Him in the city. The church needs to be transformed by its incarnational presence with the poor of the city. And then the church, in solidarity with the poor, needs to develop creative partnerships that will indeed facilitate shalom.

For the church to be an agent of shalom in the city, would imply a broad-based engagement, including various functions. Some of these might be overwhelming or even foreign to the traditional ministry of the church. It literally requires a conversion to the public arena. I would like to summarise this section with reference to Louw's discussion (1997 : 404) of the pastoral role of the church in South Africa today. The functions of the public church in the inner city, as an agent of shalom, might include the following :

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • | Admonition : | destruction of all forms of oppression |
| • | Criticism : | critical analysis of social context and people's needs |
| • | Identification / Solidarity : | identification with the poor and marginalised |
| • | Hermeneutic : | assess and articulate the present needs in society |
| • | Liberation & Prophecy : | transformation of the existing order into a just society |
| • | Political Function : | promotion of democratic values and structures & full participation |
| • | Inculturation Task : | cultural empowerment, indigenisation, liturgical renewal, multi-cultural community, etc. |
| • | Therapeutic Task : | a theology of healing, renewal and reconciliation |

## 8.7    The Church and the Poor

It has already been noted that the kingdom of God extends beyond the church. Yet, God calls the church to be with the poor. Unlike theology which argues that God mainly work outside of the church, Gutierrez affirmed the central importance of the church in ministry with the poor. He argued, from the perspective of a theology of liberation, that fidelity to the church was a prerequisite for the growth and maturing of the liberation task (cf. Arns 1988 : xi). It is an assumption of this study that the church indeed has a role ro play with regard to the inner city poor and the transformation of struggling inner city communities. It is a further assumption that the church needs to be transformed, before it will respond to this challenge adequately.

The following paragraphs would briefly analyse some of the typical responses to the poor, identifying forms of ministry, as well as the strengths and weaknesses, that are characteristic of these various responses.

### 8.7.1   The Church and Inner City Poverty : Different Responses or Approaches

### 8.7.1.1       Service

The first response, which is the most common and natural response, is to react to a given need by way of service. If people are hungry, we open a soup kitchen. If people need clothes, we open a clothing closet. If they need housing, we open a shelter. This fundamental relief work, addressing the basic physical and material needs, are very important. However, they seldom address the root causes of poverty, and if done in isolation from longer-term approaches, they have the potential to perpetuate dependency and chronic poverty.

In their book on homelessness, Timmer, Eitzen and Talley (1994 : 183-184) indicate how society usually responds to homelessness primarily through the provision of shelters. At best the shelter approach provides a temporary solution, but at worst shelters can contribute greatly to people's victimisation. Shelters do not succeed in themselves to break the cycle of poverty, because they maintain the status quo without addressing the structural causes affecting the poor (Timmer, et al 1994 : 79-80).

John mcKnight (1994 : 184), expert on public policy issues and advocate for radical social welfare reforms, argues against service-oriented approaches to poverty with their emphasis on people's deficiencies. McKnight feels that the money spent on services could have been more useful if made available in cash to the poor to help themselves. Instead, professionals become experts at the expense of local community people. McKnight then argues for a transformation of this service-oriented welfare system, calling for models of community and solidarity, in which the poor will be included on our agendas and affirmed to act on their own behalf.

Poor people and communities in the inner city often become dependent on services which maintain their poverty. A general atmosphere of apathy is often the result in inner city communities of struggle. Services rendered seldom transfer enough responsibility into the hands of the poor themselves, thereby limiting their options to dependency on those who have the power to provide (or withhold) these essential services.

This approach does not go beyond charity and over the long-term it challenges the dignity of both giver and receiver. It is, namely, a hand-out approach in which a one-way transaction takes place which is inherently undignified. Obviously, in situations of mass despair, after war or in famine-stricken countries, large relief projects are vital to rescue the lives of thousands of people. But in normal situations of poverty, we have to seek ways to address the roots of problems.

I will conclude my reflections on service by contrasting *service and justice*, as well as *service and community*.

Acts of servanthood should not be limited to the softer issues of charity without engaging in the harder issues of justice. Different churches supported a project sheltering street children in the inner city of Pretoria. The main focus of these churches was on practical supports by way of food and clothing. When the facility that housed these children burnt down, due to alleged police and right wing involvement, the support of the churches dwindled. They were comfortable with service, but not when the service required a call for justice. Our servanthood needs to go beyond individual or collective acts of charity.

### 8.7.1.2     Development

Usually people start to question the service approach to poverty after a while, wondering if they cannot make a more fundamental difference. Instead of giving people fish, the argument says that we need to teach people how to fish for themselves. Job creation projects, literacy and skills training, and even housing information, could be part of such a developmental approach to poverty in the city.

This approach goes beyond relief work and seeks to assist people in obtaining the necessary skills to help themselves. The problem with a developmental approach to poverty in the inner city, is that it does not necessarily go far enough. It still maintains the status quo and the control of projects often remain in the hands of the powerful few, perpetuating the  disempowerment of communities.

Linthicum (1991 : 38) describes how churches get involved with poverty issues through the implementation of development programs. Often, however, these programs are planned on the basis of the church's own analysis of a situation.

> ...the church has determined what the problems of those slum communities are, selected the solutions for these problems and undertaken the projects to address those issues.

Often the church adds to the problem through the very development programs that they offer to communities. Instead of contributing to the solution, the church only addresses the results of poverty and powerlessness. The actual causes are still not addressed. Communities and people are still not assisted to the point of self-determination. The church makes decisions on their behalf and implement programs to solve their problems for them. And they become more and more dependent instead of being empowered.

As was indicated already in chapters 2 and 4, the development approach to poverty has been challenged increasingly in the past two decades. Development often meant greater poverty for the poor and increased wealth for the rich. In the inner city, development projects often referred to the development of geographical areas through renewal and dislocation of the poor residents. Development projects are often characterised by the fact that accumulation of "new" wealth is not distributed fairly, and power is abused to ensure that only the developers could benefit from it (Dorr 1984 : 63-64).

Too often development projects are rooted within the dominant consciousness and determined by individualism, materialism and exclusivism. The apartheid policy of separate development is one of the crudest examples of development that marginalises and disempowers (cf. chapter 2; 1.1).

Donal Dorr (1984 : 65-67) calls for development that is rooted in social justice instead, since that would ensure a rethinking of dominant models of development, as well as a better distribution of resources. This has direct bearing on the issue of inner city renewal. The public church should assess policies of urban renewal critically to ensure that such projects do not happen at the expense of the poor. We have to ask critically if it is indeed true that any development is better than no development. I would suggest this as a huge myth perpetuated by those in power to marginalise the powerless even further. The church in the public arena needs to ensure development that will benefit the poor.

This study suggests an approach to the development of poor communities that can not be equated with modernisation or gradual change, but that requires fundamental and radical social change, as well as social transformation. In this study I suggest a transformational approach to development.

### 8.7.1.3    Community Organising

I suggest community organising as the method to achieve holistic liberation in the inner city, and as a corrective to traditional development and service-oriented approaches. This concept therefore enjoys more focus in this study.

- **Community Organising and Empowerment**

Robert Linthicum (1991) speaks of poverty as a lack of power and suggests community organising as a way of empowerment. This is echoed by John Friedmann (1992) in his book, *Empowerment*. At the heart of the practise of community organising is the goal of empowerment. Where development wants to teach people how to fish for themselves, community organising wants to ensure that people have access to water first.

Linthicum (1991 : 11) reflects on the way in which sin in the city is expressed corporately and systemically. Through corrupt corporate power, communities and individuals get destroyed. Even communities with skilled people are marginalised through corporate power at work. Linthicum (1991 : 11) suggests that the church engages itself with the systems and structures of evil in the city, if the church is to "effectively transform the lives of the city's individuals". Linthicum (1991 : 25) suggests community organising as the most effective means for bringing about the empowerment of the poor in cities, but also to transform evil structures and systems. He offers community organising as "a uniquely urban approach to Christian ministry among the poor".

Linthicum (1991 : 21-24) suggests that the church should engage with the poor from a position of being *church with the city* (cf. chapter 2; 2.2.4 & chapter 4; 7.2), joining its struggles and moving into partnership with poor communities. Community organising is an important diaconal response to the inner city poor, in which the church is working *with* poor communities to organise and advocate for social transformation. It implies that the church comes alongside the poor as their friend and servant.

Linthicum (1991 : 25) defines community organising as

> ...the process by which the people of an urban community organizes themselves to deal corporately with those essential forces that are exploiting their community and causing their powerlessness.

Philpott (cf. 1993 : 101) provides a very similar definition for empowerment, suggesting that empowerment is that process whereby a disempowered group work together collectively to take responsibility for their lives, their communities and the events that shape their own futures. It is a personal and a group process, with psychological and political dimensions.

It is important to note that the church does not empower people or communities (Linthicum 1991 : 21-24). Empowerment is something that happens when individuals or communities take charge of their own situations.

> The task of the church is to join the empowerment of the community - to participate in it, to be an integral part of it.
>
> (Linthicum 1991 : 24)

The notion of the church's incarnational presence is very suitable to community organising as an approach. Incarnational churches would be so part of the life of a community anyway, that the interests of the community and of the church would often overlap.

Community organising, in the definition provided above, takes the exclusive control for the future of a community away from service providers or local government institutions, through a process of collective self-empowerment. Powerless people determine for themselves the actions that they will take to deal with the forces that destroy their communities and perpetuate its powerlessness (Linthicum 1991 : 31). The emphasis is largely on collective action. As communities determine their own actions and as they take collective responsibility, they would insist on participation in all decision-making processes that will affect their future.

Empowerment through organising is breaking the pattern of "learned helplessness" at a psychological level (Philpott 1993 : 101) and helping people to believe that they themselves can take charge and make a difference. They do not need to rely entirely on outside agencies to "rescue" them. They can take charge of their own situations, and work in partnership with others to achieve real and lasting transformation. An aboriginal woman from Australia has probably been empowered to this point, as is expressed in her words :

> If you're coming to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.
>
> (Wallis 1994 : 164)

As people are empowered psychologically and as the power of God's healing and acceptance bring them back to life, they can respond collectively to the broader social struggles that they are exposed to (cf. Philpott 1993 : 102). A critical consciousness would be part of a psychological process of empowerment. Such a new consciousness needs to be translated into carefully selected and strategic political actions for change.

Through community organising the relationships of power are re-arranged as local communities take charge of their own situations. Meaningful partnerships between poor communities and other stakeholders could now be facilitated, in which the poor themselves take the driver seat. Community organising builds on the inherent capacities of poor communities, developing local leadership, and encouraging their full participation in the democratisation of the city. Through proper public policy a climate could be created that will be conducive for organising, empowerment and participatory democracy at the grass-roots level.

African-American theologian, Theodore Walker, jr, (1991 : 20-23) distinguishes between emancipation and empowerment. He compares the Exodus experience of God's people with the African-American experience, arguing that these experiences were limited to emancipation. Real empowerment has not been achieved before the promised land is not entered. Walker views empowerment as the comprehensive social-economic-political freedom which is more than the mere absence of slavery. It is the freedom to work fully towards the building of a righteous nation. As communities are organised, they are liberated to work fully towards restoring their communities to health, viability and sustainability.

From the perspective of Friedmann (1992 : 66-71), empowerment is the process of ensuring access to the eight (8) bases of social power. The church in the public arena needs to consider Friedmann's analysis as it journeys alongside the poor.

The bases of social power, as Friedmann suggests it, is the principle means of household livelihood. These bases "are distinct yet interdependent" (Friedmann 1992 : 69). The eight bases of social power are defensible life space, surplus time, knowledge and skills, appropriate information, social organisation, social networks, instruments of work and livelihood, and financial resources. This study is focussing on defensible life space, social organisation and social networks, although these are seen as important elements in the total empowerment process.

Greater access to these bases will contribute to people's relative empowerment. Lack of access contributes to people's relative disempowerment. Absolute poverty is evident where there are virtually no access to any of these eight bases of social power.

The following table summarises Friedmann's model.

Friedmann (1992 : 71) asserts that people and communities face tremendous obstacles on their way to self-empowerment. Therefore there remains a need for external support from religious organisations, the state, and other groups.

> ...even for the less destitute, collective self-empowerment is rarely a spontaneous process of community action : eternal agents are critically important.

The servant church should not fall in the trap of politically correct rhetoric of empowerment, whereby its role as an agent of change in disempowered communities gets reduced. Friedmann is suggesting a critical role for institutions such as the church in supporting communities as they get organised and empowered.

In Friedmann's definition of empowerment, community organising will be the process of creating access to housing and services that are decent and affordable, as well as to jobs, political decision-making processes, and other bases of power.

- **The Process of Community Organising**

Linthicum (1991 : 25) compares the church as community organiser with a "mid-wife in the birth of a community". Linthicum (1991 : 25-26) continues by suggesting a five-step process of community organising, from insertion to the birth of a new community :

- networking : this is the first step as the organiser befriends people, develop relationships, identify key leaders and key issues and build trust

- coalition-building : on the basis of relationships and networks the organiser can now facilitate the formation of coalitions or partnerships between different groups in order to effect change

- acting-reflecting-acting : such coalitions have a life of their own; they act, reflect and evaluate continuously on their collective involvement in a particular community

- leadership empowerment : leaders will emerge from such a process and it is important to be intentional about their empowerment; this would include grass-roots leaders from the local community, as well as support people who give moral and technical leadership and serve as advocates in the wider city

- the birth of a community : as local communities and their new-found leaders and partners take charge of a specific situation, radical changes can be facilitated and the birth of a new community be anticipated.

There are various signs to indicate the rebirth of a community. The collective actions that communities take, the presence of local leadership, creative partnerships between communities, churches and other stakeholders, are among those signs (Linthicum 1991 : 26). Communities who develop their own housing cooperatives, community development corporations, or self-help projects, have clearly come a long way in terms of determining their own future. Communities that have gone through a process of collective self-empowerment become active participants in the

transformation of the inner city, as they go beyond renewal and development that keep poor people poor. They become, namely, agents of their own and the city's fundamental transformation.

> Homeless people in the United States are increasingly organising themselves and speaking out on their own issues. The National Union for the Homeless represents more than 30 000 homeless individuals (Timmer, et al 1994 : 188). They call not for shelters but for housing; not for welfare but for jobs. They are in reaction against middle-class shelter operators who speak on their behalf, and affirm that they - the homeless - can speak for themselves (1994 : 188).
>
> At Hofmeyr House, a single room facility in Pretoria's inner city, the five-step process of organising as outlined by Linthicum has been applied. The residents of the building as well as key people in the surrounding community of Berea-Burgerspark have been networked focussing on the problems that this facility faced. Vital relationships have emerged from this network leading to joint action via the Berea Community Forum and other stakeholders. The focus of the action was to pressurise the management of the facility to deal more urgently with pressing issues of concern. An informal process of action-reflection-action has started as different role players reflected on the future of this facility. Leaders in the building has been empowered to deal creatively with their own situation. Currently signs of an emerging new community and new "culture" are becoming visible.
>
> Summerhill was one of the most depressed inner city areas of Atlanta, Georgia. Through an extensive process of organising, small but brave grass-roots initiatives, and collective self-empowerment, this community has literally picked itself up from the ashes. The Summerhill Development Corporation was formed, dealing creatively and boldly with the challenges of Summerhill (including poverty, public housing, unemployment, and so forth).

- **The Principles of Community Organising**

Linthicum (1991 : 31-36) highlights some of the characteristics or principles of community organising in an excellent chapter in his book *Empowering the Poor*. He also indicates how community organising differs from development. Some of the aspects that he deals with has already been related above. Some of the vital aspects that he covers include the following :

- Community organising is relational in nature, as it is based on one-to-one relationships of trust and mutual risk.

- Community organising is participatory, trying to include as many stakeholders as possible to participate in decision-making processes that will have an effect on the specific community.

- Community organising is seeking for structural changes that will go beyond immediate or direct services. Where churches or other local institutions adopt a community organising perspective, they seek with local people for decision-making power that will effect lasting changes.

- Community organising focusses on the creation of a new consciousness,

being value-based rather than issue-based in its nature.

- The emphasis of community organising is on the creation and training of leadership. It is therefore leadership-intensive rather than staff-intensive, with a primary part of the staff's role being to support emerging local leaders.

- Community organising is pro-active, rather than reactive. It has a long-term vision based on certain core values, and works within such a long-term framework as it builds local community. It is not merely reactionary to particular decisions made by those in powerful places.

(Linthicum 1991 : 32-33)

Linthicum (1991 : 33-34) argues that community development and community organising are both concerned with the empowerment of people and communities, but that organising differs in degree as it is a further stage of empowerment (and more focussed on structural transformation).

- Organising follows a long-term approach as it builds the self-determination of communities, while community development is more medium-term in duration.

- Organising is more inclusive than community development, including as many as possible formal and informal groups in its processes.

- Organising is more responsive than community development as it is not as bound to a plan or specific fixed objectives.

- Organising is often confrontational as it deals in the arena of power and with contentious issues. Community developers would rather seek for cooperation with power brokers, which might sometimes compromise their objectives.

- Community organising can get away with a small core staff, as the focus is on the development of local leaders who can assume responsibility for projects and processes.

- Community organising, when it is effective, will lead to permanent community structures or institutions that will be the rooted agents of change in communities.

In one sense community organising as a diaconal response, is a consolidation of many of the positions taken earlier in the study. This study has introduced the importance of communal solidarity, a participatory democracy, structural changes, the generation of values and the creation of a new culture, an alternative consciousness, redistribution of power, and so forth. All these aspects are central in a community organising praxis.

In the next chapter I will focus more on the importance of grass-roots institutional development, as a means for facilitating inner city transformation.

### 8.7.1.4      Liberation and Transformation

*I suggest as the goal of ministry in the inner city, and especially ministry with the inner city poor, the twin notions of liberation and transformation. I suggest community organising as a legitimate diaconal approach to work towards this goal.*

The inner city church will have to move beyond service and development to the point of community organising, if it is serious about social justice and shalom in the city. Once communities get organised and disempowered people are empowered, the way is paved for the most fundamental transformation of poor people and their communities alike.

- **A New Understanding of Development : From Modernisation to Liberation**

Van Schalkwyk (1996 : 47-49) speaks about a gradual "development" in our understanding of the "development concept". In her article, *The Church, Community Development and Liberation*, she speaks about the gradual shift from development-as-modernisation to development-as-transformation. This study has already positioned itself over against a modernisation approach.

As a corrective to modernisation it was stressed in the sixties and seventies that development is supposed to be a comprehensive social process, including economic, political, social and cultural factors, and inherently human-centred (van Schalkwyk 1996 : 48). Although this has broadened the scope of developmental activities, it still remained rather narrow, being the kind of development referred to under 8.7.1.2. It still failed to address fundamental structural evils in society.

Development-as-liberation has emerged as a response to this failure, emphasising that the gradual change that is associated with traditional development, needs to be replaced by a more radical approach, calling for fundamental and radical change to a status quo that oppresses and excludes some people and groups. In the South African context, the liberation task of the past was focussing on the dismantling of negative structures and legislation that exploited some to the benefit of others.

The gospel speaks of holistic liberation in all spheres. Human beings are liberated by Christ in a spiritual sense, but this liberation also has radical implications for their psychological and emotional lives, for economic relationships between people, as well as the way in which people are part of society.

The public church in solidarity with the poor, will have to work continuously for the

liberation of the poor from structures and systems that dehumanise them, and that deprive them of their basic human rights and socially just opportunities.

The church in solidarity with the poor is not concerned with the liberation of the poor only. We have to call for liberation that will penetrate every sphere of individual, communal and public life. It implies our own liberation and that of our churches. It implies the liberation of service providers and policy-makers. It implies liberation from those values, commitments and structures that are not life-giving, but are fundamentally exclusive, exploitative and destructive.

We need to be liberated from our need to control, in order for us to serve and share in freedom - until everybody is free to serve and to share. In the city we are pilgrims on a journey to a city of freedom, but as long as some people are captives we are not completely free yet.

- **From Liberation to Transformation**

Van Schalkwyk (1996 : 48-49) suggests that transformation actually takes us beyond liberation. We are liberated *from* the negative structures that oppress and kill. In a positive sense, we are liberated *to* serve and share, and ultimately to create and transform.

The prophet Jeremiah was called to have a ministry of liberation and transformation, "to uproot and tear down, to build and to plant" (Jer. 1 :10). As we serve and share in a world of disparity and injustice, we create new opportunities and new communities and we become agents of God's transformation. Wayne Bragg (1987 : 39) speaks of such transformation as the process of "(taking) what is and (turning) it into what it could and should be."

> Transformation is a part of God's continuing action in history to restore all creation to himself and to its rightful purpose and relationships.
>
> (Bragg 1987 : 39)

We can therefore speak of development-as-transformation. The church should engage in actions that will facilitate transformational development (cf. Bragg 1987 : 38; 39).

Van Schalkwyk describes how such a process of growth has occurred within the recent history of the Uniting Reformed Church. A major shift has taken place in the diaconal agenda of the former Dutch Reformed Church in Africa since 1992. Their current diaconal policy is actually describing development as transformation.

Transformation, similar to Villa-Vicencio's concept of reconstruction, is interested in the creation or building of a new society (Van Schalkwyk 1996 : 48; Villa-Vicencio 1991). It is a positive, almost visionary approach, flowing from liberation and erecting signs of God's new city in our broken cities. Van Schalkwyk (1996 : 40)

speaks convincingly of the liberation task that we have in South Africa today, suggesting that its focus is on restructuring, healing and transformation.

> Our liberational agenda is now headed by a new priority, namely the restructuring and healing of our society and the development of those individuals and communities that need it most.
>
> (Van Schalkwyk 1996 : 40)

Van Schalkwyk (1996 : 40) continues to define liberation in our present context saying :

> Liberation now implies a process of social change and development which aims to bring about healing and transformation in every sphere of life for individuals and communities, in the fullest sense of the word.

A response to inner city poverty is required that will go beyond charity to social justice, beyond dependency to the integration of people into society, beyond hand-outs to empowerment, beyond making people recipients to allowing people to become citizens. If such a response can be developed, we will be about the transformation of the poor and of the inner city.

*At the heart of such a transformational model of development, is a transformed consciousness, a transformed vision and values, a transformed culture, transformed institutions and communities, and a transformed people.*

Theologically speaking, the inner city church in the public arena will seek for integral liberation that goes beyond "liberation from" and deals with the fundamental transformation of society at its roots. It includes personal salvation from sin, humanisation and dignity, and socio-political justice and equity.

- **The Church and Inner City Poverty : Goal, Content and Method**

The church walks alongside poor people and communities in the city, seeking their liberation from sin, dehumanisation and injustice. The *goal* of this common journey is the liberation from sin and all of its effects and the transformation of people and communities into vision of God.

The *content* of this transformation is the shalom of God, or the kingdom of God, expressed in signs of God's presence, God's new humanity and God's justice (cf. Bragg 1987 : 38; the Wheaton Statement '83, 1987 : 257). Transformed inner city communities will be characterised by wholeness and life in every sphere; by inclusive and caring communities of the covenant marked by reconciliation in diversity; by access to economic, social and political processes; and by the capacity for fantasy, festivity and creativity in the image of God.

Bragg (1987 : 40-47) lists several characteristics of transformation, namely life sustenance, equity, justice, dignity and self-worth, freedom, participation, reciprocity,

cultural fit, ecological soundness, hope, and spiritual transformation. Bragg (1987 : 47) asserts that no development program can meet all these characteristics, although each one reflects some of these to a certain extent. He suggests that we move from development to transformation when all these characteristics are present in our praxis of ministry.

The diaconal *method* to facilitate God's shalom is community organising. Community organising is suggested as the specific diaconal response to urban poverty, but needs to be understood in conjunction with other modes of ministry, such as liturgy and worship, pastoral counselling, evangelism, and church planting. As different modes of ministry, all of these should contribute to the transformation of the inner city. These different modes need to develop and integrate a public dimension. Community organising is the more intentional public face of the church, as it ventures into communities of pain and into the arena of power, to serve as agents of hope and transformation.

### 8.7.2 Relocation, Reconciliation and Redistribution

John Perkins (1992), an African American pastor and community developer, speaks about the so-called 3 R's of Christian community development. He suggests as three vital elements in a Christian community development strategy the notions of relocation, reconciliation and redistribution.

*Relocation* is the intentional establishment of a Christian presence in depressed community, either by a group of people, or the intentional choice of an individual or family to move into an inner city area of need. Relocation, theologically, is to establish an incarnational presence in communities which often experienced a mass exodus, large-scale disinvestments, dislocation of people, and so on. Relocation is an action in the opposite spirit of the dominant consciousness which is away from communities of struggle.

Bob Lupton (1993) calls from the inner city of Atlanta for Christians to reneighbour. His concept of reneighbouring is capturing Biblical principles that have universal application. He suggests that Christians become neighbours in depressed inner city areas. Trevor and Nellie Nthlola (1995) are challenging Christians to practise the principle of reneighbouring (or relocation), as they call people to join them in their community in Pimville, Soweto. They have purchased a house in this area, and slowly work their way into the neighbourhood through nurturing relationships with local residents, schools, and so on.

*Reconciliation* should flow from the moment of relocation. Reconciliation is used in the sense of crossing barriers between rich and poor and black and white, through the creation of communities of reconciliation in the midst of division. Modelling reconciliation in practical ways is fundamental to effective Christian community development. Perkins saw many of the urban problems in the United States as

unresolved racial problems of the South (Lean 1995 : 40). Since these problems have never really been dealt with, they have been transferred into the urban arena. The urgency of reconciliation is greater than ever before.

*Redistribution* is the third element that Perkins introduces and potentially the most controversial. Christian community development implies a ministry of stewardship, which will call for a redistribution of resources, skills and gifts. Firstly, it requires the commitment of Christians that will work in solidarity with poor communities, sharing their skills and gifts in various ways (financially, advisory, practically, etc.). Ministries of stewardship would often walk the second mile to include advocacy and community organising, calling for a more fundamental redistribution of power, land and property.

Villa-Vicencio (1992 : 205) places the challenge of redistribution in a global context when he says that

> the basic necessities of life... are simply not available to the majority of the world's population. This is not primarily because they are truly scarce, but because they are unevenly allocated.

The same could be said of our cities locally.

Perkins is leading a movement of people from right across the United States, who have responded to the call to relocate into inner city areas of need, to establish visible signs of reconciliation, and to work for redistribution of resources at all levels, in order for desperate communities to be reconstructed and transformed. Together with Wayne Gordon from the inner city of Chicago, this movement has gained momentum through the establishment of the Christian Community Development Association (CCDA).

It is the conviction of this study that the church will not be able to affect the inner city dramatically without incarnating itself deeper and deeper into the life of the city. What is required is an ecclesiological conversion. Once that has happened, a reconciled humanity could be modelled, working together for the redistribution of power and resources for the sake of justice and shalom in the city.

### 8.7.3 The Church with the Poor : A Gift from God

The inner city might be called God's gift to the church. Together with other struggling or transitional urban communities, they challenge the establishment churches based on success, growth and middle-class values to return to the basic principles of the gospel. The poor do the same. Yet, the inner city and the poor are equally unlikely gifts - why would we need them ? Perhaps because "God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong" (1 Cor. 1 : 27).

Nouwen (1987 : 25) speaks about the events in Latin America - the base ecclesial communities and the struggle for liberation - as a challenge to the North American

church to be converted. In the same way, the reality of events in the inner city and other poor communities in South Africa, might be held up as symbols that call the broader church to conversion.

> I even feel that knowing God in North America can no longer be separated from the way in which God is making himself known in Latin America.
>
> (Nouwen 1987 : 25)

To have an authentic experience with Jesus today in South Africa, we might have to discover Him as He makes himself known in the inner cities of (South) Africa and in other places of struggle. God might be waiting there for us with a surprise !

We can experience this surprising gift of God by becoming church with the poor. Where the church allows the poor to become its guides towards a new expression of church, the church can even become church of the poor. If the church ignores the poor, it will be poor. Even if the church does things for the poor, it remains poor. It is rather where the church journeys alongside the poor, where we become friends and the "we-they" divides fall away, that we all - rich and poor - will start to reflect and experience God's new kingdom community. Incarnational community, covenantal solidarity, community organising, relocation and reneighbouring, are all different terms expressing the same call to be in solidarity with those whom God has chosen to shame the wise.

The church in the inner city is called to be church with and of the poor. Only as the church assumes such a new position, can we become authentic agents of transformation and shalom. Robinson (1997 : 274-284) writes about the church in the public arena, employing the well-known metaphors of salt and light as Jesus used it in Matthew 5 : 16.

> Both images speak of transforming activity : salt fights decay and tastelessness and light removes darkness.
>
> (Robinson 1997 : 283)

The church in the inner city is called to fight decay in communities and the darkness of poverty. Where the church becomes salt and light on the margins of society and in the public arena, the process of change will be set in motion. On the other hand, retreat into our sacred and private realms, would allow for evil to flourish in the public arena and would distance us from God.

> Doing so separates the church from the voice of God, for as Parker J. Palmer notes "public life is an arena of spiritual experience, a setting in which God speaks to us and forms our hearts with words we cannot hear in the private realm.
>
> (Messer 1989 : 124)

*To learn from the poor and to engage in the public arena, are indeed sources for the church's own transformation. It is at the margins that we will be transformed, so that we can transform the margins into places of hope and healing, affirming the poor at*

*the centre of the church, and supporting their empowerment and re-integration into the heart of society.*

## 9.    Summary

**Summary of Chapter 5**

*Chapter 5 is reflecting theologically on the city, the church and transformation.*

-     **This chapter provides a new or alternative imagination that envisions a transformed city and a prophetic consciousness as an alternative to the current urban reality and the dominant consciousness in our cities (cf. 4). Against the background of such an alternative imagination or vision, I explore the role of the church in the city - how should the church be church in order to usher in the transformed city of Isaiah 65 ?**

   **The threefold vision of a religion of freedom, an economy of community and a politics of justice provide the content of this alternative imagination.**

-     **A vision of a transformed city needs to be sustained by a spirituality of transformation (cf. 5). As a framework for such a spirituality I reflected on Micah 6 : 8 and the three imperatives :**

   **to walk humbly with God, to love tenderly and to love justly.**

   **I also suggested that we nurture a spirituality that is holistic, uniquely urban and uniquely African. I suggested a downward journey of dying into the city as a way of bringing life and hope amidst death and struggle. This typical gospel dialectic runs like a thread throughout the study.**

-     **Envisioning a transformed city and rooted in a spirituality of transformation, I then developed three practical theological base theories,**

   **i.e. the church as servant community, a theology of community and a public theology.**

   **These three foci correspond to the three imperatives of Micah 6 : 8.**

-     **It is required of the church as servant community to be converted to the humble God. Concepts such as presence, covenantal or communal solidarity, and inclusive or prophetic community, are introduced. Some of these concepts are then demonstrated with reference to the Base Ecclesial Communities and other expressions of the church as servant community. The relationship between the church and the kingdom of God is also briefly discussed.**

- *In a theology of community the concepts of community, communal well-being and interdependence are further explored. Community is suggested as the locus and medium for the humanisation of dehumanised people and places. The image of God and the incarnation of Christ are suggested as two appropriate Biblical images to inform a theology of community. The poor is further introduced as a fundamental anthropological category and God's presence with the poor is explored as a central aspect of a theology of community. The important categories of moral conversion, the principle of life, covenantal relationships and a new humanity, are also introduced.*

# CHAPTER 6
# THE CHURCH, HOUSING AND THE INNER CITY POOR
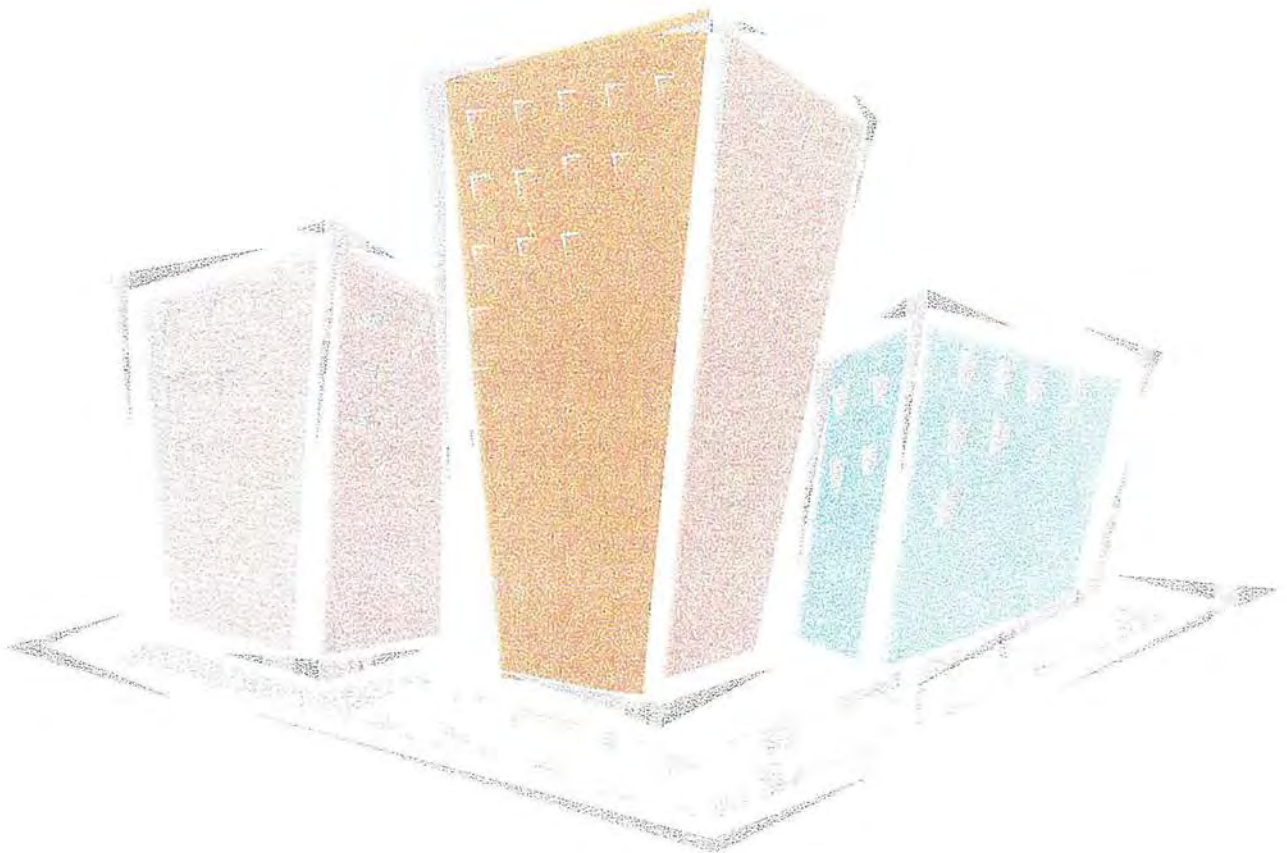
# THE CHURCH, HOUSING AND THE INNER CITY POOR

## 1. A Bridging Chapter: From Reflection to Praxis

Since the focus of the ministry praxis is to be on housing, I have decided to add a *bridging chapter* - chapter 6 - serving as a bridge between the broader reflection of chapter 5 and the specific ministry praxis to be suggested in chapter 7. Chapter 6 provides more specific reflection on the church, housing and the inner city poor, contextualising in a summarised way the questions raised and the insights generated throughout the study, to the housing arena. It is done in such a way that it leads us into the ministry praxis in chapter 7. In other words, this chapter moves from general reflection to more specific reflection, paving the way for a transformed praxis (chapter 7).

In the first chapters of this study I introduced certain inner city communities, always focussing on housing. I described these communities by analysing their needs and resources, their major challenges, the role of power, and possible options for future developments. I also raised certain critical questions. The discussion on urban and development studies in chapter 3 already provided some insights to inform a transformed praxis of ministry, and the reflections in chapter 5 took that further.

The picture on the next page is portraying a movement from the cross to the building of houses, crossing the depths of hopelessness and despair so often found in the inner city. The cross becomes the bridge to a new community. Unless the word is contextualised, as portrayed in this image, it will not become flesh with the subsequent transformative power.

This picture captures the heart of this study, suggesting that the community of the crucified has the potential to contribute to the transformation of the inner city and to its shalom. The Christian community, fleshing out the word of God, could act as an agent of transformed inner city communities. The housing arena in the inner city is suggested as an appropriate locus for the church's incarnational presence, convenantal solidarity, public servanthood and prophetic action. The word should be made flesh in the housing arena.

## 2. Land, Housing and Property: The Biblical Vision

We cannot speak of housing in the inner city without speaking about land. Land is of great theological significance in the Bible. The principles on land and property can equally apply to housing in the contemporary inner city. Biblical material opposed individualist accumulation of land which left masses of people to become

the "landless poor". These people became the category that the prophets concerned them with (Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 203).

> *Theologically*, the ownership and the use of God's creation is to be used for the benefit and well-being of all God's children, especially those who are at any point in time in most need of empowerment.
>
> <div align="right">(Villa-Vicencio 1992 : 204)</div>

This also applies to the resources of land and housing.

## 2.1 The Royal-Urban View & The Covental-Prophetic View

Brueggemann (1994 : 276-277) introduces two contrasting views on land and property in the Old Testament.

The first view was a *"Royal - Urban" view*, which is the context in which the prophet Micah found himself. The "haves" were entitled to land and property, and their possessions gave them the legitimacy to accumulate even more. The "have-nots" had no rights or entitlements. They were dependent on the generosity and charity of the "haves". They were not integrated into the organisation of society but permanently kept at the margins. They did not have access to power or decision-making processes, and could not affect the outcome of history at all (Brueggemann 1994 : 276-277).

Micah 2 : 2 describes the immense violations of people's right to land and housing, when it says

> They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them. They defraud a man of his home, a fellow-man of his inheritance.

The prophet Isaiah also alludes to this reality in chapter 5 verse 8 :

> Woe to you who add house to house and join field to field till no space is left and you live alone in the land.

In Isaiah big landowners forced some people to positions of marginalisation, since there was physically no access to land or shelter after they have possessed every inch of available land. This is still the global trend and the poor are still the victims of large corporations and big developers who march on to wealth at the expense of "small" people and "small" communities.

The royal-urban view is a threat to the vulnerable, but in the long run also to the whole of the urban community (Brueggemann 1994 : 280-281). A system that condemns certain people to dependency and marginalisation, will bear heavy social costs in time, as the disempowered needs to be sustained in any event. Their

empowerment would serve the interest of the whole urban community, but their perpetual disempowerment would threaten the on-going stability and well-being of that community.

> *...it is only possible to improve the urban environment by empowering all people that live in it.* Attracting the wealthy and powerful into new parts of it cannot solve [its] problems. The poor and powerless will continue to suffer disproportionately from environmental problems. Thus it is crucial that any efforts to promote urban regeneration involve a specific social element, designed to assist the poor and powerless to share in the benefits of that regeneration.

> (McLaren 1989 : 7-8)

Although the royal perspective was the dominant view, the prophets articulated an alternative vision on land an property, which was a *"Covenantal-Prophetic" vision.*

> It holds that the haves and the have-nots are bound in community to each other, that viable life depends upon the legitimate respect, care and maintenance of the have-nots and upon restraint of the haves so that the needs and rights of the disadvantaged take priority over the yearnings of the advantaged. Thus the stress is upon respect and restraint precisely in those areas of public life where the distribution of power makes respect and restraint unenforceable. Such a view of social organization regards property as resource for the common good, as vehicle for the viability of a whole society, as the arena for the development of public responsibility and public compassion.

> (Brueggemann 1994 : 277)

Although the Bible is not ideological, supporting either capitalism or communism, it suggests a covenantal or communal perspective on humanity and on the resources that God has given of the well-being of humanity, such as land, property and so on.

> Property must be managed, valued, and distributed so that every person of the community is honored and so that the well-being of each is intimately tied to that of the others.

> (Brueggemann 1994 : 282)

The starting point for this alternative view is with the covenantal God himself who intervenes on behalf of the landless slaves in Egypt against the powerful landowners. God's intervention and inversion brings justice to the land (Brueggemann 1994 : 277). This is echoed throughout the Old and New Testaments.

Nehemia has a similar "covenantal notion of property" (Brueggemann 1994 : 281), seeing it as a gift and not a commodity; as a right to be protected from exploitative institutions.

> Property is an extension and embodiment of personal identity and personal power, and it must be protected.
>
>         (Brueggemann 1994 : 281)

Nehemia demands reparation in chapter 5 : 7 - 11, which was to ask for more than loans that create dependencies, but rather for complete restoration (the Jubilee principle) that will allow a new beginning (Brueggemann 1977 : 155-156). Nehemia's intervention in the city transformed a community with huge barriers between landowners and the landless, into a community of solidarity. Ezekiel shared a similar vision of rehabilitated or restored space in which God will dwell with his people. The challenge was for the covenant between God, his people, and people among themselves in the city, to be recovered (Brueggemann 1977 : 143). The hope for new, restored or transformed land, remained a central element in the faith of Israel.

Brueggemann (1977 : 155-156) shows that exploitation was not necessarily intentional in the case of Nehemia. The way in which reality was understood and communities structured, called for Nehemia's intervention, however. On the one hand the rural peasants were committed to covental values. On the other hand, the royal view had a vision of globalisation for Jerusalem, and in the process of the city's growth and development, the rural peasants were marginalised. A pattern was set for the "knowing, uncaring rich to take advantage of trusting, helpless poor" (Brueggemann 1977: 162). The royal way was exploitative by definition, although it was acceptable, legal and highly sophisticated. And because of its exploitative and exclusive nature, it was challenged once again by the more radical, covenantal approach, this time by Nehemia and the local people who experienced exclusion.

Park (1995 : 30) comments on the way in which the Christian community in the New Testament understood the issue of land and property. In Acts 2 :44-45 and in Acts 4:34-35 we see that land was no longer only a private possession owned by an individual family. It now became something to be shared with others who were in need. This communal perspective became a trademark of the Christian community in Jerusalem. As owners of property, we are merely stewards of God's property. God is the ultimate owner.

> The surrender of private ownership of land, liberating the Christian community, only signals the coming homeland.
>
>         (Park 1995 : 30)

Park (1995 : 30) understands the issue of land and property within the context of the redemption of creation. The church has an active role to play as agents of God's transformation, and as caretakers / managers of God's creation.

> Land demands Christian cooperation as "creation groans for its redemption and renewal" (Rom. 8 : 22).
>
>         (Park 1995 : 30)

In 1 Kings 21 we see the interplay between the royal-urban and covenantal-prophetic perspectives, in a very vivid way. Ahab and Jezebel understand property

within the context of royal power, ideology and entitlements. Therefore they act within a legal and legitimate framework when they seek to confiscate Naboth's land. Legally there was nothing wrong with their actions. It stood in stark contrast, however, with the covenantal vision as God introduced it to his people.

> A view of property that legitimates confiscation and authorizes acts of power against the helpless is not only doubtful politics; it violates Yahweh's purposes for a proper community ordered after the manner of the exodus transaction. And finally it brings death.

> > (Brueggemann 1994 : 279)

Naboth, on the other hand, embodied an alternative perspective on property. As a small landowner, he did not understand land as a commodity to be sold and traded, but as an "inheritance", a birthright (Brueggemann 1994 : 278-279).

The story of Naboth's vineyard introduces two of the fundamental problems with property, as we see it in the Old Testament, but even in contemporary society. On the one hand there is a disregard for personal rootage, and on the other individual security is ensured at the expense of the community. In the South African context, inner city communities such as Marabastad, Sophiatown and District Six, were treated with a disregard and a contempt, ignoring the rootage, identity and meaning that people have found within these places. At the expense of the residents of these areas, a certain portion of the population wanted to secure their individual (or group) security.

In contrast to the royal-urban approach to property, the covenantal-prophetic vision maintains that property is a gift, not "a source of security of which we never have enough" (Brueggemann 1994 : 283). It is a gift to be shared communally, for the well-being of all people.

We need to understand property issues within the broader context of people's struggle for power, lack of compassion, and selfish assertiveness (Brueggemann 1994 : 284). The reality of sin has affected land issues, property and housing at its roots. Therefore we cannot speak about housing in the inner city, without assessing it morally or ethically as well. Liberation in the context of the inner city, would also have to consider housing and the current structural arrangements that determine housing.

## 2.2 God's People: Journeying between Land and Landlessness

The whole history of Israel moves between control of the land and exile; between rootedness and dislocation, slavery or landlessness; between life and death, and between death and life (Brueggemann 1977 : 14).

Genesis presents us with two stories. Genesis 1-11 relates the story of a people rooted in a land. Yet, their actions in this land led to their self-defeat.

> ... and finally the folks at Babel do everything they can to lose the land, and they eventually do.
>
> (Brueggemann 1977 : 15)

Genesis 12 - 50 is about Abraham and his family who are without land, but they are journeying towards an unknown land of promise. These two narratives provide the framework for a theology of land in the Bible. On the one hand people are rooted in the land an expelled from it. On the other hand they are landless but empowered by their journey toward a land of anticipation (Brueggemann 1977 : 15)

> Our lives are set between expulsion and *anticipation*, of losing and expecting, of being uprooted and rerooted, of being dislocated because of impertinence and being relocated in trust.
>
> (Brueggemann 1977 : 15-16)

Brueggemann describes Israel as God's homeless people (1977 : 6-7). When we meet Israel early in the Old Testament we meet them as a homeless people. We can deduct three pictures of landlessness in the early history of God's people.

The first picture is of Israel as pilgrim-sojourners. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were sojourners who left their own land on a journey to the land of promise which they did not know. Even when they stayed in a place for a long time, they remained outsiders, without rights, entitlements or a voice of their own. Brueggemann (1977 : 7) compares God's people in the Old Testament with those urban people of today, who are always at risk of being dislocated, evicted, or arrested, for the sake of urban redevelopment, or slum clearance.

The second picture is of Israel as homeless wanderers. After their slavery in Egypt, Israel became a wanderer in the desert for forty years, being without resources and entirely exposed to the elements (Brueggemann 1977 : 7-8). The wanderer is on his or her way to nowhere. There is not the anticipation of the pilgrim-sojourner. The entire life of the wanderer is devoted to survival.

> Israel experienced the bitterness of landlessness, being totally exposed and helpless, victimized by anything that happened to be threatening.
>
> (Brueggemann 1977 : 8)

The third memory of landlessness that we can recover is the time of exile. The Israelites in exile were not abused or oppressed necessarily, but as a displaced people - foreigners in a foreign land - they were without identity and security. They were deprived of the elements that gave shape and power to their faith and life. In this time of exile, they recovered the resources of a sustaining faith in a remarkable way.

The Old Testament is not only a picture of landlessness, however. They also possessed land, controlled, exploited, and sometimes celebrated it. To Israel, and to us today, having land was often as great a problem and temptation than being without land (Brueggemann 1977 : 9-10). King Solomon became a symbol of a government abusing its power to enslave its citizens and to exploit its land for the sake of the state. Most of the kings exploited the land in similar fashion, at the expense of their citizens.

> The very land that promised to create space for human joy and freedom became the very source of dehumanizing exploitation and oppression.
>
> (Brueggemann 1977 : 11)

## 2.3    The Land: Promise or Threat ?

Land is presented as a gift, a temptation, a threat and a task in the Old Testament history (Brueggemann 1977 : 47-70). Land, property and housing still are gifts, temptations, threats and tasks, even in the contemporary inner cities of South Africa.

- **The Land as Gift**

Land is a gift from Yahweh and binds Israel to the Giver in new ways (Brueggemann 1977 : 47). Israel did not get the land through power or might, but because the Lord has spoken a word. It was God's gift of grace.

- **The Land as Temptation**

On the one hand the land could be maintained as a rich gift within covenantal relationships with God and with one another. The problem is that land contains "within it seductive power" (Brueggemann 1977 : 53). It often tempts people and institutions to exploit land for their own purposes outside of the covenant, thereby destroying community, destroying humanity, and disregarding the Giver.

Land offers us the opportunity to pervert justice. The inherent value of land tends to diminish the value of humanity and even the presence of the brother or sister (Brueggemann 1977 : 66).

- **The Land as Task**

If land is a gift, it also brings certain responsibilities (Brueggemann 1977 : 59). We have the task of being stewards or managers of the land as God's resource to us.

The covenantal-prophetic vision of land always considered the landless who were pushed to the margins. The prophets suggested consistently that it was the task of those who had land, to care for the outsiders within their boundaries. Land was to

be seen as a covenantal gift, and had to be managed within the notion of the covenant. Therefore those who did not have a legal claim to the land, had to be honoured and cared for in covenantal solidarity. The landless had to be embraced as "brothers and sisters" (Lev. 25 : 25-55; Deut. 15 : 1-11; Deut. 22 : 1-4), or as "neighbours", which are covenantal phrases (Brueggemann 1977 : 65 -66).

Land is an opportunity for justice to be perverted, if we surrender to the temptation. Or it is an opportunity for the honouring of covenantal relationships, whereby social justice will be ensured. It is the task of the church to call the rich and powerful into relationships of covenantal solidarity. In the Gospels we are reminded :

> Everyone to whom much is given, of him (or her) much will be required. (Luke 12:48)

Jesus said this within the context of possessions, ownership and stewardship (Brueggemann 1977 : 59-60).

- **The Land as Threat**

Brueggemann (1977 : 67-70) reminds us realistically that the waiting land is never without "Canaanites". The mandate of God's people is not to join the Canaanites, but to engage with them in such a way that management and usage of the land could be radically transformed. As the church engages in the housing arena there are many threats, even in terms of the church's own identity. It was Israel's hope in anticipation that took them through the battle to claim the promised gift.

## 2.4 Summary

This study suggests that the church journeys in solidarity with the inner city poor. The history of God's people as described in 2.2, becomes a powerful metaphor for ministry with dispossessed individuals and groups, expressing God's solidarity with his landless people, but at the same time his promise of restoration.

Our own consciousness is so affected by the dominant royal-urban consciousness that we do not regard land as a gift. That is also why the church often refrains from the debate about land and housing issues, or from practical involvement in this arena. We need to re-discover the Biblical perspectives on land and property, which implies an embrace of land and property as covenantal notions, as godly gifts given for the well-being of the community. We need to recognize our own task in ensuring that the gift of land is distributed justly and managed faithfully. Ours is a task of responsible stewardship and prophetic admonition to such stewardship.

## 3.    Urban Regeneration, Humanisation and Social Justice

Where there is a lack of decent and affordable housing, available and accessible to the inner city poor, it is a sign of social injustice and inequality. Where banks contemplate an exodus from the inner city and property developers get away with harsh exploitation, it is a clear sign that the royal-urban consciousness are dominant. A lack of proper inner city housing, the occurrence of housing decay, and the withdrawal of resourceful people and institutions, almost always result in dehumanised people and disempowered communities.

In order to reverse the negative processes in the inner city, this study suggests that we begin with those at the bottom of society. The vision and hope for real, holistic transformation that will include the poor, would most likely be situated, even if only latently, within the communities at the bottom. Those at the top might resist such dreams and visions for change, rather maintaining the status quo and safe-guarding their own interests.

### 3.1    Regeneration from the Bottom-Up

In Biblical material a tension between the royal-urban perspective and the covenantal-prophetic perspective is quite evident. The prophets address this issue most eloquently and Amos suggests to those who violate land at the expense of others, thereby neglecting their covenantal responsibilities, that they would be dethroned and dispossessed (Amos 7). Those who are supposed to care for the land, namely the kings, have become instruments of exploitation instead (Brueggemann 1977 : 100 - 104).

God is shown as the one who inverts destinies in history (Brueggemann 1977 : 134). He always intervenes on behalf of the landless and powerless (Is. 61: 1-14; Lk. 1 : 51-53; Lk. 4 : 18-19; 25-26). Whenever it seems as if God is far away, He entered into the reality of his people, inverting their situation and restoring them to wholeness (Brueggemann 1977 : 99-100).

The Lord has often changed the face of history, beginning with the "landless outcasts" (Brueggemann 1977 : 127). Israel is often portrayed as a symbol of landlessness, hopelessness and abandonment (cf. 1977 : 133-134). Yet, God time and time again did something new on the ashes of their hopelessness. A central theme in the story of God's people, was that the barren child carried the seeds of promise, and indeed became the child of promise (Gen. 11:30; 18: 9-15; 25: 21; 29: 31; Jer. 29 : 14; cf. Brueggemann 1977 : 145).

Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 211) states that most contemporary revolutions were fuelled in urban centres and from the bottom-up. Through illegal occupation of land,

the urban poor is often engaging in the most important political action imaginable. There are many examples of well-organised land invasions which forced authorities to eventually grant titles for the land (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 193-194).

> Power and privilege are centred in the city; it is in the city that they are effectively challenged.
>
> (Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 219)

Effective urban regeneration that is transformative in nature, will often start with the poor. It is the presence of the poor and the growing numbers of marginalised people that can become triggers for political conversion and societal transformation. Living on the streets or securing a spot to construct a physical structure for shelter, are profound political statements. These are continuous challenges to the royal-urban consciousness.

## 3.2    The Gospel Dialectic at Work

in the Bible the notions of land and landlessness are always closely linked (Brueggemann 1977 : 189), as was shown already in 8.8.3. The crucifixion-resurrection dialectic corresponds to the exile-land dialectic (Brueggemann 1977 : 180). If we want to gain our lives, we will lose them. If we are willing to lose our lives, we will gain them.

> The powerful are called to dispossession. The powerless are called to power. The landed are called to *homelessness*. The landless are given a *new home*.
>
> (Brueggemann 1977 : 180)

Jesus, through his life and ministry, embodied what He wanted us to learn. His life-style and teaching had profound socio-political implications, and we need to recover those as they are still very applicable to land, property and housing even in the contemporary city. Jesus' ministry challenged the powerful to share, and affirmed the powerless to receive.

Brueggemann (1977 : 183) sums it up when he says

> Kings who grasp lose. Pilgrims who risk are given ...

> The meek, the ones claiming no home and living with homelessness, do indeed inherit the land.

In the public arena God wants to restructure the relationships of power in order to ensure equality and justice, even in the sphere of housing. It is the task of the church, as prophetic community serving in the inner city, to call the powerful into sharing relationships, if they are to sustain the city. It is also the task of the church to call the powerless to responsibility and ownership of the city, working for their

own justice and shalom.

It starts with a new understanding that the cross and the resurrection indeed want to speak into inner city housing problems. We need to discover the strange paradox of a God who wants to heal the city through the poor by inverting existing relationships of power, possession and land.

## 3.3    Housing, Humanisation and Social Justice

Although housing seems to be such a basic need, it still fails to reach the global - and local - agenda too often (McLead 1998 : 3-4). The problem is that other basic needs can hardly be met without decent housing. The different social needs are related and housing could become the trigger for social consolidation. McLead (1998 : 304) writes in *Habitat World* that the focus is too often placed narrowly on survival, food and health. Without shelter it is difficult to remain healthy, however. She argues that housing should be considered as one of the most basic needs to be addressed, in conjunction with the other needs.

Homeless people in the inner city of Pretoria insist that housing comes before jobs, even though they lack the income to pay for decent shelter. They assert, though, that homelessness deprives one of dignity, self-worth and the motivation to work or to find a job. Decent shelter would affirm people's dignity and self-worth, supporting them to get back on their own feet. Who are we, who are not homeless, to dispute this as a priority?

The problem is that policy-makers, and the hierarchy in church, seldom have first-hand experience of homelessness. It is relatively easy for those of us in power to prioritise people's needs on their behalf. It seems as if homeless people do not always agree with these priorities that establishment reached consensus on. This study suggests that housing should be a fundamental concern for lasting inner city transformation, not in isolation of addressing other fundamental needs, but as part of an integrated, holistic strategy to eradicate poverty and to build healthy communities.

Friedmann (1992 : 10) asserts that human beings have the right of both adequate material conditions of living as well as "to be a politically active subject in his or her own community." He bases this on the foundations of human rights and citizens' rights. Without access to adequate housing, the right to proper material conditions of living is violated. It also remains difficult to become a politically active subject without housing.

All human activities require some kind of physical space, whether it is sleeping, cooking, eating, nurturing one's family, securing belongings, or even economic

activity. Inadequate or no housing will give rise to serious dysfunctions, as normal human activities are inhibited (Friedmann 1992 : 86). Overcrowding, health problems, infant mortalities, learning difficulties, mental illness, and family break-down are just some of the harsh effects of housing problems in the city. This is often further enhanced by discriminatory procedures, such as the exclusion of women from access to home loans, which has only recently been reversed in South Africa (Friedmann 1992 : 112). In inner cities with high rates of single mother households such regulations can have disastrous effects.

Poor or no housing in the inner city is an infringement of people's basic rights and will ultimately lead to disempowered and dehumanised people and communities. Inner city slums are a global reality and needs to be prevented and / or reversed.

Friedmann (1992 : 330), in response to this negative scenario, proposes an alternative development framework, that would give the initiative back to the disempowered sectors of society. This corresponds with the view of urban transformation from the bottom-up. Friedmann's point of departure is the household and he shows their political, social and economic potential to change their own future. The church, through ministries of listening and participatory presence, communal solidarity, and prophecy, could facilitate community organising processes that will unleash the potential of grass-roots and disempowered people to work towards their collective self-empowerment.

Housing, in the opinion of this study, is a significant area in which to facilitate empowerment in the three areas of power, as identified by Friedmann (1992 : 33), i.e. social, political and psychological power. Housing is a way of social consolidation and empowerment, providing its beneficiaries with stability and security. Housing is more than the product, and the housing process might often entail a collective organising exercise, thereby generating political power. Security of tenure in a place that is your own (rental or ownership) has a tremendous psychological impact, affirming people's self-worth and dignity, and creating the opportunity for familial well-being. Housing also communicates to people about a God that cares, and is referred to as a spiritual treasure by Korean architect, town planner and missionary, Eunice Park (1995 : 32).

We need to work towards the goal of "human flourishing", an open-ended term coined by Margaret Jane Radin (1987; cf. also Friedmann 1992 : 11). It refers to that which is needed to be full human beings living up to our full capacity.

> It argues for the right to those social conditions, both general and specific which make human flourishing possible.
>
> (Friedmann 1992 : 11)

Although it is difficult to know exactly which conditions would enhance such

flourishing, Friedmann (1992 : 11-12) states that we know the factors that hinder it, such as hunger, poor education, poor health, homelessness, and so forth. Decent, affordable housing is one of the building blocks that will definitely contribute towards flourishing people and communities.

Ensuring decent and affordable housing in the inner city, accessible to the inner city poor, is to erect signs of social justice. The availability of decent housing for the inner city poor, is to take people seriously and to humanise the city. I suggest that housing is vital as we work toward the goals of humanisation, social justice and communal wholeness. Housing should be a central theme in the transformation of inner city communities.

## 4. Housing by the People

### 4.1 From Disempowerment to Self-Government

The central issue in John Turner's book, *Housing by People* (1976), is the political question of power: *who decides ?* (1976 : 128; 154). Based on his broad experience and observations, and his philosophy of housing, he suggests this as the central question. This also summarises his first law of housing, which has significant political implications.

> When dwellers control the major decisions and are free to make their own contribution to the design, construction or management of their housing, both the process and the environment produced stimulate individual and social well-being. When people have no control over, or responsibility for key decisions in the housing process, on the other hand, dwelling environments may instead become a barrier to personal fulfilment and a burden on the economy.
>
> (Turner & Fichter (eds) 1972 : 241)

Turner (1976 : 102) stresses the concept of self-government in housing, arguing that households need to be able to make critical decisions with regard to their housing. This is corresponding to the important place that Friedmann (1992 : 33) gives to the local household in his model of alternative development or empowerment. Turner (1976 :102) suggests that diversity in available housing options would be ensured if the authority for housing rests with the local people, including local households, institutions and enterprises.

> In the vast majority of cases, only they can know what they need most, and which are the best choice in a given situation.
>
> (Turner 1976 : 101)

Local resources for housing include imagination, initiative, commitment, responsibility, skills, muscle-power, materials, locally available land and tools, the possibility to organise local enterprises and institutions, the capacity to co-operate,

and so forth (Turner 1976 : 48). It would be completely unwise not to build on these local resources waiting to be utilised for the well-being of the local community.

The principle of self-government, as advocated by Turner, can equally apply to all the diverse housing scenarios of the inner city, including the informal housing sector, single room and rental facilities, residential neighbourhoods (private houses), as well as sectional title facilities. A sense of ownership is vital to ensure decent housing and healthy communities.

It is important to listen to Turner's wisdom as we consider management of struggling inner city housing facilities. His opinion (1976 : 89) is that people's will to invest time, skills and effort into their housing, depends on the outcomes that they expect from the housing in terms of usefulness, satisfaction and tenure.

> The management and maintenance of dwellings and their surroundings ..., depend primarily on the care of their residents and users.
>
> (Turner 1976 : 130)

In housing facilities that match the basic needs of a certain group of people at a given time, providing security of tenure, together with basic standards of shelter and security, there is great opportunities for residential care and shared management practices.

With regard to informal housing, people like Turner and Abrams contrasts the views of Lewis' culture of the poor, indicating how the poor themselves are able to consolidate their housing position when given half an opportunity (cf. Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 118). The one philosophy - the culture of poverty - suggests that people are trapped for generation after generation. The other philosophy advocates self-determination. These two contrasting philosophies have significant implications for housing policy.

If the poor are trapped, namely, they need to be helped by government and housing must be provided *for* people. Turner (1992 : 118-119) suggests that government should rather help the poor to help themselves, to build on their own capacities, to engage in self-help housing, and so forth. Besides the collective empowerment of this approach, it could have the additional benefits of being a cheaper option, being community-based with other potential spin-offs, locally developed human and institutional capacity, and so on.

With appropriate support, say Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 129), self-help builders could transform the housing scenario in the cities of the developing world. Friedmann (1992 : 24-25) cites examples of protest movements that developed into self-managers with great effect. The previously marginal group became part of the social and institutional fabric of society, and contributed to its transformation from

the bottom-up. In the Third World there are many examples of a process that started with protest against landlessness and culminated in the landless themselves owning and managing their housing. What starts with protest, leads to self-built housing erected in contested sites, persistence in demanding land; the eventual provision of public services; in situ-development of housing; locally-owned management; and grass-roots institutional development.

Turner (1976 : 65) suggests that the role of the government should

> be limited to ensuring personal and local access to essential resources - such as, in the case of housing, appropriate technologies, land and credit.

The authorities have the power and resources, which, according to Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 129) should be made available for the facilitation of self-help. They suggest that this would be the most efficient use of their resources. Turner (1976 : 113) compares the disastrous effects if the director of a football club wants to score the goals, with a government wanting to deliver housing.

In October of 1998 the person responsible for reconstruction and development in the Central Pretoria Substructure (local government) has indicated that local government would not allow any initiative in Marabastad other than direct government provision of housing. Housing would be done by government and on government's terms.

In Turner's opinion the greatest challenge for government lies with the implementation of policy that would protect resources, that will make scarce resources available for housing purposes, and that will empower local institutions to deliver housing.

## 4.2 Housing as Process

It is important to emphasise that housing is not only about the product, but it is also about the process. This is true generally, but even more so when we deal with housing and poor communities. In reflecting on the church and housing in the next section of this chapter, "housing as process" is be an important emphasis.

In English the word "housing" refers to both the product (noun) as well as the process (verb) (cf. Turner 1976 : 60). Housing is not only a physical reality, but it implies a comprehensive set of relationships. The housing process is not only a physical development process, but has important social and human development aspects to it (Friedmann 1992 : 86).

One can say it differently, namely that social housing is determined not so much by *what it is,* but by *what it does* in people's lives (Ward, preface to Turner 1976 : 5). This is a summary of Turner's second law of housing and refers to the same distinction that I just made between housing as product and process.

Turner (1976 : 60-61) distinguishes between the market values, and social and human values of housing. The market value is defined in terms of what housing is, while social and human values are defined in terms of what housing does for people. Turner continues his argument, stressing that it is vital to understand that housing problems are not necessarily related to the material standard of the dwelling, although decent, safe housing should remain a goal. But Turner (1976 : 64) asserts that housing problems arise

> when housing processes, that is housing goods and services and the ways and means by which they are provided, cease to be vehicles for the fulfilment of their users' lives and hopes.

Turner (1976 : 114) consistently argues that the value of housing should be measured in terms of its use-value instead of the "image of a consumer society standard". This holds definite implications for communities such as Salvokop and Marabastad in Pretoria, as well as for single room facilities and what they can offer.

Turner (1976 : 97) suggests that we have to deal with three housing needs, i.e. access, shelter and tenure. It means access to people, institutions and resources that will contribute to livelihood; tolerable shelter from climate and neighbours; and tenure long enough to be worthwhile in terms of investment.

> A house can be a home if and only if it is minimally accessible, provides minimum shelter, and a minimum security of tenure.
>
> (Turner 1976 : 97)

Turner (1976 : 52-58) uses the example of two Mexican families to further illustrate his point of user-value, suggesting that the most important criteria is whether housing actually suits the needs of a particular poor family or individual (cf. also Gilbert & Gugler 1992 : 119). The one family in Turner's example has good housing, proper services and it is well-designed. Yet, the family cannot really afford it. This housing is oppressive, rather than liberating or productive housing.

The other family lives in an informal house, or a shack, without good design or proper services. The costs of maintaining this dwelling is helping this family to stabilize, however. Turner speaks of this as the "supportive shack", superior to the well-designed unit in terms of suiting the needs of this family at this particular point in time. The well-designed unit, in contrast, is oppressive. Turner, instead of advocating for poor housing, suggests that shelter should match the needs and incomes of poor people. A market-driven approach will surely raise questions as to the locality of housing for the poorer section, but earlier in this study it was concluded already that the market should not be seen as a rigid given, as it is shaped by human agencies and demands (cf. Chapter 4, 2.5.3.5).

Gilbert and Gugler (1992 : 117-121) speak about the "rationality among the poor".

Poor individuals and families often make housing choices that will support their process of self-empowerment and gradual growth. People often opt to live in housing conditions that are less sophisticated, as long as it facilitates their longer-term social integration into society.

The housing process should assist people to consolidate their lives and families in the social sense, to be empowered politically, and to be affirmed psychologically.

People with adequate incomes can make wise choices about housing, for example rental closer to work or ownership in peripheral suburban areas. Those with proper incomes have a diversity of housing options to choose from. Many inner city tenants (and even owners) do not have such a choice, as they merely settle where they can find affordable housing. Old, infirm and very poor people have very few options, if any. The challenge is really to create more options and more diverse options, especially at the lower, more vulnerable end of the market.

The challenge is to establish diverse housing options for the diverse needs of the inner city population. Gilbert & Gugler (1992 : 121) argue

> ... that poor individuals are rational and make trade-offs which improve their welfare level. At the same time, their poverty and the conditions facing them in most Third World cities effectively limit their choices. Of course all our choices are limited by something, but in conditions such as those found in Calcutta or Kinshasa the choice is so limited as to be effectively compulsion. In such circumstances the poor do not choose location, but are pushed into any available accommodation. The only alternative in the long term is if the range of choices is enlarged by rising income levels or by changes in the housing or land markets ...

## 4.3    Signs of Hope in Urban Communities

The following examples will cover a diversity of housing types, ranging from informal housing to single room housing and sectional title facilities. They will present signs of hope, as local people take responsibility for their own housing and communal needs. They will also represent some of the principles that will guide the praxis of ministry that I will suggest in chapter 7.

### Villa El Salvador, Lima, Peru

The first example comes from Villa El Salvador, which is situated outside Lima, Peru (Friedmann 1992 ; 25). The process of housing in this case study started with the illegal invasion of state land in 1971. Out of this invasion a community organisation emerged (CUAVES), which had to represent the landless community in negotiations with government. An alternative site with services was made available to these people, and eventually Villa El Salvador has grown into a municipal district with 250 000 people by 1983. Although this is a low-income area with all the normal problems and challenges, Villa El Salvador differed significantly from other similar areas, in its high level of citizen involvement.

This has led to a highly successful process of open planning that directs the scarce available resources toward purposes that serve the community as a whole.

(Friedmann 1992 : 25)

CUAVES, the community organisation of the local people, has remained community-based and has developed into a broad-based organisation for the whole district of 250 000 people, sparking off other community organisations and community initiatives such as communal kitchens, women's clubs, libraries, and so forth. These organisations all participate in the development planning for the area. People do not only claim rights as apathetic and dependent receivers, but participate as active citizens of Lima, as neighbours of one another in Villa El Salvador, and as co-builders of healthy communities.

Important principles of self-management, inclusive democracy, and the deployment of common resources to address the collective needs, are all expressed in this example (Friedmann 1992 : 26). Instead of materialism, individualism and a liberal democracy, the people of Villa El Salvador have been able to embrace a model of communal solidarity in trusting relationships; an anthropology of personhood (humanness and humanisation), and an inclusive democracy seeking for local social justice (cf . Friedmann 1992 : 26).

This is corresponding to the vision that I suggest for the church (cf. chapter 5; 6-8), as well as to the three strands of a theology of inner city transformation (cf. chapter 5; 3).

The example of CUAVES is a metaphor of what could happen in Marabastad or Salvokop.

## Summerhill Neighbourhood Corporation and Tapestry Community
I have already introduced the Summerhill and Tapestry communities in Atlanta in the beginning of this study (chapter 3; 3.2). The developments in these communities were marked by bold and creative partnerships between Christian organisations and local people. Local organising, initiative and institutional development, have set in motion a process of transformation of depressed inner city communities. That process is still underway. The key was local ownership, as was indicated by Turner and Friedmann earlier in this chapter (cf. 4.1). The role of the church was another determining factor.

The lessons of Summerhill and the Tapestry community need to be treasured for Berea, Salvokop, Marabastad and Schubartpark. The principles that they applied are universally applicable. The church's undeniable role in inner city transformation is nowhere more poignantly demonstrated as in these communities of Atlanta.

## Seven Buildings Project, Johannesburg
The Seven Buildings Project is a ground-breaking inner city initiative in which the residents of seven run-down facilities in Hillbrow and Joubert Park have acted collectively towards purchasing their buildings. After many disappointments they were able to secure these properties and to ensure security of tenure for the individual tenants. They are now in the process of securing funds for the upgrading of these buildings. The quality of life in these buildings have improved and the security of tenure have provided stability to many families.

## Hofmeyr House & Litakoemi (Single Room Facilities)
Both these facilities are situated in the Berea-Burgerspark area of Pretoria's inner city. They are both single room facilities offering accommodation to about 150 people. Although both buildings have a caretaker, resident committees work closely with the caretaker and monthly resident meetings are held where concerns are discussed and plans are made. The emphasis in these buildings is on shared management in which the residents themselves have to take greater responsibility for their building, creating an environment of communal caring and ownership, and assisting the caretaker in

his or her job. The caretaker, on the other hand, becomes a servant of the community, working closely with them to ensure that the house rules are implemented and that living conditions are healthy.

Especially in Hofmeyr House, a tremendous change took place when a new management style has been introduced. Before, residents did not have any say and their was a great lack of communication between the residents and the management. Since a resident committee is in place and a caretaker is appointed from the ranks of the residents, the whole atmosphere of the building has changed and slowly more significant changes will be implemented, which will include upgrading of the building , and the introduction of service projects that will benefit both the residents of the building and people from the surrounding neighbourhood.

## Kangelani

Kangelani is a 53-unit block of flats in Berea, Pretoria. The individual units have been sold as sectional title units. The building has gone through a major crisis, marked by people's lack of understanding of the nature of sectional title ownership, the absence of a board of trustees and a caretaker, ineffective management by the property administrator, and outstanding levies of R 60 000.

Through a very basic property owners' education process one of the owners took responsibility for this block, re-organised the people, and discussed the nature of their investment with them. He became the caretaker and facilitated the election of a board of trustees. Slowly the residents of this building is taking collective responsibility for their building. They committed themselves to pay the outstanding levy amount of R 60 000 over a six month period. Those residents who did not want to give their co-operation slowly moved out, as the pressure against them increased. The quality of the building and the quality of life for individual residents improved, as they took collective action to stabilise their building, to safeguard their investment, and to create a healthy living environment.

Where the property administrator wanted to withdraw from this building before, they now stay on as administrator. Although there is still a steep road ahead for Kangelani, this building has become a sign of hope in this community, and the lessons learnt are now shared with other owners and trustees, who are concerned and prepared to take charge of their buildings.

## Banks : Withdrawal or Re-Commitment

The tendency of banks to withdraw from inner city communities, or to implement the so-called red-lining practice whereby loans are no longer awarded in certain communities, is a global reality. I would like to relate one story of how this was reversed by the local community (Pierce : 1984 : 41-43).

The Bloomfield / Garfield community in Pittsburgh was under severe pressure due to a series of decisions taken by outsiders on behalf of the community of Bloomfield / Garfield. The area headed in the direction of total inner city devastation. A Roman Catholic priest, Father Leo Henry, took initiative and resorted to community organisation as a response in return.

First of all the neighbourhood was placed in the centre of attention through a series of demonstrations, rallies, and encounters with local government. Slowly, the attention and services required were received. The main focus then turned to Penn Avenue, a once-vibrant business area that deteriorated due to withdrawal and neglect. The role that financial institutions played in this downward spiral was significant as they moved out to suburban areas instead. The Bloomfield / Garfield community realised that the community would only recover fully with the return of banks to their area.

Through a creative and powerful display of the value of community organising,

> (T)he Bloomfield / Garfield corporation organized every person and institution and business in their neighborhood to pledge to move all of their banking business to whatever bank would move onto Penn Avenue. They had about $ 2,5 million pledged.
>
> (Pierce 1984 : 42)

When this was still not enough, government departments pledged in excess of $3 million. Finally the community called the bankers in and negotiations took place in front of 500 people. The choice was between the two biggest banks in the area, Mellon and Equibank, both keen by this time to open a branch on Penn Avenue. Finally, the respect with which Equibank treated the neighbourhood leaders, gave them the edge and they were voted in. They moved to the Bloomfield / Garfield community and the local people moved their money to this bank.

Pierce (1984 : 43) concludes by saying :

> This was real organization, real power, and real change.

Pierce also underscores the vital role of the congregation.

## Property Administration

In the South African context, property administrators often fail to recognise that the cultural transition in inner city buildings present very real challenges to the management and administrative approach. In this narration, I deal specifically with sectional title property in the inner city. In many cases, the cultural transition has been dealt with by a neglect to deal directly with "new " trustees, predominantly black, and the failure to build capacity in buildings among new owners. This has resulted in tense relationships between property administrators and body corporates, the withdrawal of property administrators from certain buildings, and the threat to withdraw in principle from the inner city as a whole.

There are four possible scenarios.

- In one inner city building, the residents actually decided to discontinue their contract with a larger property administrator and to manage their own building with a locally generated set of values. The principle of *local self-government* applies here and it seems to be successful in this facility so far, although it is still in its early stages (unstructured interview with Mr. David Mojakisani, chairperson of the Board of Trustees; 3 September 1998).

- The second possibility is that of general *withdrawal by large property administrators*. Such disinvestment might lead to total decay in some buildings, as not all buildings would be able to run all aspects of their own affairs completely.

- The other possibility of large-scale withdrawal by large companies, is that it creates the opportunity for local initiative to create a *community-based institution* that will deal with property. This is the third possible scenario. Those buildings which cannot run their own affairs completely, would use the services of the new community-based institution.

- A fourth possibility is a *broad-based partnership* between property administrators, trustees, property owners, local community forums, and so forth, ensuring that the transition and risk factors in the inner city are indeed managed properly. Such a partnership would provide opportunities for training and education, conscientisation, cultural sensitivity, the mobilisation of local resources, mechanisms for conflict resolution, and so forth. Different partners could have different functions in the intervention process.

  I opt for this model, as it is in line with the liberation process of both "rich" and "poor",

"powerful" and "powerless", manager and local property owner (or client). In partnership, the interests of different parties could be addressed in order for a win-win situation to be created.

- One example of an initiative to address inner city residential property issues more efficiently, is the formation of a Sectional Title Forum in Pretoria, drawing different property administrators together. This Forum envisages higher standards of training for management agents, as well as better co-operation between property administrators and property owners on the basis of an ethical code by which clients can evaluate their performance. This Forum wants to provide an accountable service to its clients (cf. Beeld 31 July 1998 : 1 [property guide]).

  It is just interesting to note that the chairperson of this Forum happens to be an involved Christian with a doctorate degree in missiology. He is now the managing director of a well-known property administration company in Pretoria. He manages to bring faith and ethics together in the workplace, persisting in the inner city, somehow against the odds. In discussions with him, it became clear that this is not only a business issue for him, but also a moral issue.

## 4.4 The Creation of Liberating, Community-Based Institutions

I concluded in chapter 4 with a short overview of the institutional response to the inner city of Pretoria. In line with the general thinking of this study, I would like to suggest the creation of bottom-up institutions in the inner city that will facilitate real transformation generally, and transformation in the housing arena specifically.

The stories that I related in 4.3 give evidence to the fact that local initiatives and ownership could contribute greatly to inner city transformation, and that the church - in partnership with local communities - indeed has a role to play. In chapter 4, 8.5, I have concluded that the church has a threefold role to play with regard to the facilitation of liberating institutions :

- addressing existing institutions and calling them into relationships of covenantal solidarity
- empowering local communities to initiate local institutions, and
- strengthening its own institutional capacity, or generating new church-based institutions.

The first function is an on-going prophetic function that the church has. It is becoming a priority for the church to engage in the other functions as well, serving as catalyst-facilitator in the creation of new grass-roots institutions, or creating church-based institutions, being owned and driven locally. The intention and focus of both would be liberation and transformation in the local community. Just by virtue of being local, institutions have a better chance of being liberating. Being local they will have a sound knowledge of the community's intricate issues and the generation of local vision and capacity can impact upon inner city communities significantly.

The challenge is to create institutions that will resemble the characteristics of communities, organisms, or movements, flexible enough to be responsive, but also capacitated enough to be taken seriously. This is not about the creation of

institutions for the sake of institutions, but it is about the creation of liberating structures (new wineskins) that will truly facilitate communal solidarity, humanisation, social justice and shalom.

The liberating institutions to be facilitated by the church will sometimes be a unique blend of ecclesial and social characteristics, and often a purely social-secular diaconal or developmental structure.

The following are some examples of potentially liberating institutions :

### Base Ecclesial Communities / Intentional Communities

These communities are ecclesial communities to be found at the grassroots. They are ecclesial with a social focus and a local rootedness. Their members are often the poor themselves or people opting for a simpler lifestyle, intimate communal relationships, a deep sense of communal sharing, and a commitment to work for social justice. It is often a spontaneous, informal movement, and transformative actions grow from below. Through shared resources and simple living, additional resources are available for creative development initiatives to assist and empower the poor. Reba Place in Chicago is one example of creative community that translates into concrete housing actions (cf. chapter 5; 8.5.4).

### Community Forums / Civic Associations

Community forums, resident associations or civic associations are some of the terms used for locally organised groups of people living and / or owning property in the same community, and with shared interests and concerns about that community. Organised communities can achieve much more than isolated or fragmented communities. In Pretoria, the partnership of churches facilitated the development of community development forums (CDF's) in Berea, Salvokop and Marabastad. These Forums continue to wrestle with housing issues and could increasingly become facilitating agents to ensure diverse and just housing developments.

### Lobby Groups

Informal lobby groups can be another avenue for change. People sharing the same concerns about issues such as homelessness, dislocation of the poor, demolition of low-cost housing, or similar issues, will organise themselves into lobby groups, addressing key role players that could influence a given situation, and using the media to highlight their concerns and to advocate for change. In Pretoria a small group consisting of church and homeless representatives, have engaged in a series of public meetings and events, to highlight the lack of non-racial shelter facilities for homeless people in Pretoria's inner city.

### Community Policing Forums (CPF)

Community Policing Forums are important platforms for the transformation of communities, and an important structure for the church in the city. Not only could the church contribute to the fight against crime, but the church also has a pastoral role with regard to victims of crime and violence, but also with regard to the police in their area, and even to those who are perpetrators of crime. Through the CPF, the church should speak out on issues of domestic violence, child sexual abuse, homelessness, and other issues. Important relationships in the community can be nurtured at this level.

### Co-Operatives

Co-operatives are businesses with the assets owned collectively, and benefits and profits going to the members of the co-operative. Since ownership is collective and not individual, a member who leaves the co-operative cannot take some of the company's capital with. There are various kinds of co-

operatives, varying from housing to food and service co-operatives (cf. Elkin & McLaren 1991 : 224-225; Department of Development Planning and Local Government; 20 March 1998 : 8-9).

## Credit Unions

Credit unions (Elkin & McLaren 1991: 225-226) are financial co-operatives, similar to the "stokvel" movement in South Africa. A credit union is owned and controlled by people who share a common bond such as geographical location or common affiliation. Members save in this co-operative financial structure and earn dividends on their savings. Credit unions could provide fixed (and lower) interest rates, and could assist in setting up community businesses or other co-operative ventures in the community.

## Housing Associations

Housing Associations are non-profit organisations focussing predominantly on the provision of subsidised housing for lower income households. Housing Associations are found in the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Europe and the United States. These associations rely heavily on voluntary support and Board members represent both volunteers as well as representatives from the beneficiary community (Department of Development Planning and Local Government; 20 March 1998 : 7-8).

In the South African context the Seven Buildings Project, the Johannesburg Housing Company and Yeast City Housing in Pretoria, are examples of housing initiatives geared at the lower end of the market.

## Community Development Corporations (CDC's) / Development Trusts

Community Development Corporations are organisations rooted in a particular community and working for its holistic development. CDC's usually undertake a whole range of activities focussing on the construction or rehabilitation of housing, the creation of economic opportunities, and the delivery of services. CDC's are usually tax exempt and not for profit. Its structure should represent the community which it serves. The greatest benefits of CDC's are the effective inclusion of the community in the implementation of projects, and the fact that CDC's, being home-grown, are sensitive to the needs of local residents (cf. Department of Development Planning and Local Government; 20 March 1998 : 6-7).

Development Trusts in Britain are independent non-profit organisations which act for the sake of the renewal of an area, both physically and socially. Housing and employment creation are often part of the activities of a development trust. Local businesses and residents are often involved in substantial ways (cf. Elkin & McLaren 1991 : 225). The Summerhill Development Corporation (cf. chapter 3, 3.2) in Atlanta, Georgia, is an example of such a community development trust and the church played an active role in the development of that corporation.

## Church-Based Community Development Trusts, Companies, Foundations

There are various examples of church-based community development trusts, charitable trusts, non-profit companies or foundations. All the above-mentioned structures could also be church-based, facilitated by the church, or the church could be one of the partners or stakeholders, participating in the process.

The Christian Service Foundation is an inner city organisation in Johannesburg doing very creative ministry ranging from shelter for homeless people, a children's home, and job creation programs, to inner city hospitals and long-term care for the frailty. Pretoria Community Ministries is organised as a charitable trust focussing on inner city community development.

## Leadership Foundations

In the American cities a church-based movement of so-called leadership foundations has emerged in response to inner city challenges. These leadership foundations draw urban leadership from churches, business, and government together into a leadership foundation with a Christian vision for revitalised cities. These foundations serve as brokers between communities of need and resource, accessing funds for inner city projects and supporting grass-roots initiatives. They often combine racial reconciliation with urban reconstruction. The Midwest Leadership Foundation (Chicago), Pittsburgh Leadership Foundation and Philadelphia Leadership Foundation, are some examples of active urban leadership for transformation. This is something to be explored by Christian leaders in the South African cities. One of the keys to the American model was the mobilisation of lay leadership for urban ministry and transformation.

In Britain a similar structure, although not church-based, is the so-called Community Trust (1991 Elkin & McLaren 225-226). This is a financial trust generating funds to be channelled into community projects.

## Management Structures for Urban Improvement : CID's, BID's, NID's or Social Development Zones

All these structures (cf. Gauteng Department of Development Planning and Local Government : 1998) are essentially strategies for effective urban planning and management. It re-structures urban management by way of partnerships, connecting local authorities with interest groups in communities, such as residents, business, and NGO's.

*City Improvement Districts (CID's)* are provided for by provincial legislation in Gauteng. It allows local communities and / or business to contribute to the development of their own areas. CID's are partnerships between private sector, local government and other urban stakeholders. CID's can take the form of business improvement districts (BID's) where it is predominantly a business area, or alternatively of social development zones where it is predominantly residential in nature.

*Business Improvement Districts (BID's)* are city improvement districts specifically focussed on creating environments conducive for business to flourish (cf. Department of Development Planning and Local Government; October 1997 : 89). A BID is a designated area in which business invests in additional security, cleaning, and other improvements, and contribute to the thinking about land use, planning practices, and environmental standards.

*Social Development Zones* are city improvement districts specifically focussed on urban residential areas. Such zones would include housing development, job creation, the creation of informal trading areas, and social and welfare infra-structure (Department of Development Planning and Local Government; October 1997 : 89). BID's are based on the leverage of additional taxes from property owners, whilst Social Development Zones seek for relief from such rates and taxes "in the interests of achieving socially desirable objectives" (Department of Development Planning and Local Government; October 1997 : 89). One could also refer to these zones as Neighbourhood Improvement Districts (NID's). If tenants and property owners in these zones work together, they could probably lobby for social amenities such as schools, creches, play grounds, tax rebates, incentives for good property management, organising street parties and festivals, and fighting the "red lining" of an area by the banks.

## Partnerships

Partnerships refer to the joint actions of various key groups, getting together around their vested interests and focussing on community revitalisation, physical improvement and economic revival (cf. Department of Development Planning and Local Government; 20 March 1998 : 7). Partnership in this sense refers to a co-operative arrangement or social compact between different partners, rather than

a strict legal partnership necessarily.

**Summary**
The church in the inner city could engage itself in more than one of the above-mentioned structures. In fact, to contribute effectively to inner city transformation, the inner city church will have to consider the facilitation of such representative vehicles as institutions of liberation and healing in at-risk urban communities. Where these structures are in place already, the church should consider playing the role of a servant participating in these structures. It needs to be said that these structures are not liberating institutions in themselves. The beauty of these structures is the fact that they are broad-based and they are incorporating the principles of partnership, representation, and holistic development. They also offer the opportunity for real participative democracy, encouraging local people to initiate development projects and to take ownership for them. They have the potential, therefore, to facilitate liberation and transformation.

The next chapter will integrate some of the material explored above in the proposed ministry plan.

# 5. The Church, Housing and the Poor

## 5.1 A Vision of Transformation : Why is Housing so Important ?

Since the first chapter, I suggested that housing should be a central element in the transformation of the inner city. Later chapters have emphasised the crisis in inner city housing, expressed in the decrease in affordable residential options; the decrease in housing quality in general, and sometimes in Christian-managed housing facilities in particular; the reality and the threat of displacing the poor through urban development projects; the lack of managerial capacity and / or the will to deal with the cultural transition in inner city housing; and the growing abandonment of inner city housing, leaving a disempowered community behind.

All these issues raised fundamental questions, such as the role of the church with regard to slum housing, whether housing decay can be reversed, whether the poor can be re-integrated into society, or alternatives be found for the displacement of the poor. The lack of diversified housing options for the inner city poor, inner city housing that deprives people of dignity, and inner city development that continues to displace the poor without the provision of viable alternatives, need to be challenged consistently.

It was indicated earlier that displacement of the poor could be reversed by alternative policies and strategies (chapter 4; 2.5.3.5). The role of human agencies, political will, community organisation, and the development of grass-roots leadership, could all contribute to reverse the trend of displacement, facilitating transformational processes that go beyond renewal, leading to the fundamental restructuring of society to include low-cost housing options, the re-integration of the poor, ownership at the lower end of the market, and the avoidance of dislocation.

Housing is indeed a key in the inner city transformational process, as the neglect of housing would have a detrimental effect on any other attempt at inner city renewal. If everybody withdraws from the inner city housing arena, it would continue to deteriorate.

A broad-based strategy to ensure healthy housing environments in the inner city, could create the proper environment for inner city renewal, development and transformational projects to flourish.

We do not only need strategic interventions in crisis situations, but we also need transformational models of housing, that will work pro-actively to ensure decent, affordable housing options for all people.

## 5.2     Inner City Housing : A Theological and Ecclesial Question ?

In chapter 5 I argued extensively for the church's engagement in the public arena. The same arguments and issues that I have raised there need to be considered and contextualised for the inner city housing arena.

### 5.2.1   Faith Translated into Housing Action

I have asserted in chapter 5; 8.2.1, that faith and ethics belong together. Housing, when it dehumanises people, when it is an expression of social injustice, or when it stands in the sign of evil and brokenness, becomes a theological-ethical issue. When inner city people suffer as a result of poor housing or slum conditions, insecurity of tenure, or blatant exploitation, our faith should be translated into deeds, and the voices of the city should inform our ecclesial praxis.

Once we have embraced a theology of community and a public theology, housing indeed becomes a theological and an ecclesial issue. Where we enter into relationships of covenantal solidarity, and when we engage in the public arena, the manifold issues of inner city housing will soon be raised and we would not be able to escape from these without losing our integrity. The housing issues of the inner city arise within the ecclesial communities in which we are called to serve. These are the issues of our members and potential members.

These are the issues of God's people all over the inner city. And we cannot send people away wishing them peace if they have to go back to inhumane living conditions or exploitative housing situations ! We need to seek for ways to translate our faith into concrete housing actions.

It has been suggested in chapter 5 that the real struggle of the inner city church is to protest death in all its forms, and to proclaim life. The community of the crucified

should make itself present in housing situations that is marked by signs of death, proclaiming the possibility of life over death. As church we are also the community of resurrection, and the power of the resurrection needs to be proclaimed and demonstrated in the reality of inner city housing.

The vision of the new city in Isaiah 65 implies that housing should be "for all the people, irrespective of their wealth or poverty" (Linthicum 1991 : 167). As Isaiah puts it : "No longer will they build houses and others live in them" (cf. also Brueggemann 1993). The estrangement of people from their own production and skills should be overcome, and people should be given the opportunity to employ their skills for their own well-being and that of their families.

Linthicum (1991 : 168) shares a profound vision for the church's engagement in the housing arena.

> The church is to work for safe and well-built housing so that there are no tenements, no slums, no cardboards and tin shacks, no barrios, no bustees or favellas. To work for safe and decent affordable housing for all city dwellers is part of the work of the urban church.

Linthicum (1991 : 168) suggests that the church should work for housing of the inner city poor. This would imply working for housing that is decent, affordable, fairly distributed, accessible, located within the vicinity of job opportunities, safe, and humane.

Linthicum (1991 : 177) is of the opinion that the involvement of the church in public areas such as housing, health care and economic development, has a profound impact on the spirituality of the city. The church's lack of involvement in these areas might have the negative effect of housing without values, or economic development without ethics. The effect of the church should be like that of salt and yeast, often invisible, but its persistent efforts to build healthy and good communities will slowly penetrate and impact the city for good. On the other hand, its withdrawal from the public and housing arena might surrender the city to the forces of evil.

That is why I argue for the creation of liberating institutions (chapter 6; 4.4), that will be known as life-giving structures, existing for the well-being of inner city people and communities, initiated and owned *by* the people, and directly accountable to the people. Such institutions might become visible vehicles where faith and works can be combined.

### 5.2.2 Building Lives, Building Communities

In 4.2 of this chapter the importance of the housing process was stressed. I would like to elaborate on that in these paragraphs. Housing as a ministry of the church is about ensuring decent, affordable housing products for all people. But it is more
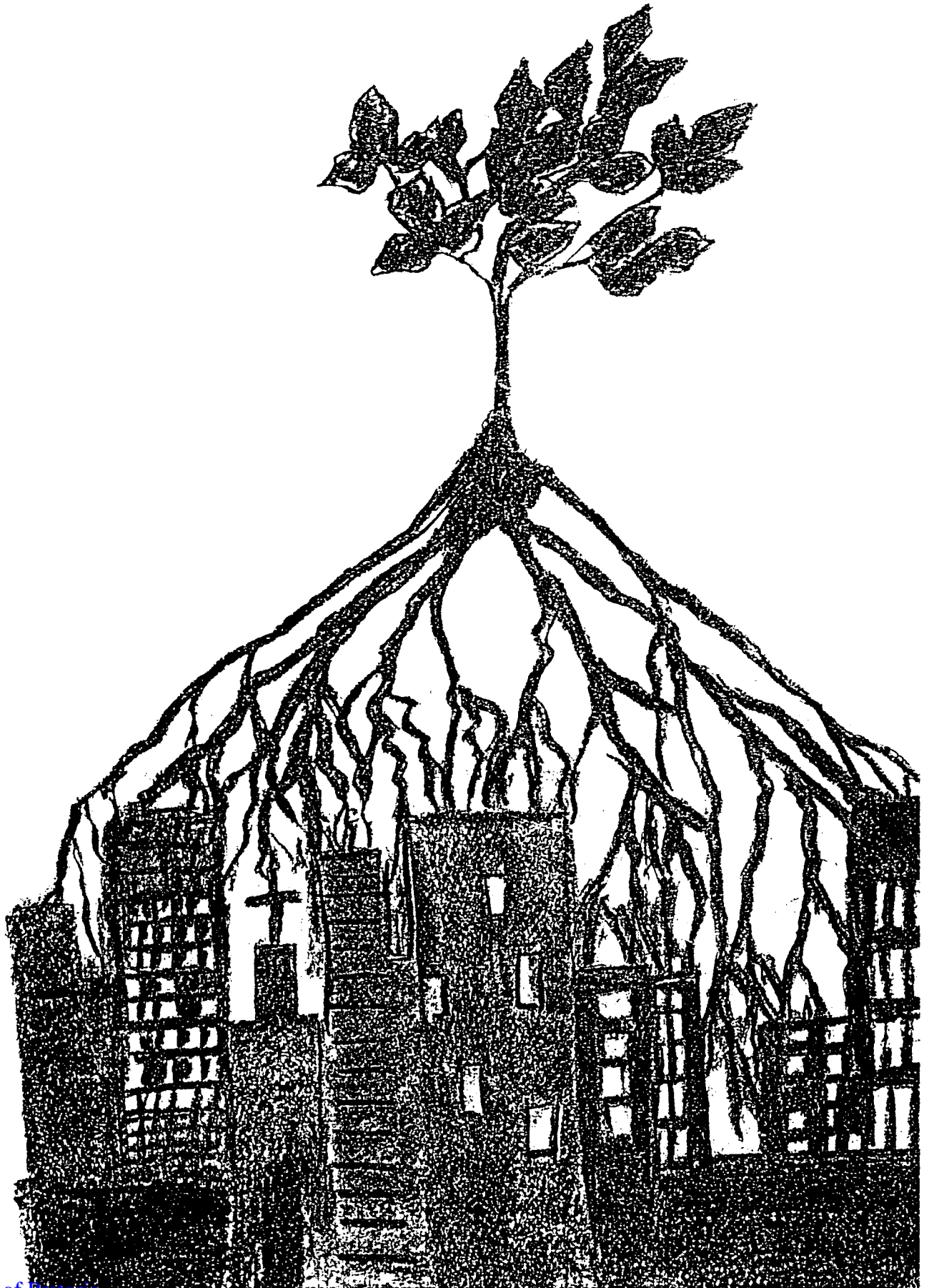
than that. It is not only about erecting the physical shelter, but it is also about building lives and eventually about the building of communities.

Many people in the inner city are at-risk, disempowered and without the necessary support systems to sustain them through crises. After long periods of homelessness, life in slum conditions, or insecurity of tenure, the option of decent, affordable housing with security of tenure, represents to people more than a physical shelter. It often represents the affirmation of dignity and self-worth, the re-integration into a community, the possibility to establish broader community linkages, the possibility of social stability and consolidation, the possibility of healthier family life, and often even greater possibilities to find and maintain employment. A permanent address is equal to an identity document. Without these there are questions about people's identity and doors remain closed. With an identity document or a permanent address, identity is re-affirmed and new options open up.

Such a holistic vision of housing provision is often lacking within the existing inner city housing scenario. Landlords, property administrators and managers do not engage with housing holistically, they do not always consider the social and human aspects of housing, and they lack the skill or the capacity to manage buildings holistically. This might be the determining factor in assessing success or failure in a particular building. Social and human development processes that empower people to take responsibility and ownership, will always make a world of difference. Somehow, these "softer" issues of housing management need to be embraced and implemented in the inner city context.

Housing is about rooting people. Inner cities are full of rootless people seeking to establish themselves once again within families and communities. Many inner city people are searching  for meaning once again and meaning is often found at people's roots. Without roots, the notions of identity and meaning are elusive. It is therefore not strange that the "homeless God" concerned himself deeply with the roots of his people.

> And such rootage is a primary concern of Israel and a central promise of God to his people. This sense of place is a primary concern of this God who refused a house and sojourned with his people (2 Sam. 7 : 5-6) and of the crucified one who has "nowhere to lay his head".

> (Brueggemann 1977 : 4)

Millard Fuller (quoted in *Habitat World*, Oct/Nov 1996 : 6-7), founder director of Habitat for Humanity International, emphasises the importance of housing in providing people with roots, when he says :

> Housing is to a family what soil is to a plant - a place of rootedness.

Rooting people is not merely a physical process but contains social, economic,

psychological and spiritual elements. It is this holistic picture of housing that we need to consider. And once we embrace a holistic vision of housing, the church becomes one of the most appropriate institutions to engage in this arena, because of the holistic nature of God's shalom, seeking wholeness in every sphere. It is in our nature as church to concern ourselves with human well-being and social development. Where these aspects lack in the housing arena, the church needs to explore its latent resources as the mobilisation of these resources could contribute greatly to inner city communities.

The attached sketch illustrates the point that I have made above.

When we speak about housing as the building of lives and communities, it is important to consider it for a moment as an extension of family ministry. Family values have always been central within the Christian tradition. Yet, to expect healthy families has become rather unrealistic when they face situations of increasing homelessness, poverty and slum housing. It is not fair to expect families to flourish where homelessness, poverty or housing decay is prominent. Yet again, the church's verbal ministry needs to be translated into deeds of transformation that will address some of the root causes contributing to family breakdown in this country. The availability and quality of housing is suggested here as one of the root causes.

The hostel culture is one of the cruelest examples of housing and family break-down. It was caused by a system of migrant labour, separating men from their families, and leaving tremendous scars (cf. Ramphele 1993). Forced removals caused the breakdown of entire communities, value systems and families. Poverty housing and homelessness are destructive and need to be eradicated.

The executive director of the National Coalition of the Homeless in the United States, Mary Ann Gleason (quoted by Free; April/May 1998 : 6), stated the following:

> If we are really serious about family values, we have to be serious about housing.

Housing is the materialisation of the family. It is the physical structure that contains human, communal, social, psychological and spiritual processes. It is a place of belonging, identity and meaning. It is a place filled with symbols and rituals. It is the starting point and nurturing place of relationships. In the inner city of Pretoria we have experienced how many single mother families have consolidated themselves once they were able to move into a simple housing facility. Even when they only had one room and shared bathroom facilities, they were able to use this opportunity to create family again.

It is a miracle that many families and individuals still survive without adequate housing. It is a sign of a numb society, though, when housing is a low priority and when housing decay and homelessness are virtually ignored. In time it will have serious effects on the families of a nation. Therefore the church needs to respond in this specific arena.

When we engage with housing, we build lives, families and communities. It gives concrete expression to the gospel's promise of liberation for the oppressed, housing for the homeless, hope for the hopeless, and good news for the poor. Decent, affordable housing indeed becomes good news to the poor.

### 5.2.3  Towards a Transformational Housing Praxis

Jesus took our realities so seriously that He became flesh to dwell with us in our neighbourhoods. Our love for people needs to be so intense that we will take their poor housing and exposure to exploitation seriously - to the point of fleshing out the gospel through concrete expressions of housing ministry. In 5.2.3 I will reflect on a framework for a transformed housing praxis as a church-based ministry.

Isaiah 58 : 12b provides a very vivid vision for urban communities, and I would like to interpret and suggest it quite literally.

> ...you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.

The prophet envisages God's people at work in the restoration of buildings and streets, to provide safe and accessible dwellings to the people of the city. The vision of the new city in Isaiah 58 and 65, places housing quite prominently as a sign of a transformed city. This reminds us again of Nehemia, who also involved himself in an ambitious urban redevelopment project in the name of God. Perhaps we need to emphasise again that the transformation of the inner city is not possible without the transformation of the inner city housing sector as well. And God's people can base their involvement in this area on the spiritual resources and foundations that the Old and New Testaments provide in this regard.

From a Biblical perspective it is about proclaiming the reign of God in the housing arena, and facilitating signs of God's shalom. It is about establishing the household of God within the households of humanity.

In chapter 5 I suggested a framework for a theology of inner city transformation. I will briefly use that framework and contextualise it for the housing arena. The following table is an indication of the functions or roles of the church as an agent of transformation in the housing arena and broader.

| **TRANSFORMATION OF INNER CITY COMMUNITIES** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **H O U S I N G** | incarnational presence <<<<< | **THE CHURCH** |
| | < | * becoming a servant community |
| | < | * being with the poor |
| | < | * nurturing covenantal communities |
| | < | * holistic discipleship |
| | < | * humanising dehumanised people and places |
| | < | * confrontation of death and power in the city |
| | < | * empowerment of the poor and vulnerable |
| | < | * advocacy and action for social justice |
| | < | * generating values and nurturing a new culture |
| | < | * creating partnerships |
| | < | * ensuring liberating institutions |
| | < | * facilitating shalom |

*Table 1 :*      *The Church as Agent of Transformation, via Its Housing Engagement*

It was emphasised that the church needs to be transformed first, before it will be in a position to play its rightful role. The churches in the inner city of Pretoria had to be exposed continuously to the realities of inner city housing and its problems, before they were able to understand housing as a legitimate Christian ministry.

- **Incarnational Servant Communities**

An appropriate Christian presence in the inner city will require of the church to become a servant community, incarnating itself and participating in the joys and struggles of the inner city. As an incarnational servant community the church should live and work humbly with the inner city poor. In communities such as Salvokop, Marabastad and the Grand Boulevard area of Chicago, it is the incarnational Christ who needs to be discovered amidst the struggles of inner city people. It is the powerless, servant Christ who has the power to transform the inner city, by empowering the poor and by calling the rich to solidarity and accountability. It is where we serve at the grassroots that God's vision for transformed housing and a transformed city will emerge.

- **The Creation of Covenantal Communities**

As a servant community the church has an important role to play in the creation and nurturing of covenantal communities, both within and outside the church. These are communities of covenantal solidarity, in which community members commit themselves to one another, recognising their interdependence, and working together towards a common goal. As community is established, the possibility of humanising dehumanised people and places becomes real. It is in community that people get

the sense of belonging and self-worth, and that people are humanised towards purposeful living. Through the creation of simple, decent places to live (cf. Fuller 1995), the city and its people can be humanised.

In a facility such as Litakoemi, managed by a church-based housing company in the inner city of Pretoria, living conditions are simple. Yet, the building is maintained and relatively safe, people have come to respect each other through shared living and regular residents meetings, and responsibility for the building lies in many ways with the residents themselves. Placing ownership and responsibility in the hand of the residents, are empowering and humanising in itself. And they would continue to create a humane environment.

- **Holistic Discipleship**

Housing provides the church-based agency with the unique opportunity of holistic discipleship, i.e. sharing our faith in the context of housing management, and demonstrating that faith also has implications for the way in which I live as a resident, relate to fellow residents, care for the environment, and manage my money. In an informal and relational way, essential elements of discipleship could be transferred as different issues arise in the housing environment. Often people accommodated in low-cost housing facilities are vulnerable people, and the Christian housing agent could offer more than a managerial service, by providing a listening ear. Although the roles of the housing manager could become confusing at times, the church-based housing agency should structure itself for such holistic ministry. It could, for example, integrate a pastoral component into the service it renders.

- **Confronting Death and Power in the City**

A further function of the church with regard to inner city housing is to confront death and power in the city. Practically it means to confront situations of homelessness, unreasonable dislocation of the poor, slum formation and exploitation, that cause either physical, social or psychological death in the city. This refers to the function of exorcist or liberator. The church has a prophetic role to call the powers that be to accountability and responsible, fair stewardship. It also has the constructive role of humanising dehumanised people and places.

- **Empowerment**

The other side of the same coin is the task of empowerment. The church has to walk with the inner city poor in ways that will empower them to assume responsibility for their lives and living conditions, and to work with others towards the best options possible. The task of empowerment is a holistic task, as Friedmann indicates (cf. chapter 5; 8.7.1.3; chapter 6; 3.3, 4.1).

- ## Advocacy and Action for Social Justice

The housing arena often requires advocacy and action that call for social justice. The unfair distribution of resources are often evident in the lack of diversified housing options, and the withdrawal of large and small institutions from certain inner communities affect inner city housing very directly. It is in this regard that the church should advocate for justice in the housing sector, through participation in public policy-making procedures, community forums, lobbying, and so forth. The church should also act, not only through its advocacy role, but also through very constructive actions, such as the renovations of a run-down building, the management of low-cost housing facilities, purchasing land for housing development, utilising its buildings for housing purposes, the provision of information on housing issues, and so forth.

The Biblical notions of stewardship, Jubilee, and the sabbatical year, are very applicable to the housing arena. It is in this arena that land could be made available, restitution be concretised, and stewardship be practised in very practical terms.

The Dutch Reformed Church in the inner city is selling off many of its properties, often to non-Christian institutions and often with direct, adverse consequences for the surrounding community (cf. the AJO in Visagie Street, Pretoria). An appropriate way of restitution within the South African context, could - for example - be for the Dutch Reformed Church to make some of these facilities available to the broader church at a lower price, at low interest, or even to transfer these facilities into the name of another church-based entity as an asset to secure on-going ministry. Whereas the Dutch Reformed Church in the city centre of Pretoria is moving out, the Uniting Reformed Church is rooting itself deeper and deeper in the city. Its greatest challenge, however, is to develop financial sustainability on its own. One large residential building, currently owned by the Dutch Reformed Church, could position this new, emerging church very favourably for future inner city ministry. The Jubilee principle at work could become a wonderful sign of grace in the midst of hostile and suspicious relationships.

- ## Generating Values and Nurturing a New Culture

Problems such as non-payment and the breach of contracts are ideal opportunities for constructive interaction between housing management and housing residents - to generate values that will ensure and sustain a healthy living environment. As these values emerge people will take responsibility for their own building and a new culture will be created. This is essential for maintaining healthy inner city communities and for the generation of new community leaders at the local level. The church-based housing company in Pretoria's inner city experienced that some of the key grass-roots leaders in the community came through the process of shared housing management, and as they assumed responsibility their latent skills were developed and shaped.

- **Partnerships**

The nature and extent of the housing arena calls for creative, bold and extensive partnerships. This is an ideal opportunity for resourceful people to be stewards of their resources, investing these resources in struggling communities. This is also an opportunity for broad-based ecumenical partnerships, whereby various churches could join hands to make a difference in the housing arena. Partnerships between people of resource and people of need could be liberating for both. The church could also engage in partnerships with local communities, the private sector, local and provincial government, and NGO's, focussing on housing or development issues. Partnerships are probably the most effective way to ensure responsible stewardship of God's urban resources.

- **Ensuring Liberating Institutions**

This has been introduced already in chapter 6; 4.4. Whenever the church engages in the housing arena, it would have to consider the institutional arrangements. The church could  initiate church-based housing institutions that will work closely with the local community to ensure decent housing. The church could be a mere facilitator, assisting local communities to set up their own housing corporations, co-operatives, and so forth. The church could also facilitate other broad-based housing partnerships, or get itself involved as servants or volunteers in existing housing structures. What is important is to ensure liberating institutions that will facilitate humanisation and social justice within the housing arena. Liberating institutions are, in the context of this study, institutions with a human face, rooted in local needs and aspirations, encouraging local participation and ownership, and based upon accountability and transparency. The church, in facilitating or encouraging such institutions,  believes in the Christian vision of a new and transformed city.

- **Facilitating Shalom**

All of these functions together will contribute to the shalom or wholeness of the inner city. Reversing slum housing, adding to the housing stock, ensuring low-cost housing options, and assisting people to be reintegrated into society, are all signs of restoration, which are signs of God's kingdom and presence with us. It is the shalom of God that the church in the inner city is seeking. Housing is but one of the avenues, but I suggest housing as one of the most critical, strategic and innovative areas through which to seek God's shalom.

The following table does not differ much from the previous one. It rather builds on the functions of the church as outlined in table 1, envisioning the possible outcomes of the church's involvement with inner city housing, if the above-mentioned functions are implemented. It serves as a summary for 5.2.3.

| TRANSFORMATION OF INNER CITY COMMUNITIES | | |
|---|---|---|
| **HOUSING** | **<<<** | **CHURCH** |
| *shalom* | | |
| social justice | | |
| value transfer & cultural empowerment | | |
| social empowerment | | |
| *humanisation* | | |
| affirmation of dignity | | |
| social consolidation (re-integration) | | |
| nurturing community | | |
| *holistic discipleship* | | |
| participating, serving presence of church-as-people | | |
| celebrating signs of the presence of God | | |
| re-evangelising & conversion | | |

*Table 2 :        The Hopeful Outcomes of the Church's Ministry in the Housing Arena*

The transformed church indeed has a vital role to play in the public arena towards the transformation of inner city communities. In order to take up its role, the inner city church will have to come to a new understanding of its identity, namely that of being a servant-healer in fractured inner cities (cf. Cox 1978 : 114-125).

### 5.2.4   The Institutionalisation of Values

A transformational housing praxis could be likened to the reconstruction process in Ezra and Nehemia (Brueggemann 1977 : 153-156). Against the background of distorted covenantal relationships, exploitation of the land, individualist accumulation of commodities, and disparities between small citizens and the bureaucratic elite who managed land and property, Ezra and Nehemia were called to intervene as agents of transformational urban ministry.

Their intervention was profoundly political, making economic claims, and advocating for land distribution. At the same time it was a process of nurturing an alternative consciousness, covenantal organisation and institutional development. A vision of the new community where justice reigns was institutionalised in these stories by the

people of God (Brueggemann 1977 : 152-153). Similar to the movement of the poor in Villa El Salvador, Peru (cf. chapter 6, 4.3), Ezra and Nehemia moved from protest to the creation of a grass-roots institution.

The church's compassionate presence in the housing arena sets in motion a process of conscientisation, as the creation of covenantal relationships lead to partnerships that facilitate more responsible stewardship. And the church's visible actions in the housing arena become signs of a new community where new values have become valid.

The housing arena is an important space for the institutionalisation of values. A holistic perspective on housing will affirm values such as humanness, dignity, social justice, equity, cultural sensitivity, stewardship, shared management, shared ownership, self-government, and so forth. These values could be made visible through their institutionalisation in housing, thereby demonstrating the effect of these values on recreating and transforming society.

Chapter 7 will propose a housing strategy that is based on this framework for a transformational praxis.

## 5.3    The Latent Institutional Capacity of the Church

My own view on housing and the church was limited to transitional shelter, and at most, a housing information service (De Beer 1991 : 210-211). The church's vision for housing rarely goes beyond a charity perspective limiting housing to temporary shelter for the homeless. It seldom includes formal housing, property development, conversion of office buildings into residential units, and so forth. This study suggests that the church has the latent institutional capacity and the kind of slumbering resources, that could impact upon inner city housing in a very positive way. This needs to be discovered by the inner city church, though.

Abrams (1966 : 566) commented on the role that the church could play in addressing issues of poverty housing and dislocation in inner city renewal projects.

> The advent of urban renewal, public housing, public works, and federal aid to suburban growth has added not only new problems but new dimensions for the church. Thus far, too many churches have been destroyed and their people forced out of the neighbourhoods in which these institutions have been a binding force. (The destruction of Stockton, California, of more than thirty Negro [sic] churches is an example of what should not be done.) But a number of churches have assumed leadership. They have spurred a greater social responsibility for the less privileged and influenced officialdom to revise their eviction and relocation policies.

Abrams then quote examples of churches that developed housing units for its elderly, for the dislocated poor of the neighbourhood, and so forth.

Eunice Park (1995 : 31), in an article on the Bible, land and housing, suggests that locally-based initiatives are best for addressing the housing crisis. She qualifies this by saying that non-profit organisations and church groups, in solidarity with local people, could create viable partnerships with government, in order to develop housing.

In a challenging article on the role of religious institutions in rebuilding American cities, Taylor ( 1994 : 6/6) suggests that

> religious institutions can play a leading role on the revitalization of central cities... But first, they must expand their mission. Religious institutions have a long history of providing social welfare services to "needy" urban residents. They have distributed food and clothing, and they have provided emergency shelter, counselling and educational programs. However, the task of rebuilding central cities and revitalizing and economically developing black neighborhoods is much bigger than the delivery of social welfare services.

It requires transformed churches with a transformed sense of identity and mission.

> The urban church must view itself as the lead agency in the central city redevelopment process. It must move from congregational to neighborhood focussed development, and from neighborhood development to regional development... This means that religious leaders must acquire a deeper, richer understanding of how to rebuild and develop distressed neighborhoods, as well as the regional economy.

Although this sounds very ambitious and far removed from the reality of struggling inner city churches, it is a possible vision. I would like to briefly suggest some of the characteristics that might qualify the church to play an important role in inner city housing and transformational development.

### 5.3.1  Churches are Community-Based Organisations

Most inner city churches are, by definition, community-based organisations. Although I have indicated that some local churches have a majority of commuting members from elsewhere, their buildings and programmes are still continuing locally. As local institution the church can play a vital role in partnerships with other local institutions, building strong alliances for the sake of inner city housing and revitalisation. More and more inner city residents join local inner city churches in Pretoria, and therefore the church becomes a credible institution of the local community, representing a large percentage of its members.

Churches are property owners in the local community and therefore an important stakeholder who needs to voice its concern about issues affecting tis future and that of its neighbourhood. Sometimes churches are big landowners and in the inner city

of Pretoria the church might be one of the biggest, collectively, after corporations such as Old Mutual, Sanlam, and the likes. The issue is how the churches use this as a strategic leverage to effect public policy-making.

Local churches usually provide local services already, thereby engaging in relationships with the local community and speaking from a position of care. Churches who are intentional about incarnational ministry will draw and develop local leaders, and their pastoral leadership would often reside in the local community, thereby combining moral and spiritual leadership, with local rootedness and citizenship.

Priests of the Roman Catholic Church usually reside in their parishes which is ideal for incarnational ministry. St. George's United Church in Joubert Park, Johannesburg, decided to purchase a manse for their pastor in the inner city close to the church. That is a conscious step towards closer solidarity with the local struggle. Brian and Lisa Bakke live in a flat in Chicago on the corner of a popular meeting place for rival gangs and right on top of one of the walls frequented by gangs for their graffiti. Brian has developed an art and outreach ministry with the gangsters and theirs is an exceptional example of incarnational ministry.

### 5.3.2 Self-Interest

The interests of inner city congregations are usually localised and as inner city communities deteriorate these churches are also at-risk. Pierce (1984 : 30) quotes Fr. John Coleman, who asserted that

> ...parishes and neighborhoods - at least in inner cities - stand or fall together.

Coleman links community organising programs with local parishes, arguing that these two should be in dialogue, conscientising the parish on inner city issues, educating its members, who are often local residents, and mobilising it into actions for social justice. It is in their self-interest to do so. Pierce (1984 : 18-31) argues that the concept of self-interest is very important in mobilising people and churches into action. He distinguishes between self-interests and selfishness. Self-interests are the very real concerns of people or churches, not necessarily at the expense of others, but vital for their survival and sustenance.

The same point is stressed by Bob Lupton when he argues that vested interests might contribute positively to ministry in the inner city. When I have invested significantly in a community, not necessarily financially only, but by living there as a family, by sending my children to community schools, and so forth, I would take greater ownership of what is happening in and to the community (cf. chapter 3; 4).

It is in the interest of the church to transfer responsible stewardship into the critical area of inner city housing. The prophet provides the intriguing instruction in Jeremiah 29 : 4-7 that God's people should work for the shalom of the city, "since on

its welfare yours depends". This passage underscores, in similar fashion, the close relationship between the future of the neighbourhood and the future of the church. It is in the interest of the church's well-being, and that of its people, to work for the well-being of the city.

> Seek *shalom*, and you'll get the land.                    (Brueggemann 1977 : 126)

### 5.3.3   Identity and Mission

The church has the theological basis for public involvement, also in the housing arena (cf. Pierce 1984 : 38). The identity of the church as servant community is important as a foundation for a ministry of housing. It provides the theological basis for ministry that seeks covenantal solidarity, serving outside the ecclesial realm, and not necessarily always being recognised for its role in maintaining the stability of the inner city.

The essence of the church is in its outward mission to the world, wanting to serve, to save, to heal, and to change. This outward movement of service, change and justice, is particularly important for the church's own understanding of housing as a ministry. Housing is an outward mission, aimed at service, change and justice.

Jesus' images, comparing the community of disciples with salt and light and the kingdom of God with yeast, are important and foundational images for church-based housing projects.

### 5.3.4   Value-Based Organisation

Churches are value-based organisations, rooted in the Biblical values of compassion, justice, caring, sharing, stewardship and community. These values qualify the church to make a unique contribution towards inner city community development that is based on neighbourliness, fairness and humanness. The values of the church should spill over into the public arena, which will include housing.

Pierce (1984 : 37) quotes from a pamphlet distributed by the Industrial Areas Foundation.

> The economic and political middle of this country is being sucked dry by a vacuum - a vacuum of power and values. Into that vacuum have moved the huge corporations, mass media and "benevolent" governments... So we have given over control of much of our lives... to "experts" and "specialists", who are in fact only fronts for institutions of greed and unaccountable power. Without effective institutional power of their own, the families and churches withdraw, backbite, blame each other, or perhaps experiment with fads - ignoring their history and strength.

Pierce (1984 : 38) argues that congregations and average local families usually

share most basic values and the church is often trusted by the community. As a value-based organisation it could provide the moral leadership which is important to ensure value-based community development and value-based democracy.

### 5.3.5  Resources & Infra-Structure

### 5.3.5.1        Infra-Structure : Buildings and Administration

Currently many church buildings in the inner city are under-utilised, which could provide offices for housing or development initiatives. The church could become a meeting place for community residents, housing co-operatives, board meetings, and so forth. The Berea Community Forum has met often at the Wesley Methodist Church in Pretoria's inner city.

Besides using facilities as they are, church buildings might also be converted to serve as multiple-use community centres, youth centres, shelters for the homeless, and so forth. The St. George's United Church in Joubert Park converted part of their facility into an affordable housing facility, the Central Methodist Mission in Durban developed a men's shelter, and the Wesley Methodist Mission in Pretoria has developed shop fronts accommodating a second-hand store, a book shop and a small bakery.

Most established churches have administrative systems in place that could serve grass-root, start-up initiatives. Photocopiers and fax machines could provide an essential service in the early stages of a housing ministry, giving it time to be properly established.

### 5.3.5.2        People Power (Skills, Time & Volunteers)

Churches have skilled, resourceful people that could serve the revitalisation of struggling communities (builders, town planners, architects, quantity surveyors, engineers, organisers, bookkeepers, accountants, plumbers, carpenters, electricians, etc.).

Often retired people have incredible expertise to offer on a voluntary basis. Youth groups or cell groups are often seeking for opportunities to make a contribution. Work parties for the renovation of old buildings is one such an opportunity. It is important, however, that such involvement will be done in close partnership with the local community, and that the church members would become the servants and the learners.

### 5.3.5.3        Stewardship (Finance, Assets, Etc.)

Churches often look for opportunities to contribute to mission projects, either through their central budget or through mobilising members or small groups within the congregation. The assumption of this study is that urban mission should be a priority for the church, and housing as a credible form of mission could indeed become an item on the budgets of congregations. Habitat for Humanity International (Fuller 1995) has succeeded to mobilise churches worldwide into the ministry of housing. There are different ways in which churches could assist :

- providing start-up capital to implement a housing advice desk or a housing office
- accepting financial responsibility for a key housing staff person (either on the congregational payroll, as part of a mission support program, etc.)
- providing monthly finances to cover the overhead costs
- mobilising members or groups to contribute financially towards the renovations of a run-down inner city building or single housing units
- mobilising members or groups to contribute financially towards purchasing an at-risk inner city residential facility, taking over the mortgage loan of an at-risk family, or assisting a family to make the transition from rental housing to ownership
- taking financial responsibility for a single aspect of housing improvement, such as the building of a communal kitchen, the development of a communal laundrette, the security of the building, or a play area for children

The church could also contribute meaningfully to housing by contributing in kind. The Gereformeerde Kerk Pretoria has a piece of land in the inner city, which is currently neither utilised, nor can they sell their land. This land could become a gift to the broader church or a church-based housing company, to be used for the development of affordable housing. It could also be offered to the community for the same purpose. It could be offered at a low interest rate or free of interest. Or the Gereformeerde Kerk could enter into partnership with other churches to develop this land.

As was mentioned earlier, the Dutch Reformed Church in the inner city of Pretoria has large assets which could become vital in terms of on-going mission and service of the church in the city. Unfortunately they are not in dialogue with the broader church on their assets and seem to be willing to sell it off to anybody, as long as they get the best price possible.

### 5.3.5.4      Brokering

In some local churches, especially cathedrals, there are the kind of membership that could make very significant links to the corporate world and to key people in government structures. The St. Alban's Anglican Cathedral in Pretoria's inner city have members in key positions which could impact greatly upon the future of the inner city and its poor. The Dean of the Cathedral serves in an advisory capacity to the Minister of Welfare and Population Development and is highly respected. Yet,

the relationship between such individuals, their congregations and inner city challenges, still need to be nurtured more. They could play an important brokering role, linking communities of need and communities of resource, people of power with people who are powerless, the rich and the poor.

It becomes a pastoral task to guide prominent people as to how they could impact upon society, in general but with regard to poverty in particular, in the macro- but also the micro-context, as part of fleshing out a life of discipleship. Once again, it is a process of pastoral guidance towards a holistic spirituality where the false distinction between private religion and public affairs will be bridged.

### 5.3.5.5      Partnerships

The church, confessing that it is the universal body of Christ and always striving towards more visible unity at a local, regional, national and global level, is uniquely geared to facilitate and develop partnerships that could impact in significant ways upon urban communities in distress.

The first kind of partnership is local partnership between different Christian communities, breaking down the walls of separation and building trust between diverse traditions, the ecumenical and evangelical stereotypes, and black and white. Such partnerships could be informal through church forums, loose networks, or prayer breakfasts. It could also be formalised through united churches, joint community development trusts and housing companies (such as Pretoria Community Ministries and Yeast City Housing).

The second kind of partnership is between inner city and suburban churches (cf. Taylor 1994 : 6/6). The traditionally white, suburban religious institutions, possess the kind of resources that could contribute greatly to the inner city. In the same way partnerships between inner city and township churches should be developed. In the inner city of Pretoria, it is increasingly sensed that dealing with problems of homelessness or child prostitution are not inner city problems per se, but problems of the metropolitan area, which should be dealt with at a metropolitan level. Preventative care is vital and could only be developed in close relationship between inner city and township churches (or inner city and suburban churches). The dynamic of movement between urban and rural areas is also important to consider in terms of partnerships.

Lastly, the local church should explore the possibility of global partnerships, connecting with those who are involved with housing ministries in other parts of the world, sharing experiences and expertise, developing exchange programs for mutual learning, and accessing funds where possible.

Besides these internal church partnerships, the church should obviously seek

partnerships with other stakeholders through its involvement in the public arena. This will be dealt with in a more detailed way as part of the ministry praxis proposed in chapter 7.

It is important not to have any illusions about potential problems with partnerships. Partnerships are essentially rooted in relationships, and it is important to nurture these relationships as they provide the solid foundations for partnerships.

### 5.3.5.6      Power

The church obtains its power through its incarnational presence in a community. Through assets and properties in a certain neighbourhood the church is rooting itself, thereby taking ownership of such a neighbourhood and earning the right to speak into the life and future of that neighbourhood. Incarnational ministers, opting to live in an area, also gain power through their vested interests and the right to speak as residents and stakeholders. Individual members of the church, who has access to power and resources, could be power brokers on behalf of the inner city poor.

At its deepest level, the power of the church does not lie in its assets, properties or powerful people, however. That would have disqualified Jesus from ministry. At its deepest level the church as a servant community obtains its power through its selfless service. Through compassionate involvement with the poor, the church is exposing the "principalities and powers", claiming access to life in situations of death (cf. Pierce 1984 : 112). Through selfless service, the church gains credibility and becomes a voice to be listened to. The church has the responsibility to use its power to bring about healing and transformation. The prophetic servant church should never assume power, however, since prophetic witness often leads to marginalisation. But it is the way of the cross that leads to resurrection.

### 5.4     A Value-Driven Housing Process : The Role of the Church

I conclude this chapter by suggesting a value-driven housing process (cf. *values of Yeast City Housing* in chapter 7). Housing based on values could facilitate the real transformation of inner city communities.

The tables in 5.2.3 of this chapter already represent such a value-based approach to housing. It suggests certain functions and goals for the church's involvement in housing. Housing is, namely, an ideal arena to flesh out certain core values, to generate shared values and to empower a responsible culture. Housing could affirm the basic notions of human dignity and social justice. Value-based housing could also contribute to a participatory democracy through the process of community

organising, empowerment, leadership development, collective building management, and so forth.

> ...for a community to be whole and healthy, it must be based on people's love and concern for each other.
>
> (Fuller, quoted by Free; Jun/Jul 1996 : 2)

From the perspective of the church, housing becomes a visible demonstration of the church in solidarity with the city and the urban poor. The church's presence in the housing arena is the presence of a humble servant on a journey with inner city people. As the church nurtures communal solidarity in housing, it facilitates the humanisation of dehumanised people and places through mutual respect and tender, life-giving relationships. As the church acts prophetically to call for social justice and to facilitate creative housing developments with the poor, it builds signs of shalom or wholeness in broken inner city communities. The ultimate goal is still the transformation of the inner city, and value-based housing is by definition very relevant as a tool in such a transformational process.

John Perkins views the transformation of communities ultimately as a spiritual issue (Lean 1995 : 146). Likewise, Park (1995 : 32) argues that housing should be seen as a spiritual treasure or a resource which we need to manage through good stewardship. When housing is only seen as a speculative commodity, it will remain exploitative - excluding certain people in the process. Park (1995 : 32) suggests that "change can begin with a moral commitment from the community of believers". The Christian community could provide moral leadership in facilitating value-based housing processes in the inner city.

Pierce (1984 : 43) emphasises the important role that the church can play, recalling incidents where the church's public participation facilitated transformation. He is of the opinion that the church could provide "the initiative, financial support, credibility, leadership, meeting space and spiritual basis" for organising communities and for bringing change.

Providing value-based leadership in inner city communities could contribute to the vision of decent and affordable housing for all inner city people. Habitat for Humanity is a Christian NGO developing housing in partnership with poor communities based on certain Biblical values. They are building non-profit, no interest housing in partnership with the poor (Park 1995 : 31). Through the principle of "sweat equity" low-income people gain the opportunity to invest of their time and skills to build and renovate their own housing, affirming self-respect and community, and reducing the costs of units.

It is important to raise the question as to the difference between middle-class gentrifiers developing an area and displacing the poor, and incarnational ministry

that also wants to see  the rehabilitation and upgrading of housing and communities. I want to suggest that a value-based approach would overcome this tension. Incarnational ministry - as advocated by Perkins and Lupton - is not interested in its own profit, but exists for the sake of the local community and its people. Incarnational ministry will assess its success or failure in terms of the outcomes of its development projects for the poorest residents of the area. Incarnational ministry is developing intentional community, crossing barriers between rich and poor, and integrating the poor and marginal in the process of urban development, including them in the ultimate benefits derived from it.

*Incarnational ministry will seek to be agents of inner city transformation or urban revitalisation without displacing the poor.*

The church in urban neighbourhoods could play a transformative role, combining the best of gentrification with more fundamental conversion of the existing housing stock and participation of current tenants and owners in the process of revitalisation. The local people should be in the driver seat.

A last remark is that value-based and transformational housing should never be developed in isolation, but rather as part of a larger, more comprehensive community development strategy, which will include skills training programmes, job creation, education, health care, and business development (Linthicum 1991 : 167-168). On the other hand it should also include discipleship, church planting and counselling. Only through such a holistic approach could transformation be facilitated.

The principles of value-based housing can apply equally to the communities of Berea-Burgerspark, Salvokop, Marabastad and other inner city areas. In chapter 7 I will make an effort to integrate these principles into a proposed ministry praxis.

**YEAST City Housing**

# A PASTORAL PLAN FOR ACTION :

# A TRANSFORMATIONAL HOUSING MODEL, AS PART OF A HOLISTIC PASTORAL MODEL FOR THE INNER CITY

In this final chapter I will propose a pastoral plan for a transformed ministry praxis, with inner city housing as focus. The transformational housing model that I suggest should be contained within a broader integrated and holistic pastoral plan for inner city transformation.

- In order for local churches to develop transformational ministry in the inner city, they need to move beyond stereotype visions of the city, mission and ministry. Local churches need to overcome their anti-urban bias, embracing *a new imagination* of what is possible in our cities (cf. chapter 5; 4). Such an imagination will provide us with a vision for the city big enough to match the challenges of the city. We need to be able to imagine a transformed city - in the image of God's shalom.

- In chapter 5 I have suggested that inner city transformation should be rooted in *a spirituality of transformation*. Theological reflection follows on our lived faith, which is an act of spirituality. Likewise actions (ministry praxis) of transformation will be nurtured by a spirituality of transformation. A housing praxis which is developed in isolation from the liturgical event or the lifestyle of discipleship, therefore runs the risk of losing its soteriological depth. It is in liturgy and spirituality that the housing actions of the church find its sustaining and energising resources, and it is in the liturgy that the body of Christ is shaped by inviting the voices from the public arena to participate prophetically, critically and provocatively.

- A new imagination and a spirituality of transformation have led me to propose *a framework for a theology of inner city transformation* in chapter 5. The reflections in chapter 5 emerged from our existing ministry praxis in the inner city of Pretoria. The praxis that I suggest in this final chapter is a result of both an emerging praxis over the past 5 years, and the principles that I have outlined in chapter 5. It is the result of a continuous interaction between theory and praxis. As this transformed housing praxis is being implemented in the inner city, our theological reflections on inner city transformation would continue to be informed and the assumptions and principles advocated in this study might be questioned, adjusted, or affirmed. It remains an on-going pastoral cycle of action-reflection-action.

- *The following table identifies the elements that are part of my proposed ministry praxis.* It once again emphasises the continuous interaction between theory and praxis, as our lived faith are translated into deeds of ministry and

reflected upon theologically as we proceed on our journey. As we engage with inner city issues, we do theology and a ministry praxis emerges.

| A TRANSFORMED MINISTRY PRAXIS (FOCUSSING ON HOUSING) | |
|---|---|
| 1. | A Renewed Commitment to the City as Place of Mission : Imagining a New City |
| 2. | Establishing an Incarnational Presence |
| 3. | Nurturing Community |
| 4. | Toward a Spirituality of Transformation |
| 5. | Discovering a Theology of Inner City Transformation |
| 6. | Confronting Death, Proclaiming Life : The Church, Power and Powerlessness |
| 7. | *A Holistic Model for Urban Mission* |
| 7.1<br>7.2<br>7.3<br>7.4 | Different Modes of Ministry : Informing & Sustaining our Housing Praxis<br>Kerygma<br>Koinonia<br>Daikonia |
| 8. | *A Plan of Action : A Transformational Model for Inner City Housing* |
| 8.1<br>8.2<br>8.3<br>8.4<br>8.5<br>8.6<br>8.7<br>8.8<br>8.9 | The Institution<br>Mission<br>Values<br>The Process : Holistic Development<br>Objectives & Strategies<br>Structure, Staff & Community Participation<br>Relationships, Networks & Partnerships<br>Evaluation<br>Resource Development & Sustainability |

## 1. A Renewed Commitment to the City as Place of Mission : Imagining a New City

The first step in transformational ministry, is to make a renewed commitment to the city as place of mission. The city in general and the inner city in particular have become a frontier of mission (Greenway & Monsma 1989; Bakke 1997 : 116-117). It is the gathering place of people from different nations and cultures, the access point of the migrant poor, a concentration point of power and powerlessness, and the collective mirror of a city's soul.

As frontier of mission, the city is of tremendous strategic importance (Bakke 1997 : 12-15). It provides a demographic challenge as - for the first time - the majority of the world's people will live in cities in the 21st century (Dubose 1978 : 28; cf. also

chapter 4; 2.2) Cities are exploding globally and locally, and the urban life-style will influence people and societies everywhere. The extent of urban poverty (cf. ch. 4; 2.2.3), the housing shortage in cities (cf. ch.4; 2.2.4), spontaneous urban settlements (cf. ch.4; 2.3), the dynamics of changing inner cities (cf. ch. 4; 2.4), the growing disparities between rich and poor (cf. ch. 4; 2.4), and the way in which power is used and abused in cities, are increasingly challenges that the global church needs to take seriously, if it is to be serious about its mission in the world.

An even greater challenge is to be found, however, not within the city but within the church (Bakke 1997 : 13-14).

> ...the challenge is also ecclesiastical, fore every church and denomination will face the reality that while the church may keep the same basic functions..., the forms they take must adapt to the pluralized and kaleidoscopic realities of a twenty-four-hour city.

For the church to maintain its presence in inner city areas, and to develop creative and liberating institutions, another serious challenge is financial (cf. Bakke 1997 : 14). As other institutions fail to remain in the city, the church often becomes "the only institution that still has presence and credibility" (Bakke 1997 : 14). Creative ways will have to be found to sustain inner city ministry financially. The larger church, suburban churches, and denominational structures, should also be challenged with regard to this renewed commitment to ministry in the city.

A commitment to the city would imply a recovery of an authentic Biblical calling to the city, the establishment or continuation of an incarnational presence of the body of Christ, the discovery and development of a theology as big as the city (Bakke 1997), and actions of service, solidarity and sacrifice, that will demonstrate our commitment to the city visibly and credibly. Evangelism, pastoral care, and ministries of community development and social justice, will have to co-exist in cities, in order for the whole church to share the whole gospel with the whole city (Bakke 1997 : 66-67; 100).

A renewed commitment to the city must be grounded in a new imagination (chapter 5; 4), seeing the city through the eyes of God. What is required is an alternative imagination, defying the dominant, negative perceptions about inner cities and their future, and working towards the city in God's vision (chapter 5; 4.3).

The following are possible strategies to facilitate and ensure such a renewed commitment :

- Creating opportunities for urban exposure through site visits, city tours, short-term volunteer projects, joint ventures, presentations at churches, inviting the voices from the streets into church, and so forth.

- Challenging existing models of theological training and education, to urbanise the curriculum, or to add intentional urban-focussed course work.

- Creating opportunities for denominational and church structures to be exposed to the

challenge of inner city ministry, to respond with the allocation of budgetary and human resources, as well as available facilities.

- Encouraging the church-at-large (local churches, suburban churches, presbyteries, circuits, dioceses, regional and general synods, and overseas churches) to be faithful stewards of God's urban resources, through financial involvement, investment of skills and gifts, shared facilities, and human tithing - i.e. supporting people to relocate into the inner city.

- Developing Bible study material that will assist the church to start reading the Bible through the eyes of the city, discovering God's word and vision for the city, and the exciting ministry opportunities awaiting us in the city.

- Creating an inner city retreat centre, where people can "withdraw" in order to meet God in new ways in the streets of the city and in the eyes of the poor, thereby also conscientising and exposing the church to the realities and the gifts of the inner city.

- Nurturing a new vision by recalling what God is doing in cities globally, sharing stories of hope among God's people, inviting people from other cities to tell their stories, and reminding people of God's Story of love and imagination for our cities.

## 2.     Establishing an Incarnational Presence

*Rooted in a calling and commitment to the city, and aspiring to God's vision of a transformed city, the next step would be to establish an incarnational presence.* I have established the importance of incarnational ministry already in previous chapters. The church as a servant community is an alternative community that embodies the presence of God through its incarnational presence in the world (cf. chapter 5; 6.3). Following Christ into the city, the church has to seek for ways in which to incarnate itself, meeting God in the eyes of the poor and the cries of the neighbour (cf. chapter 5; 6.4.1 & 7.4.2). It is incarnational communities of faith that are able to proclaim life over death in inner city areas. As we die into the city, the new life in Christ can become a reality (cf. chapter 5; 8.5.2).

Such an incarnational presence would often require an intentional relocation or re-neighbouring process, as suggested by Perkins and Lupton. As we incarnate ourselves in a certain area, we become agents of reconciliation and redistribution and, eventually,  restoration.

The following strategies are possibilities to flesh out the goal of incarnational presence :

- Supporting local churches - through prayer, finances, and people - to remain in the city

- Encouraging people and creating opportunities for them to move into the city and to make it their home. People can buy an old house, flat, or building, decide to start an inner city commune with a shared living arrangement, and so forth.

  The point of relocation is that of intentional living in relationship with local people, sharing life with them, and investing time, skills and resources as these are appropriate (redistribution). Relocation also facilitates opportunities for reconciliation, breaking down barriers between cultures and races, and demonstrating visible signs of God's new community.

## 3. Nurturing Community

I have asserted earlier in the study that we should establish incarnational *communities.* An incarnational presence cannot be sustained without the nurturing of communities of covenantal solidarity and mutual faithfulness. We need to establish and nurture community at different levels. It is important to be intentional about the nurturing of communities locally where people enter into covenantal relationships with one another, committing themselves to common values, goals and a common vision.

We also need to nurture community in the city across denominational, racial and cultural lines, discovering our unity in Christ anew.

Thirdly, we need to establish relationships of solidarity with other people in the city - business, local government, police, service organisations and residents - in order to work together for the well-being of the city. This should be a critical, prophetic solidarity, however, being able to distance itself when needed, for the sake of justice and equality.

Ephesians 1 : 10 speaks about the process of God in history, as He

> bring(s) all things in heaven and one earth together under one head, even Christ.

This process of bringing everything under the lordship of Christ is made visible in the city where communities of mutual caring and solidarity emerge, and where networks and partnerships facilitate wholeness and justice.

The following are possible strategies that might facilitate greater covenantal solidarity in inner city areas :

- Creating groups of people (ministry groups, groups within churches, cells, etc) with shared vision, goals, values and projects.

- Creating opportunities for people to live closely together in the same area, and to develop a shared life-style with communal activities (inward and outward).

- Creating covenantal relationships whereby people commit themselves to be faithful to each other in sharing together and in sharing with the surrounding community.

- Creating relationships across denominational and racial / cultural lines, through prayer times, shared projects, intentional networks and partnerships, joint events, and so forth.

- Getting involved in community forums, nurturing relationships of trust and accountability, and building networks with inner city residents, local businesses, and other role players. Bakke is always referring to his visiting of local shop owners to ask them how the church could serve them to make the community a better place.

## 4.     Nurturing an Urban Spirituality

We need to be rooted in a spirituality of transformation (chapter 5; 5). This refers to the discipline of opening ourselves to God's Spirit who is creating within us a new imagination about what the city could become (cf. chapter 5; 5.1). This spirituality includes the values, commitments, rituals, and actions that will realise and sustain ministry of transformation in inner city areas.

In South Africa a spirituality of inner city transformation needs to be urban, holistic and African in character (cf. chapter 5; 5.7). It needs to include the diverse elements of fantasy or imagination, festivity or celebration, protest, struggle, and community. Our acts of faith need to usher in the city of our alternative imagination.

In chapter 5; 5.7, different elements were highlighted - based on Micah 6 : 8 - as essential components of such a spirituality of inner city transformation.

- It should discover and affirm God's presence in the inner city.

- It requires of Christian individuals and communities to die into the city.

- It calls us to a humble walk with God in the example of the humble Christ (humility).

- It calls us into communal relationships of tender love and faithful solidarity (faithful and fierce tenderness).

- It calls us to disentangle ourselves from unjust structures, relationships and practices, and to work for social justice in the public arena (justice and wholeness).

In chapter 5; 5.6.3, some of the implications or disciplines for nurturing an urban spirituality were indicated already.

## 5.     Discovering and Practising a Theology of Inner City Transformation

It was the assumption of this study that a contextual theology of inner city transformation is important in contributing to the kind of ministry praxis that is required in the changing inner cities of South Africa. Such a theology is not a static, rigid or complete set of dogmas, but rather a creative process of interaction and exchange between theory, praxis and spirituality. A commitment to the city, engagement with the city, and an emerging urban spirituality, need to be translated into a theology of transformation; such a theology of transformation needs to be translated again into a transformed praxis; and such a transformed praxis will again inform our theology of inner city transformation.

A framework for such a theology has been spelled out in chapter 5 and it has been contextualised for the inner city housing environment in chapter 6. Although it is rather ambitious in imaging a new, transformed city, it is this kind of a theology - as big as the city - that Bakke (1997) calls for in his book. He (1997 : 14-15) suggests that the primary challenge of the city for the church is a theological one. We need an urban theology.

The following table summarises the way in which such a theology could be translated into a local ministry praxis (cf. chapter 5; 3) :

| field of study | base theories | imperative (spirituality) | requirement | actions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ecclesiology | the church as servant community | to walk humbly with God | transformation of the church | incarnational servant communities working for change |
| anthropology | a theology of community | to love tenderly | transformation of human relationships | covenantal relation= ships; intentional communities; humanisation |
| social | a public theology | to act justly | transformation of urban systems & structures | prophetic communities calling and witnessing to signs of social justice and wholeness in every sphere of society |
| **TRANSFORMATION OF INNER CITY COMMUNITIES** | | | | |

Some of the important broad strategies required for a theology of inner city transformation, will include the following :

- A theology of inner city transformation must be intentional about establishing an incarnate presence (chapter 7; 1.2), and about developing a servant life-style and servant ministry in the example of Jesus.

- A theology of inner city transformation must be intentional about establishing a community or communities (chapter 7; 1.3) in which members will be committed to each other in relationships of covenantal solidarity. It must be intentional about building networks and nurturing partnerships, and about its role as bridge builder or facilitator to humanise relationships between people - powerful and powerless, rich and poor, black and white, men and women, and so forth.

- A theology of inner city transformation will move from establishing an incarnational and communal presence to a place of active prophetic ministry that will call for justice and that will demonstrate visible signs of a new society in the old.

- A theology of inner city transformation in the inner city will have a reflective nature, being self-critical and evaluative, always seeking to flesh out the gospel with greater credibility and integrity, always seeking to identify the numbness or death within us, and to be transformed into God's image and vision.

A theology of inner city transformation will be present on the streets and in the public places : listening to the voices of the city, developing an informed opinion, drawing on resourceful people to help shape that opinion, speaking out on key issues of concern; making alternative proposals; and using the media creatively and prophetically.

## 5.    Confronting Death, Proclaiming Life : The Church, Power and Powerlessness

The incarnational presence of the church, being in solidarity with the city, has to be translated into visible actions for justice and wholeness. Where the church enters the public arena (chapter 5; 7.6, 8.3 - 8.6) it finds itself in the middle of a battle between death and life. It is in this arena that the church has to confront death in all its forms, and proclaim life.

One of the most visible manifestations of the battle between death and life is in the struggle between power and powerlessness. The church in the inner city, focussing on issues of poverty, cannot escape from these dynamics, but need to develop a theology of power and a corresponding praxis, which will allow them to engage the realities of power and powerlessness. This was reflected upon in previous sections of this study already. In this section I suggest a practical Biblical framework (with practical suggestions).

### Mary Magdalene, Zacchaeus, and the Christian community

The diagram on the next page summarises this practical framework for ministry in the context of power.

The church in the inner city needs to embrace Zacchaeus (A) and Mary Magdalene (B) with the same kind of compassion and commitment, offering both the opportunity to become free. The path of liberation might differ for them, but the outcome will be the same.

The Zacchaeus-ministry is a ministry with the rich and powerful, helping them to become free. It will include conscientisation, advocacy, community organising, prophecy, and so forth. It will challenge unfair practices and call for the sharing of resources. It is a ministry that will assist people to become stewards of their God-given resources, utilising it for the well-being of all people. It is a ministry supporting people of power and resource to engage in a "downward" journey in order to be in a shared relationship with the poor.

The Mary Magdalene ministry is a ministry with the marginal, poor and powerless. It will show solidarity with marginal people, affirming their dignity and assisting them to organise themselves into action groups for change. It is a ministry of empowerment, helping the poor to help themselves and to engage with the powers in mutually

# Community of the Cross
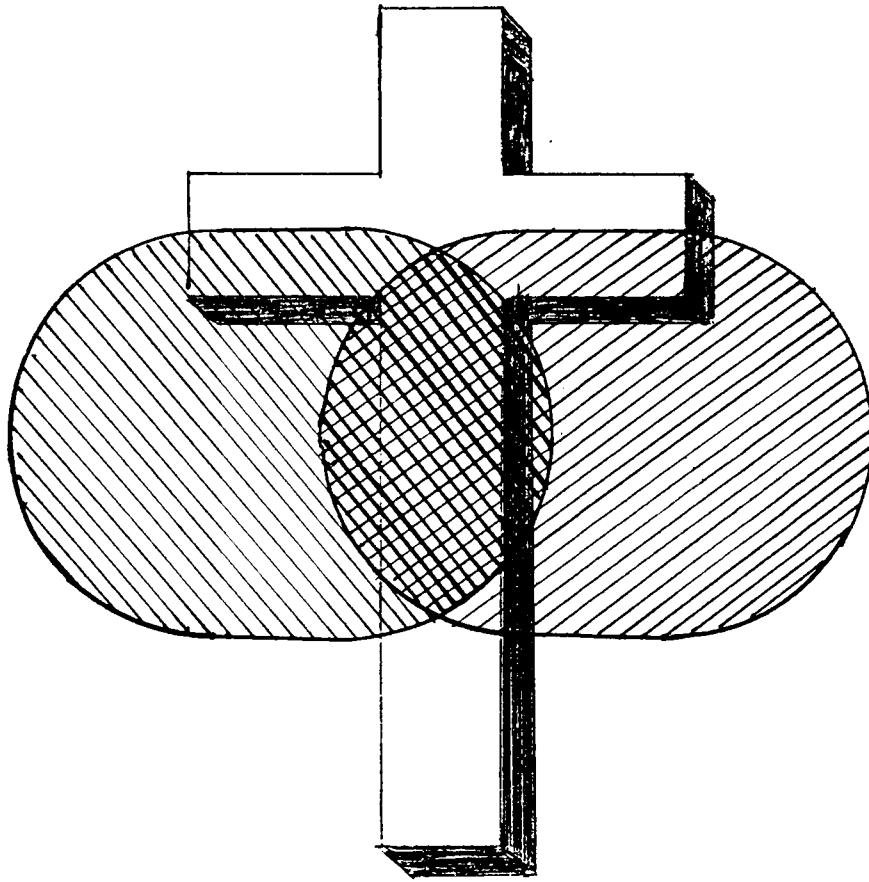


▨ Mary Magdalene
▨ Zacchaeus
▨ Christian Community

liberating ways.

Assisting the rich and powerful to become responsible stewards of their abundant resources, is an act of liberation. Empowering the poor and powerless to take responsibility for their own well-being by organising themselves for collective actions, is another act of liberation. The church in the inner city needs to provide pastoral leadership with regard to stewardship and empowerment, thereby providing liberating or redemptive opportunities for both powerful and powerless.

At the centre of this movement between Zacchaeus and Mary Magdalene is the notion of covenantal Christian communities (C). True Christian community will reflect the diversity of Acts 2, where rich and poor journeyed together in the Jerusalem congregation. Where the Christian community embraces rich and poor in affirming and accepting ways, there is liberation for these diverse groups individually, but also collectively. It is in the church as community that the rich will learn how to share in humility, and the poor will be affirmed to take their rightful places in society again. Where the church fails to provide such an equal and liberating community, it is in danger of reinforcing current prejudices and it is unable to become a bridge of healing and justice.

Examples of ministries that bridge these gaps are the "Homeless Talk" newspaper in which homeless people work with others to publish a homeless newspaper, addressing the concerns and the dreams of the homeless community, empowering homeless people to help themselves, and conscientising and offering opportunities for involvement to those with resources. Yeast City Housing is an example of creative partnership between inner city people (churches and residents) and suburban expertise, working together to assist the inner city poor in the creation of decent, affordable housing opportunities. Church of the Saviour in Washington DC has a ministry of money, helping rich and resourceful Christians to become better and more responsible stewards of their resources, investing in inner cities and Third World situations. Church of the Saviour is demonstrating this dual movement to the poor, through its Jubilee Housing ministry, ministry with drug addicts, and so forth, but also to the rich through its ministry of money.

A recent incident in the inner city of Pretoria clearly describes this dual process. Pretoria Community Ministries has developed a project with teenage girls-at-risk and on the streets, called Lerato. The outreach program of this ministry has identified that children were working as child prostitutes, not only on the streets of the inner city, but also in certain budget hotels. On Friday 28 August 1998 one of these hotels was raided by police of the Child Protection Unit and it generated substantial media publicity.

As an outcome of this raid 5 young girls decided to leave the streets and entered the residential program of Lerato House. This is the Mary Magdalene-ministry. At the same time, however, two meetings were called where the owners of four budget hotels were present. As a result of the media attention, they committed themselves to run a clean operation and no children are in these hotels anymore. They alleged that they were not aware of the presence of children in their hotels. It might be true, or they just kept a blind eye until the media publicity forced them to act. Whichever

way, they now made themselves accountable to the outreach team of Lerato and to the Child Protection Unit of the police, allowing these groups to enter their buildings and to keep a close eye. This is the Zacchaeus-ministry, dealing with those in power.

In a sense, the result is freedom for the girls who decided to leave prostitution, as well as the hotel owners who can now sleep with a cleaner conscience. It affirms the human dignity of both parties, and empowers both to act with integrity. It opened up new opportunities for creative, and almost unlikely, partnerships between hotel owners, child advocacy workers, the police, and the churches.

- **Processes and Projects**

It is important to make a further distinction between projects and processes. A project like Lerato House, with its street outreach program, drop-in centre and transitional housing facility, is vital as a visible demonstration of an alternative community offering new beginnings. Its focus is on the Mary Magdalenes of our city. On the other hand there are various processes to conscientise the public, the police, and the hotel owners. These are processes helping people like Zacchaeus to become free.

Projects are visible with clear goals and time frames. Processes should also have clear goals, but these are more unpredictable, as they are working at the level of relationships, values, prejudices and commitments. In dealing with power in the city, it is important to engage prophetically in various processes, while at the same erecting visible signs of hope (projects).

- **Responding to Power through Projects and Processes : Introducing the 8 P's**

In the arena of power we need to be aware of the invisible forces that might either hinder sings of hope or enhance them. I want to suggest eight such "invisible forces" - the eight  P's - which can impact upon inner city communities significantly. In order to confront death and proclaim life, to develop prophetic projects and to engage prophetically in various urban processes, the church has to take these eight P's seriously : prejudice, presence, prayer, proclamation, praise, prophecy, patience and partnerships (cf. Murray 1990).

**Prejudice** is the uninformed judgement of individuals and groups over other individuals and groups, confining each other to stereotypes and myths, and often basing public policy on these myths. The church ministering in an arena of power and powerlessness, has to identify stereotypes and prejudice, dispel their myth (cf. Conn 1987), and offer opportunities for new insight and understanding. This should be an intentional and continuous process, breaking down walls and building bridges between people.

**Presence** is the second invisible force, implying that the church is working its way into society as

salt, being invisible in the food, yet, giving it taste. Murray (1990 : 81) refers to the author of the letter to Diognetus, written centuries ago, stating :

> As the soul is to the body, so are Christians to the city.

The presence of God's people in inner city areas, living in solidarity with the powerless, becomes a powerful message to those in power, confronting death and proclaiming life. Murray (1990 : 80) provides a clear challenge to Christians to remain in inner city areas, unless God clearly calls them away.

**Prayer** is the third invisible force in which inner city and suburban churches can engage collectively, to celebrate God's presence in the city, but also as a way of engaging the destructive powers that want to destroy urban people and places. Prayer for the city needs to be informed and with insight (Murray 1990 : 71). Prayer needs to be coupled with presence, however, and translated into actions. Jeremiah 29 : 4-7 is a call to God's people in a hostile urban environment, to create a presence, to pray for the city, and to act on behalf of that city. Prayer should be rooted in presence and translated into actions.

**Proclamation** includes the multiple expressions of the message of good news, either through direct evangelism, preaching, church planting, the confrontation of powers or the celebration of life amidst places of darkness. Proclamation includes words of hope and encouragement, calls to repentance, confrontation of evil, and proclamation of life. This is important within a context where the powerful often becomes agents of death, and the powerless their victims.

**Praise** is suggested as a broad term for the twin notions of festivity and fantasy that were introduced in chapter 5 already (cf. Cox 1969).

> Inner city churches need renewal : celebratory praise, an expectation of the miraculous, enlarged faith and vision. But renewed churches also need the inner city - to earth much that is rather ephemeral and as a testing ground.
>
> (Murray 1990 : 101 - 102)

Murray (1990 : 102) makes it clear that this is not referring to a kind of triumphalism that inner cities don't need. It is rather rooted in deep submission to God, recognising our own brokenness in broken inner cities, and committing ourselves and our communities to God, our hope of transformation. Praise is not taking us out of our realities and should not be seen as escapist (Murray 1990 : 105). Rather, it is allowing the transcendent reality to transform us and our churches, for the sake of us becoming instruments of hope and transformation in our realities.

**Prophecy** in this context refers to the prophetic ministry of the church as it was suggested throughout the study. It implies prophetic witness and action on behalf of the powerless in public forums, providing prophetic alternatives, scrutinising public policy, becoming prophetic communities that embody the alternatives that we suggest, and so forth. Prophecy would imply different things to different churches in different situations (cf. Murray 1990 : 97-98). The Johweto Community is one such an example of a prophetic non-racial church that brought Christians from Johannesburg and Soweto together at the height of apartheid. Different situations will require different prophetic responses.

It is important to note that the prophetic task of the urban church should not only be directed to the city or society, but to the church itself. Murray ( 1990 : 111) says

> I believe urban churches have a prophetic role not only towards their cities but also towards the wider Church, challenging its complacency, identification with the successful and powerful, and insensitivity towards human needs.

**Patience** is vital in tough inner city environments, where rapid change and overnight transformation are seldom achieved. Murray (1990 : 136-137) reminds us of the tension between the present kingdom and the kingdom that is yet to come. Although small signs of hope are erected and sings of victory emerge, these are never complete and final.

> Victory in the New Testament is not triamphalism. It is the ability to stand firm patiently.
>
> (Murray 1990 : 137)

Murray (1990 : 137) calls for realism when he asserts that the urban mission of the church is an unfinishable task, that will only reach completion when our present reality is replaced by the New Jerusalem.

**Partnerships** are the relationships of trust and solidarity emerging in the city, and pulled together into joint actions and joint ventures for the sake of inner city transformation. Nehemia is an exceptional example of creative partnership to rebuild Jerusalem (cf. Murray 1990 : 142-154). Partnerships are mechanisms reflecting the process of God uniting everything under his Lordship (Eph. 1 :10). Partnerships can also be destructive, however, if they are based on individualist values, and at the expense of certain vulnerable groups in society. This study suggests partnerships for transformation, that go beyond partnerships for renewal.

- **In Summary**

As was suggested before, the Christian community should be at the heart of the church's struggle to build a new city. The elements of prejudice, presence, prayer, proclamation, praise, prophecy, patience, and partnerships, need to be considered in an inner city ministry praxis. These elements need to be considered in our projects and processes, aimed at bringing change and hope in inner cities. Without addressing the invisible forces of prejudice or the unholy partnerships of greed, and without releasing the invisible resources of presence, prayer, and so on, the church will find it increasingly difficult to bring liberation to people like Zacchaeus and Mary Magdalene in our inner cities.

## 7.    A Holistic Model for Urban Mission :An Inner City Housing Praxis as part of a Broader Inner City Ministry Praxis

A church-based inner city housing strategy needs to be embedded in a broader inner city ministry strategy. In order to sustain the church's intentional engagement in the housing arena, the different modes of ministry need to recognize and support this engagement.

Greenway and Monsma (1989 : 53) suggest a holistic model for urban mission, which includes conversion to Christ and discipleship, church planting and development, community ministries addressing human needs, and a cosmic concern for all that God has created.

The church's inner city ministry praxis should include strategies for discipleship, church planting and church development, community ministry, and broader ministry that addresses global and cosmic concerns.

This study is focussing on housing, within the broader context of a holistic model for urban ministry. The study does not allow, however, for a detailed discussion on church planting and development, conversion and discipleship, and so on. Housing is essentially a community ministry addressing human needs, but it is also contributing to the broader urban environment, giving expression to the concern for the whole of God's creation. The intention of the housing praxis is primarily community ministry and cosmic concern, but it should also include a strong discipleship dimension (cf. 3.3).

There are also challenging global examples of church planting and church-based housing initiatives being combined in very creative ways. Church of the Saviour in Washington DC, Bethel New Life, Lawndale Community Church and Reba Place in Chicago, as well as the ministry of the Roman Catholic parish in Smokey Mountains, Manila, are all models of ministry in which the dual processes of local church development and involvement in housing have affected each other. People who have gone through the housing process join the church, and on the other hand church members who reside in the inner city, represent its housing concerns and shape the vision and focus of ministry.

*I want to suggest the housing praxis of the inner city church as a very significant ministry focus with the potential to integrate all four dimensions of the model suggested by Greenway and Monsma.*

## 7.1    Different Modes of Ministry : Informing & Sustaining our Housing Praxis

The model of Greenway and Monsma is also reflecting an integration of the traditional distinction of three modes of ministry, namely kerygma, koinonia and diakonia (cf. De Beer 1997 : 37). The first focus of their model is kerygmatic, the second is koinonial, and the third and fourth elements are diaconal. Together they represent the witness of the church in the urban context.

> Robinson suggests **martyria** or witness as the all-embracing term for the church's work. Our ministry in this world serves as a witness, in word and deed... But our martyria (witness) includes kerygma, diakonia and koinonia.
>
> (De Beer 1997 : 37-38)

The church's witness (martyria) includes proclamation (kerygma), fellowship (koinonia), and service (diakonia).

Although each of these modes of ministry has its own intention or focus, they cannot exist without the other. The kerygmatic function has proclamation as its primary

intention, but needs to combine that with a communal and social dimension. The same applies to koinonia and diakonia.

These three modes of ministry differ in intention, but together they form the witness of the church in the world. When Harvie Conn (1982 : 35-36) writes about holistic ministry, he asserts that the different modes of ministry are not isolated parts of the kingdom. Each one does not exist in isolation from the others. They should be completely integrated. Kritzinger (1988 : 35) explains their integration using the image of scissors. He suggests that kerygma and diakonia are two blades of the same pair of scissors. Koinonia is the screw connecting the two blades in the centre.

> Other theologians suggest a similar threefold function for the church, namely a faith function, community function and social function (cf. Heyns 1978 : 374; Pieterse 1982 : 25).

(De Beer 1997 : 38)

The faith function, corresponding to kerygma, calls people into a relationship with God through proclamation of the gospel. The community function is to create fellowship by nurturing the faith community to maturity (koinonia). The social function serves the broader community through the diaconate of the church (diakonia). These three functions are not existing in separation, however, as they inform each other and consistently overlap.

The housing praxis suggested in this chapter has a diaconal intention, but should integrate the dimensions of kerygma and koinonia. It has a kerygmatic dimension as it

> ...is proclaiming Christ's Lordship over urban systems and urban housing, and sharing Christ's love when appropriate and suitable with some of the tenants.

(De Beer 1997 : 49)

It expresses the dimension of koinonia when it builds community, create support systems, link people into society, or organise fellowship evenings.

An evangelist would focus on inner city residential facilities primarily with the intention of kerygma or proclamation. Even the evangelist should include the other dimensions or functions of the church within his or her ministry praxis, expressing

> ...a diaconal dimension..., considering the context in which flat dwellers live, their social needs and aspirations, and so forth. If not, the proclamation of love might lose its integrity since people can't see God's love in rat-infested flats, dark foyers and lifts that don't work.

(De Beer 1997 : 49)

The dimension of koinonia or community can be expressed through support groups, the nurturing of fellowship and mutual care in buildings.

I am exploring the threefold modes of ministry or functions of the church, i.e. kerygma (proclamation or faith), koinonia (fellowship or community) and diakonia ( service or social), within the context of the church's role in the public arena in general, and inner city housing in particular.

## 7.2    Kerygma : Proclamation / Faith

Different ministries are included in the category of kerygma. Preaching, teaching (didache), evangelism and counselling, could all be understood as kerygmatic functions, proclaiming Christ in words, explaining the good news for people to understand and be transformed, translating the good news into a specific context or specific situations, and  nurturing the faith of a people.

These kerygmatic functions do not exist in isolation of the church's other functions, however, and here I would briefly want to make a few suggestions as to how the kerygma of the church could inform, strengthen and sustain the church's public ministry and housing praxis. Implicit are suggestions on how the church's involvement in the public arena and with housing, could shape the nature of its kerygmatic ministry.

Gutierrez (1989 : 16) suggests that it is on the garbage heap of the city that we should "look for a suitable language for talking of God". We need to speak of God from the underside of history, from the sub-city, "from the standpoint of the poor of the earth" (Gutierrez 1989 : 16).

I would like to make this my starting point for this section. Before our kerygmatic ministry in the inner city can be appropriate, we need to listen to the voices of the city ourselves. We need to listen to the voices of the poor and marginal, and we need to interpret these voices in the light of God's Word. Only if we understand what good news is to poor inner city dwellers, would we be able to break this news in appropriate, life-giving and liberating ways. The content of our kerygma and the goals thereof, need to be contextualised for the realities of inner city situations, based upon our attentive and responsive listening.

### 7.2.1  The Content of Our Kerygma

The following elements are included as part of the content of our proclamation :

- **Proclamation of Good News to the Poor... and the Rich**
The church should proclaim good news to the poor (Luke 4 : 18), contextualising it into the realities of the inner city. Our proclamation should remind the poor that Christ came for people like them. In as far as the rich turn from their wealth and to Christ and their neighbours, the gospel also becomes good news to them, liberating them from the power of materialism and death.

- ## Proclaiming the Message of Reconciliation

Our kerygmatic ministries should lead to reconciliation between people and God. In Christ the broken relationship between God and humanity is restored. This lies at the heart of the church's proclamation. The reconciliation between God and us also has horizontal implications, however, as it facilitates reconciliation between people and people, as well as people and God's creation.

- ## Proclaiming God's Presence in the Profane City

The kerygmatic ministry of the inner city church should proclaim the presence of God in dark situations and in unexpected or profane places. The incarnation of Christ fleshed out the Word of God in the realities of our existence, which indeed includes the profane and evil realities of the inner city.

- ## Proclaiming the Humble God of the Poor

As was indicated before in this study, God is in a special way concerned with the poor and oppressed. Our kerygmatic function should introduce the humble God who reaches in a special way to those who are pushed to the margins. This message is liberating for the poor themselves, and prophetic for the rich and powerful. It evokes a humble, inclusive faith, as opposed to an elitist faith which is exclusively for some.

- ## Proclaiming the Power of the Powerless : Servanthood and the Cross

Central to our proclamation is the servanthood and the cross of Christ. In his powerlessness, Christ defeated the powers. Recovering these images and recognising the power of the powerless, are not only good news, but it also has radical social implications for those who abuse the powerless.

- ## Proclaiming the Seizure of Power

The kerygmatic function of church is to broadcast the seizure of power (Cox 1965 : 11). Christ, in his powerlessness, defeated the powers. Our proclamation is calling people to freedom from the principalities and powers of this world, but at the same time it gives people responsibility over and for them.

- ## Call into Community (incorporation)

The kerygma of the church is the function of the church that evokes and nurtures faith within people. People of faith are called into communities of faith. It is part of the kerygmatic function of the church to call people into the new community that Christ has established on earth.

> At the centre of evangelism should be an answer - the kingdom of God embodied in a community of salvation and sharing.
>
> (Conn 1982 : 30)

Conn (1982 : 29-30) speaks of the task of *incorporation* - calling people into covenant communities of identification, inclusivity, acceptance, salvation, mutual caring, and sharing.

- ## Call to Humanisation

As with the previous element, the element of humanisation corresponds with the theology of community, proposed in chapter 5 already. The proclamation of the church is not only about personal salvation or reconciliation with God. The good news of the gospel has to include

> the announcement of the restoration of humanity, of fallen imagehood redeemed in Christ "the image of God" (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3 :10).
>
> (Conn 1982 : 31-32)

- ## Call to Celebration

Proclamation that focusses on good news should evoke celebration (Conn 1982 : 32-33). Worship is the result where people grasp faith in personal and life-changing ways. Campolo (1990 : 9) reminds us that Jesus always sought to have fellowship with his disciples and with sinners, sharing the good news practically and around a meal, and teaching them the art of real celebration. The kingdom of God, says Campolo, is a party. Our proclamation should call people to celebrate life in Christ.

- ## Call to Justice

Conn (1982 : 33-34) emphasises that proclamation of the gospel has a transforming effect, not only spiritually, but also socially, politically and economically. When people are liberated from the power of sin, they are called to express signs of God's shalom in their lives. This implies that proclamation of the good news also calls us to do works of justice and mercy, to seek for transformation of unjust structures, and for wholeness in every sphere of society. This is the whole gospel as Jesus proclaimed and lived it (cf. Luke 4 : 18-19).

All these elements together provide a biblical foundation for ministry in the city. It qualifies the kind of faith that we are called to - i.e. not only personal, but also communal; not only private but also public or social; not only about salvation, but also about humanisation and justice. It does not side with the rich and powerful, but affirms the poor and weak. It is a faith bought by the cross and expressed not in power but in servanthood.

It is clear, therefore, that our kerygmatic ministry should explain the social dimensions of the gospel, the centrality of the poor, and the public agenda of the church, for it to be authentic and holistic evangelism and discipleship. Our kerygmatic ministry should provide a mandate and challenge for mission that will take the church beyond its sacred spaces, calling it to incarnate its faith in profane places and at the points of greatest need.

### 7.2.2 Kerygma, Public Ministry & Housing

Besides presenting the content as outlined above, the kerygma of the church can also contribute to the sustenance of public ministry and an inner city housing praxis in the following ways :

- In simplest terms, the kerygmatic function of the church is calling **people to walk humbly with the humble God** (cf. chapter 5). This walk with God is qualified by a call to humility and servanthood, as well as a reminder of God's character, caring for the poor and embracing the oppressed. Our humble walk with God will therefore draw us to the places where God is, urging us to serve humbly in those same places.

- Secondly, our kerygmatic ministry - preaching, teaching, evangelism - should not shape a triumphalist church, but **a servant church** in the image of Christ. Through the kerygmatic functions the body of Christ can be prepared and equipped for public ministry and for ministries of service in the housing arena.

- The proclamation of the church should serve the function of **conscientisation**, making God's people aware of the challenges of the inner city, the plight of homeless people and inner city

slum dwellers, and the injustices of urban housing structures. It should explain the consequences of Christ's victory over the powers and principalities, and provide guidance as to how God's people can take responsibility over power in the inner cities.

- The kerygmatic ministry of the church should engage in the *re-evangelisation* of Christians, helping us to understand discipleship holistically, liberating us from middle-class cultural categories of Christianity, and liberating us to a form of discipleship that will be communal - i.e. establishing relationships of mutual solidarity, and social - i.e. living our faith in the public arena.

- The kerygmatic ministry of the church should call people to the *threefold conversion* of Micah 6 : 8, i.e. conversion to God, to people and to the public arena (cf. chapter 5). Such a threefold conversion would prompt the church into humanising relationships in inner city slums, and public ministry that will transform inner city housing.

- The kerygmatic function of the church introduces the good news of *the kingdom of God*, reminding us that the church is but a sign of the kingdom, and that the ministry of the church should establish similar signs of the kingdom in the public arena in general, and in the housing arena in particular.

- The kerygmatic function of the church will eventually result in *church planting and development*, either establishing new faith communities where there is a need, or adding to the numbers of the church new people that come to faith. We need to question the kind of churches that we plant : are they merely replications of existing models that often withdraw from the public sphere, or do we plant churches that develop holistic ministry in the full sense of the word (cf. Greenway & Monsma; ch.7; 4.1) ?

The kerygma of the church should include an intentional call to the public arena and to engagement in inner city housing, providing a Biblical base, mandate and challenge for such involvement.

### 7.2.3 Proclamation - Personal Transformation - Social Transformation

Our activities of proclamation have to result in personal transformation of people, and social transformation of places. Too often, however, we assume that personal transformation automatically leads to social transformation. That is simply not true. Part of the proclamation of the gospel should be an *intentional* focus on the social dimensions of the gospel.

De Gruchy (1986 : 28) speaks of conversion as a spiritual rebirth, or a complete reorientation of our lives so that we will move from conforming to the values and powers of the world, to being agents of transformation. Those who have been transformed by Christ begin to dream about and work for a world of justice, love and freedom. Transformation by Christ will provide us with a new agenda for living which include social and economic imperatives.

Howard Rice (1991 : 165) suggests that those who have met the living Christ will be

> more loving, more accepting, more forgiving, and more willing to involve (themselves) in concern for others.

Encounters with God should not lead people away from other people, since that will raise serious questions as to whether people have really encountered Christ. Rice (1991 : 72) is of the opinion that a deep spiritual experience with Christ will often not be euphoric, but rather disturbing - because when we truly encounter the love of God we cannot but "(become) aware of the tragic condition of the world".

In a different style and with different words, African-American scholar, Theodore Walker, jr. (1991 : 34), suggests likewise. "To get right with God" implies doing God's will. And God's will includes the activities of Matthew 25, which are provision of food, shelter, clothing, health care, freedom, and so forth. Walker (1991 : 34) suggests that achieving the right relationship with God, will imply "the empowerment of the people". A right relationship with God always contains social and ethical imperatives.

This close relationship between faith, community and society, should be expressed in the different kerygmatic activities of the church.

Harvie Conn (1982) writes profoundly about *evangelism* as the twofold ministry of doing justice and preaching grace. He emphasises the close relationship between preaching of grace and deeds of justice, brought together in the ministry of evangelism. He (1982 : 30; 33) suggests that evangelism includes, among other things, a call to humanisation and a call to justice. This is echoed by De Gruchy (1986 : 221-227), asserting that evangelism and justice belong together, as well as Pannell (1992 : 15), who states that "evangelism cannot be separated from ethics".

Conn (1982 : 14) suggests the model of Jesus as appropriate for communicating the gospel in our day. God did not save humanity from a distance "or from across the Jordan river" (Conn 1982 : 14), but revealed Himself in Christ Jesus. Jesus became flesh and  entered our reality. This is the incarnational model of communicating the gospel. Evangelism in the inner city should also be incarnational in nature, fleshing out the Word in concrete social circumstances.

I mentioned earlier that listening to the voices of the city should be the starting place for sharing the word of God. Referring to Bonhoeffer, Conn (1982 : 20) emphasises the importance of listening as the first step in the process of proclaiming the gospel.

> We should listen with the ears of God that we may speak the Word of God.
>
> (Bonhoeffer 1954 : 76)

Conn (1982 : 20) then raises the rhetoric question :

> Does our model of evangelism as talking inhibit the obligations of evangelism as hearing ?

Do we listen with openness, acceptance and affirmation, or are we too preoccupied with what we want to say ? It is in listening that our proclamation will become relevant and appropriate.

The image of Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24 : 13-35) is a helpful metaphor for evangelism in the inner city. Jesus was walking alongside the two disappointed travellers, without forcing them with words of proclamation. He rather listened to them before he started to speak. He walked with them patiently and gently. Eventually it was in the breaking of bread around the table that the travellers were able to recognise Jesus.

Where we break bread together, people will recognise the resurrected Lord. It is not necessarily in our words, but in our deeds of solidarity and sharing, that Christ becomes visible and real.

> Where bread is not broken, Jesus is not recognized, God is not served, and the people are not free.
>
> (Walker 1991 : 121)

Where the church becomes visible in the public arena, and willing to break bread with homeless people on the streets, Christ will be discovered and people will become whole.

In the same way, *preaching* and Bible study need to be presented in ways that are liberating, communal and social. Hessel (1992 : 93) suggests Bible study and preaching that are liberating. Preaching should be Christological, focussing on the grace of Christ, communal as the knowledge of God is embraced and explored within a Christian community, critical as a prophetic consciousness gets nurtured (as opposed to the royal consciousness) (Hessel 1992 : 98-99), and contextual as preaching and Bible study links our current situation with God's word.

Hessel (1992 : 94) identifies 3 types of social preaching, i.e. prophetic interpretation of social issues, education in Christian social values, and a social reading of the Bible. He refers to Jesus and housing, saying that Jesus did not actually analyse the housing crisis of his time, but Jesus' parables stressed the values of the kingdom, which had direct application to justice in the public arena generally, and to the way housing has been deprived from widows, in particular.

Hessel (1992 : 105) emphasises that preaching, when it is a communal event, would almost always result in social action for change. Where the community of faith is given the opportunity to reflect critically on their context in the light of God's Word and on God's Word in the light of their context, their faith would be translated into action.

> Theological reflection flows out of and into public action by the community of faith.
>
> (Hessel 1992 : 105)

In the area of *teaching* of Christian education, the action-reflection-action model on which this study is also based, paves the way for a liberating hermeneutic. The congregation involved in public ministry is the locus of such a hermeneutic. Current epistemologies assert that it is not enough to know or to believe - it is about living out that which we know and believe (cf. Hessel 1992 : 111).

The purpose of Christian education or teaching is to nurture a

> critical consciousness and hopeful vision that enable participants to evaluate events and act courageously to change dominant systems - doing the truth in love as they experience social conflict, encounter fresh claims and ideas of justice, and work for shalom.
>
> (Hessel 1992 : 111)

Walker (1991 : 109-110) states that the surrender of African-American education to largely white institutions, has contributed to the African-American crisis. He suggests that the African-American church should recover what has always been part of their church tradition, namely the multiple functions of socialising and educating their community. I would like to suggest that the task of the inner city church in South Africa should include such a teaching ministry that will educate, socialise and nurture our people into a new culture based on the values of mutual responsibility and caring. The various kerygmatic activities of the church would have failed if it introduced people to God without nurturing, socializing and educating them into becoming disciples and citizens, rooted culturally, spiritually and emotionally.

Education is derived from "educare" which literally means "to lead out". The teaching ministry of the church should lead the church out of its narrow sacred confines, and the shackles of the royal consciousness, and into the public arena, where God wants his people to act prophetically for healing and wholeness. Hessel (1992 : 113) refers to Jesus, stating that He was teaching his disciples in ways that led them out to new places, as they started to imitate Him in their own lives.

Even in the arena of *counselling*, people like Gerkin (1991), Messer (1989), Hessel (1992), and others, call for a closer integration of the pastoral and the prophetic. Gerkin (1991) writes a book entitled *Prophetic Pastoral Care*, in which he explores this integration in more detail. Messer (1989 : 117) comments on the false separation of pastor-shepherd and prophet. He (1989 : 116ff) suggests the image of a political mystic, finding "the transcendent in the commonplace, the profane in the holy". He also suggests that the church could be a pastoral and prophetic community simultaneously.

> Shepherding in the tradition of Ezekiel and John links pastoral care with prophetic politics. The authentic shepherd is a steward of God's justice and peace for the sake of abundant life in all kinds of social relations in all times of the life cycle.
>
> (Hessel 1992 : 128)

It is virtually impossible to provide pastoral care in an inner city slum without engaging prophetically with those who perpetuate slum conditions indefinitely. In this scenario, social transformation could enhance personal transformation by improving the social environment.

Parker Palmer, quoted by Hessel (1992 : 124), suggests involvement in the public arena as "a therapy unattainable in the private realm". Engagement in public affairs is, namely, therapeutic in nature, as it provides us with the opportunity "to lose ourselves in others and thereby (we) find ourselves healed and whole again".

## 7.3    Koinonia : Fellowship or Community

> Koinonia is the ministry of the church that is intentional about nurturing and building the faith
> community internally through fellowship, worship, and so on.
>
> (De Beer 1997 : 43)

This internal koinonia should, however, result in actions that will facilitate community-building outside the walls of the church as well.

Different ministries are included in the category of koinonia. Worship, liturgy, fellowship, celebrations, community-building, prayer, healing and counselling could all be classified as ministries of koinonia. These ministries could be offered in the larger space of the public worship event (liturgy), or in the intimacy of small groups, prayer meetings, and so forth. It could also take place in the establishment of mutual relationships of trust and care within the public arena.

### 7.3.1  The Objectives of the Church's Koinonia

The overall aim of koinonia is to establish communal or covenantal solidarity, that will nurture the faith of individuals and the Christian body. Within the community of faith it is vital to nurture such relationships of solidarity, which will be expressed in loving, affirming and healing tenderness, and which will result in the humanisation of people and places.

### 7.3.1.1       Liberating or Empowering Worship and Liturgy

Hessel (1992 : 79) states that public worship is an occasion for social or public ministry, as this becomes the "weekly battleground with 'the principalities and powers'". It is the place where we commit ourselves to justice, or get immunised against the injustices all around us, depending on the nature of our worship.

> The One who made friends with all humanity through a public ministry that led to a cross cannot be worshipped in a socially passive way. To focus on the cross as a worship symbol is to highlight an instrument of cruel execution set on a garbage dump outside a city wall. To remember him in communion is to be directly involved with socio-political realities.

> (Hessel 1992 : 85)

If we worship in the light of the cross, we are reminded that Jesus was pushed to the margins of society where he achieved victory on our behalf. It is on the margins of society that Christ still wants to bring healing through his presence. Our worship may never be escapist, but should draw us deeper into the realities of life.

Isaiah 58 is a challenge to God's people, directed at the nature of their worship (cf. McAfee Brown 1988 : 126-130). They were introvert in worship, while the prophet defined worship in terms of outward actions of justice and mercy. There is no separation between worship and justice in this text; in fact, worship is *defined* in terms of social justice. Radical worship, says McAfee Brown (1988 : 128), goes hand in hand with radical public involvement, working to change society at its roots, to work for economic and social justice, to ensure the integration of the poor into society.

McAfee Brown (1988 : 134) refers to Jeremiah 20 :13, distinguishing between prophetic language and contemplative language in this text.

> Sing to the Lord;
>     praise the Lord !
> For (the Lord) has delivered the life of the needy
>     from the hand of evildoers.

The first two lines in Jeremiah are contemplative and the last two are prophetic. McAfee Brown suggests this as the appropriate way to speak about God in worship, combining the mystical and the political (cf. Messer 1989 : 116ff), the private and the public, the contemplative and the prophetic. There are many other cases where the prophets called for such integration between worship and justice, between ritual and life (cf. Amos 5 :18 - 24).

Hessel (1992 : 81) focuses more specifically on the liturgy on Sundays and makes the distinction between domesticating or liberating liturgy (cf. also Cox 1969 : 70-75).

> Liturgy, like education, either domesticates or liberates. There is no middle ground. Domesticating liturgy justifies the way things are...
> (Hessel 1992 : 81)

Hessel contrasts domesticating liturgy with liberating liturgy. A liberating liturgy, not sanctioning the status quo, serves to empower believers to develop an alternative prophetic praxis. Hessel (1992 : 90) suggests a close integration between liturgy and action, or liturgy and life. Liturgy in the narrow sense of the word should be

seen, namely, against the backdrop of the larger liturgy of life, i.e. the people's daily work in the light of God's work. McAfee Brown (1988 : 87-88) asserts that life should be seen as a whole and that worship and action should be held in an integrated fashion as two expressions of the same thing : the liturgy of life and the liturgy of Sunday should be integrated.

A living liturgy, according to Hessel (1992 : 90-91), is a space in which members can give account of their struggles, joys and different ministries, in the public worship service, in order for communal sharing, prayer and encouragement. For a living liturgy to develop, it is important that each member will be involved somehow in a ministry group or base community, in order for the integration between worship and action, or liturgy and life, to become real. Hessel refers to the Church of the Saviour and the Latin-American base communities where all members are also engaged in works of ministry and transformation. Such integration serves to liberate the liturgy, placing it at the heart of the church's public ministry.

Hessel (1992 : 91) reminds us "that liturgy is both serious and festive". Therefore the serious public concerns of the moment should be raised as part of the liturgical event. It is only when we can identify death in our midst, that the liturgy can help nurture a new imagination, new hope and new faith, which will include the possibility of resurrection. And in nurturing such hope amidst struggle, we are developing the capacity for festivity as well.

Hessel (1992 : 92) suggests "a vital, participatory people's liturgy", where people bring the stories of life to the table of the Lord. The liturgical space should create opportunities for story-telling, prayers, ministry of healing, personal and collective confession - both of guilt and of faith. Where the liturgy is largely removed from life, it would be a sterile event, unable to liberate us to action in the public arena. Where we invite the reality of people's lives and stories into our liturgies, we will be liberated for contextual action and transformative ministry.

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**Story-Telling in Melodi ya Tshwane**

Melodi ya Tshwane is a multi-racial Christian church in the inner city of Pretoria. It is a congregation of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa. In September 1998 a series of three services was held on the theme of truth and reconciliation. This was done to bring the lives of the people, their social realities and their stories, into the liturgical space. On the third Sunday, both a black member and a white member were asked to share their stories of life in the old South Africa. These stories were painful and challenging. After their stories we were able to break bread together around the communion table, celebrating this table as the occasion for forgiveness, acceptance and healing.

In telling our stories, the wounds of the past are brought to the surface. And opportunities are created for mutual forgiveness, restoration and reconciliation. Liturgy and life were integrated in these services, by the stories people told, and in this integration the liturgy became a place of mutual liberation.

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Finally, we need to take note of the comments of Walker (1991 : 105) on worship, especially in the African city and in embracing an African urban spirituality. He speaks about the exclusion of rhythm, dance and beat from the worship experience, saying that the idea that these are secular forms of music was imposed by Westerners upon African people. I would even go further in suggesting that moving away from dance, rhythm and the beat, is to move away from the original Biblical images of worship. Walker (1991 : 106) suggests that we should allow people to dance to the glory of God, "rather than to the perennial themes of unrighteousness". He continues to say that dance is educational, healing, empowering and celebrating.

In our inner cities we need to recover dance, and other forms of creative arts, as legitimate liturgical expressions with the potential to facilitate public confession of guilt or faith, to conscientise people through drama, mime or dance, to facilitate therapeutic processes as people engage creatively, to celebrate God with our whole body, soul and spirit, and to mobilise people into public action.

## 7.3.1.2. Providing Nurture, Fellowship & Empowerment

The koinonia of the church aims at creating a space in which God's people are nurtured in their faith and as a family of believers; in which they experience intimate fellowship with God and each other, through worship, prayer and sharing; and in which they are empowered as community and as individuals to engage with the world around them. This function of the church should serve to build identity and community, on the basis of which the church could impact upon society. While this remains an important function of the liturgical event on Sundays, this might often be too big to facilitate true koinonia or fellowship. The larger celebratory event needs to be balanced out by smaller, more intimate fellowship opportunities, as expressed in the cell church, house church, mission group, prayer group, and so forth.

## 7.3.1.3 Shaping Our Theology and Consciousness : Re-Evangelisation & Conscientisation

Our theology is shaped in the fellowship or community of the church by the way in which we are together, and by Christ's presence in our midst. The place of fellowship is also an ideal and safe environment in which to nurture an alternative consciousness to the dominant consciousness of the world (cf. chapter 5; 4.1). It is in celebrating the new and alternative community of the kingdom, that we are conscientised to live according to the radical values of the kingdom. True koinonia which is rooted in the incarnational and transcendent Christ, will enhance the re-evangelisation of believers and their conscientisation, calling us to embrace a holistic gospel, to meet with Christ among the poor, and to recognise and celebrate the Lordship of Christ as it is manifested in different urban systems, places and people.

### 7.3.1.4        Inclusive Community : Embracing Strangers

In an inclusive community (cf. chapter 5; 6.4.2.2) the opportunities for fellowship or koinonia would be enriched by our openness for strangers in our midst. Our fellowship should not be exclusive, but always inviting those from the outside to participate. It is in listening to strangers and outsiders that our fellowship is becoming a celebration of Christ's presence, and an opportunity to be transformed. In listening to the voices from the streets, we will start to hear the voice of God calling us into the public arena. It is important to be a listening community, allowing people to inform us about the contextual realities of the inner city, in order for us to be shaped to become an outward-looking church.

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Lilian grew up in Marabastad. Her parents were forcible removed from here. For many years she lives in the backyard of an Indian shop owner in Marabastad. At an Ecumenical Ascension Day Service in 1996, Lilian shared her story and the story of Marabastad. Not only did it help to create an awareness among inner city churches, but it was the first time that Lilian was able to share her story with a group of people like that. She related afterwards that this was a genuine healing experience for her.

Brenda is another resident of Marabastad, running a small enterprise from there, and active in the small emerging Christian fellowship. She related her story of faith in the context of Marabastad to the members of the Melodi ya Tshwane congregation at a Communion Service. Listening to her story has helped to make this congregation aware of the realities of Marabastad, and they are currently seeking for meaningful ways in which to connect.

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### 7.3.1.5        Public Confession of Guilt and of Faith

One of the important elements in the liturgical event is the public confession of guilt and of faith. In confessing our lack of love, our prejudice, our broken relationships, our participation in unjust structures, we are developing a new consciousness and we are shaped to disengage from the past and to re-commit ourselves to a new life. Our collective, public confession should not replace personal one-to-one opportunities for confession, however. We are reminded in James 5 : 16 that we have to confess to each other and to pray for each other in order to be healed. It is in the koinonia of the church, where we are intimately together, that we need to create opportunities for both personal and collective confession. We need to create non-threatening moments in which people can express their anger, confession or forgiveness, where the community of believers can pray for each other, and where healing can be shared.

> After the death of Chris Hani, the Johweto Community decided to cancel their normal Sunday morning worship service. Instead, they allowed angry young people to come and speak their hearts in the space of a Christian fellowship. Johweto was criticized for doing this. They asserted that the creation of a space in which young people could voice their anger was therapeutic and contributed to the prevention of more violence. They were able to speak within the context of a Christian community and to pray with Christians, allowing them to deal with the trauma of Hani's death.

The second form of confession is our shared or communal faith, confirming that by which we are willing to live and die. Confessions such as the Belhar Confession and the Living Creed are contextualising the basic tenets of our faith in contemporary terminology with which contemporary Christians can relate. In order for a ritual, such as a confession of faith, to be liberating, it sometimes needs to be stripped of it's a-historical clothes, and made contextual for the present believers. Confessions, if appropriately selected and used, are also a way of conscientising the community of faith to embrace a holistic faith, which has implications for the public arena as well. What follows is a liturgical version of the Belhar Confession (Cloete & Smit 1984), presented in the form of a Litany. This is used in congregations of the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa.

## A liturgical version of the Belhar Confession
L : We believe in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
who gathers, protects and nourishes the church
from the beginning of the world to the end

**C : The church is one,**
**The church is holy,**
**The church is universal.**
**It is the community of God's children,**
**Called together from the whole of humanity**

L : We believe that the reconciling work of Christ
gives birth to a uniting church,
because church unity is a gift from God
and a goal we need to strive for

**C : The unity of the church must become visible**
**so that the people around us can see**
**how separation and hatred are overcome in Christ**

L : We believe that the genuine faith in Jesus Christ
is the only condition for membership
in this Christian church

**C : So we reject the suggestion**
**that colour, class, gender or culture**
**should determine who belongs to this church**

L : We believe that God has entrusted to the church
the message of reconciliation,
and that the church is called to be the salt of the earth
and the light of the world

**C : So we reject the belief
that the gospel encourages separation of people
on the basis of race, gender, class or culture.**

L : We believe that God wants to bring about
true justice and lasting peace on earth;
We believe that God is, in a special sense,
The God of the suffering, the poor and the downtrodden

**C : God gives justice to the oppressed
and bread to the hungry;
God sets captives free
and makes the blind to see;
God protects strangers, orphans and widows
and obstructs the plans of the wicked**

L : We believe that the church is the property of God
and that it should stand where God stands :
against injustice and with those who are wronged

**C : So we reject every policy that causes injustice
and every teaching that allows injustice to flourish**

L : We are called to confess and do all this
in obedience to Jesus Christ, our only Lord;
even if authorities or laws oppose this;
even if punishment and suffering are the result

**C : Jesus is Lord !
We will follow him !
To the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory for ever and ever !**

**Amen**


This confession has grown in the South African soil as a response to apartheid and the lack of visible unity among churches from different racial groups.

The confession emphasises the local and global unity of the church, the need for a visible expression of that unity through reconciliation, the imperative to oppose ecclesial separation on false grounds of race, gender and class, the challenge to work for justice and peace on earth, God's special concern for the poor and downtrodden (Is. 58 & Lk. 4 : 16-19), the calling to stand where God stands - with the oppressed and against injustices, the prophetic role of the church even if it has to include civil disobedience, the Lordship of Christ, and radical discipleship.

In order for the church to adopt a public agenda that will address issues such as homelessness, slum housing and unjust urban structures, it is important to have

rituals that will shape and sustain such public engagement. The Belhar Confession is very appropriate in this regard, as it affirms basic tenets of our faith that are very timely and relevant to the struggles of inner city communities. It also echoes many of the sentiments expressed earlier in this study already.

Although it is criticised as a confession too narrowly focussed on people instead of God, and liberational in its emphasis on God's special concern for the poor, this is a potentially important confession from the perspective of the inner city poor, mobilising the church into public action on behalf of the poor, into works of justice, peace and reconciliation, into following Christ in radical ways, and into a recognition and celebration of the Lordship of Christ over the powers and principalities of the city.

The Living Creed is a confession contained in a book by Kathy Keay (1994 : 99), and often used in the Melodi ya Tshwane congregation of the Uniting Reformed Church. The author is anonymous.

**The Living Creed**

We believe in one God, Author of life,
Creator of the universe.
We believe in the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
Who came into the world to seek the lost and to redeem the whole creation.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life,
Who leads us to all Truth, renewing us
And enabling us to grow
in the likeness of Christ.
Create in us today
Faith, hope and love
So that together we may liberate
Those who are oppressed
And work towards the renewal of the whole earth.

The words of this Creed are more contemporary and liberating than some of the more traditional confessions, inviting Christians today to participate in Christ's work of redemption and restoration. It is a Creed culminating in a prayer for faith, hope and love, stirring the community of faith into action.

The Living Creed is focussed on salvation for the lost (personal sin), human growth into the likeness of Christ (personhood), liberation of the oppressed (socio-economic), and redemption of the creation (cosmic). These are the concerns of the God we confess, and these should be the concerns of the church as well. Publicly confessing this liberating faith, could assist in the task of mobilising the church into the public arena, and in sustaining the church's evangelical and diaconal involvement.

## 7.3.1.6      Public Prayer

Koinonia is nurtured in prayer. Where we pray together, for each other, or collectively, we bring the life of our community, the lives of its people, and the life of our city, to God. We speak to God and we hear from God. In prayer we are shaped as a community and we are shaped into action on behalf of the city. Hessel (1992 : 86) speaks about prayer, once again broadening the content of prayer to include the whole of humanity, instead of narrowly focussing on spiritual matters only.

> Public prayer features gratitude and petition for God's liberating-reconciling action, while expressing anguish, frustration, and longing amid public events... Authentic prayers of the people celebrate God's gift of shalom, rejoice in God's loving justice, express solidarity with victims of oppression, protest dangerous or wicked enterprises that cloak their deeds in the name of order, freedom, security, or justice, and anticipate God's power to intercede for the poor and meek.

Hessel (1992 : 87-88) then suggests a litany that places prayer within the public realm.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Leader :** | Creator Spirit, you made the world and everything in it; you created the human race of one stock and gave us the earth for our possession. |
| **People :** | Break down the walls that separate us and unite us in a single body. |
| **Leader :** | Gracious God, we have been divisive in our thinking, in our speech, in our actions; we have classified and imprisoned one another; we have fenced each other out by hatred and prejudice. |
| **People :** | Break down the walls that separate us and unite us in a single body. |
| **Leader :** | Loving Reconciler, you mean us to be a single people, ruled by peace, feasting in freedom, freed from injustice, truly human, men and women, responsible and responsive in the life we lead, the love we share, the relationships we create. |
| **People :** | Break down the walls that separate us and unite us in a single body. |
| **Leader :** | Source of all Truth, we shall need ever-new insights into the truth, awareness of your will for all humanity, courage to do what is right even when it is not allowed, persistence in undermining unjust structures until they crumble to dust, grace to exercise a ministry of reconciliation. |
| **People :** | Break down the walls that separate us and unite us in a single body. |
| **Leader :** | Power of Life, share out among us the tongues of your Spirit, that we may each burn with compassion for all who hunger for freedom and humanness; that we may be doers of the Word and so speak with credibility about the wonderful things you have done. |
| **Leader and People :** | Lord, direct us in ways we do not yet discern and equip us for the service of reconciliation and liberation in your world. |

The congregation or small groups can also develop their own collective prayers or litanies to express in words those items that they want to share with God in prayer. Different ministry groups would probably focus on different prayer items. A group focussing on housing would develop prayers that are appropriate for their specific focus. Others who are engaged in the lives of those who suffer from AIDS will develop collective prayers accordingly.

## 7.3.1.7        Healing and Counselling

Koinonia is the space in which healing can be ministered through acceptance, affirmation and respect. It is in this space of intimate fellowship that people become willing to share their stories, to pray for each other and to receive counselling from fellow believers. Those on the margins of society need to be welcomed into the intimate fellowship of the church where they might be supported to take the first steps on the road to healing. The church as healing fellowship should be in touch with the pain and wounds of the city, offering the wounds of Christ who died on the margins as sources of healing for those who live on the margins of the city.

Again, as was suggested in 2.3.3.1 and 2.3.3.5, the koinonia or fellowship of the church should offer the opportunity for people to tell their stories, as story-telling is often cathartic, paving the way for healing and growth to take place. In the context of housing, victims of forced removals, evictions or other forms of relocation, need to be drawn into more intentional processes of healing and counselling, as the body of Christ provides practical support and encouragement in times of crises.

## 7.3.1.8        "Let's Break Bread Together..." : Holy Communion

Theodor Walker (1991 : 34; 102) emphasises the importance of holy communion as an affirmation of the social or ethical dimensions of our relationship with God. At the table of the Lord the different elements of proclamation, fellowship or community, and a call into society, are brought together.

According to Walker bread symbolises, not only our basic nourishment, but also all the other necessities and resources that contribute to healthy social existence.

> Bread is a symbol for food, for money, for wealth, and for other resources and opportunities. Comprehensively conceived, to break bread means to share food and money and land and power and other resources, including spiritual and religious resources, with the people.

> (Walker 1991 : 34-35)

Walker (1991 : 35) distinguishes between an ethic of breaking bread, and an ethic of crumbs. The ethic of breaking bread is the model that the church should implement. When we break bread together at the communion table, we should not

be content with the trickle-down of crumbs to the poor, but we should be praying for a relationship with God that will result in acts of justice and in the empowerment of the poor. At the communion table we are called to share bread instead of crumbs.

Walker contrasts the ethic of breaking bread with his so-called counter-model, namely an ethic of crumbs. He refers to the story of Lazarus and the rich man in Luke 16 : 19ff. The rich man was condemned, not simply for being an unbeliever, but for his refusal to break bread with the poor Lazarus. Lazarus had to be content with the crumbs from the rich man's table. The trickle-down theory of economic growth (cf. chapter 4; 1.1 - 1.2) suggests that the poor will eventually be fed from the crumbs of the rich.

> This is the ethic of the rich man who went to hell. This is the ethics of unrighteousness. This is the ethic of crumbs.
>
> (Walker 1991 : 35)

Walker's suggestions radicalise the communion table, placing it at the heart of societal injustices and economic disparities. At the communion table we are called into the world as agents of justice and transformation. At the communion table we are called to break bread together, to share our land and resources, to work for better housing for all, and to engage in the empowerment of the poor. Our breaking of bread together evokes us to form bread-breaking partnerships for economic and social justice, not only locally but also globally.

At the communion table we break bread together, praying to get into a right relationship with God, while at the same time knowing that we are called to the empowerment of the people, through the ethic of breaking bread.

McAfee Brown (1988 : 93) reminds us that the original Eucharist, as celebrated by the people of the exodus, was a celebration of political and economic liberation from Egypt. There was a close relationship between liturgy and liberation.

The celebration of holy communion is an ideal opportunity in which many of the elements suggested above could be combined. This is the place where strangers could be invited into fellowship, where believers are nurtured with the bread of life, where people could relate their stories and confess their private and public sin, where forgiveness and healing could be ministered, where the body of Christ could collectively confess their faith and offer their prayers, where the drama of life could be expressed in dance, drama and art, and in doing all of these things, the community of faith can be liberated from the dominant consciousness of society and empowered to liberating actions in the city.

### 7.3.1.9    Building God's New Community

The church's koinonia, as seen by Harvey Cox (1965 : 125ff), is to demonstrate that

which the church is proclaiming in its kerygma and which the church is working for in its diakonia.

> It is "hope made visible", a kind of living picture of the character and composition of the true city of man (sic) for which the church strives.
>
> (Cox 1965 : 125)

The church should not only be a community of hope, in isolation from the rest of society, but as an incarnational Christian community the church should be shaping society through its participation in it. The Christian community should be an embodiment of the Biblical images of a new city, where God's presence is real, where justice and equality are achieved, and where reconciliation is lasting (Rev.21 : 22-24; Is. 65 : 17-25; cf. chapter 5, 4.3). Although the perfect community will not be achieved on earth, the Christian community should work at erecting signs of the new city, continuously opening itself up for the transforming work of God's Spirit in its midst.

The koinonia of the church is the ideal place to nurture an alternative imagination that will keep the vision of a new city alive. The real challenge is to facilitate a shared dream or vision for a new community. De Gruchy (1986 : 232) shows how the dream of some people for power is the nightmare of those who are powerless. The dream of the powerless for liberation is the nightmare of the powerful. He suggests that we go beyond these divisive categories, seeking and nurturing a common vision with new life for all, that will include broken barriers, restored relationships, justice, righteousness and equality.

> Without such a shared vision the people will perish, and all our dreams will become a nightmare.
>
> (De Gruchy 1986 : 233)

In the liturgy, worship and small group meetings of the church, and in the church's work for relationships of solidarity in society, the vision of restored communities in the image of God's new city can be nurtured. Through the sharing of global and local stories of hope, collective prayers, and selected Bible readings and songs, the community of believers can start to envision a transformed society.

The following is a suggested creed to confess our faith in a God who cares for communities, to educate believers in the public or social nature of their faith, and to encourage them to work with God in the rebuilding of communities and cities.

## A CREED FOR RESTORED COMMUNITIES

We believe in the power of God
who is stronger than all other powers,
and who empowers us to overcome evil

We believe in the tenderness and justice of Christ
who embraces the poor and the homeless
and speaks out against those who abuse and exploit

We believe in the transforming work of the Holy Spirit
who changes lives and attitudes,
who rebuilds communities and cities

We believe that God sets the lonely in families,                    (Psalms 68 : 6)
to the homeless He gives shelter                                    (Isaiah 58)
to the hungry He gives a city in which to settle down              (Psalms 107)

We believe that God calls rich and poor to freedom,
to serve and to share, to heal and empower, to journey together

We believe that God restores the broken streets,
and provides safe dwellings for people to live in                  (Isa.58 ; Zech.8)

We believe that God loves the city,
        God's presence is the foundation of our hope
        and the source of our service

We believe that God is building a new city,
and we are called to work with Him.


## 7.4    Diakonia : Service or Social Ministry

The diakonia of the church refers to the function of the church that proclaims Christ through deeds of service and justice. Ministries of compassion, ministries of justice, community development, advocacy, and community organising, are some of the activities that resort under the diaconal heading.

Since I have elaborated extensively on the church's public ministry in chapter 5, and I deal extensively with the proposed inner city housing praxis - which is primarily diaconal - in the next paragraphs, a few remarks on the diaconal function of the church would suffice.

I have referred to Cox's suggestion previously that the diaconal function of the church is to heal the urban fractures (Cox 1965 : 114). While koinonia focuses more on healing inside of the body of believers, though not exclusively, the diakonia is fleshing out the gospel and God's embrace in the public arena, though not exclusively, offering fellowship and healing "outside the gate". It is important, however, that there should be continuous interaction between the koinonia and

diakonia of the church.

Walker (1991 : 120) underlines this close interaction, referring to the communion table, and suggests that the bread we ought to break should include money, leadership, food, jobs, land, housing, health care, child care, and all the other resources

> essential to the nurture, survival, fruitful increase, and empowerment of all the people.

(Walker 1991 : 120)

Although I focus on an inner city housing praxis in these last pages, a housing ministry cannot exist in isolation. It needs to be part of a broader inner city diaconal or community development strategy, that will range from ministries of compassion to ministries of liberation. Hessel (1992 : 156) introduces an inclusive model indicating the different elements to effect social change. I would like to adopt his model here, suggesting it as a multi-layered diaconal model that will serve the city in different ways and at different levels, ranging from service provision, institutional development, and community organising, to the reforming of legislation.

An inner city housing praxis also needs to be sustained by the elements introduced before - commitment, incarnation, community, an urban spirituality, urban theology, and so forth (cf. ch.7; 1-6). It needs to be informed by the kerygmatic and koinonial functions of the church (cf. ch.7; 7 [7.1 - 7.4]). It also needs to be strengthened by a complexity of other diaconal services and structures, both inside and outside of the church.

Basic assistance with food and clothing, skills training, adult educational programs, legal aid, health care, child care, credit unions, small business development, recreational and cultural programs, creative arts, ecological programs, and other diaconal functions might all contribute to the effective implementation of an inner city housing praxis. Without such support structures in place, people in low-cost housing facilities might struggle to sustain themselves adequately.

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People in the housing facilities managed by Yeast City Housing (see below) have access to a Centre for Legal Aid, child care, church-based second-hand shops, the Five Loaves Restaurant, providing low-cost meals, counselling and referral services, and linkages to the churches.

As the family of ministries develop, and as Yeast City Housing networks with other community-based resources, there will be even more services that can support the provision of transformative housing.

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These diaconal services should be further enhanced by the advocacy ministry of the church, speaking on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves (Proverbs 31 : 8-9). The church's advocacy role should be seeking for justice in the public arena,

which might include restructuring of the city, prevention of the displacement of the poor, and so forth. Furthermore, an inner city housing praxis should be supported by a ministry of stewardship (cf. Church of the Saviour), providing opportunities for people to share their skills, gifts and resources into housing development.

Where the church establishes a presence on the margins, we might encounter opportunities for our own healing. It is, namely, a surprising reality that we might often discover God's presence - not in prayer or liturgy - but in the places where we least expect it. In the profane places we might discover the Holy One.

> Those who seek after Christ will be met in the heart of darkness and suffering - in the midst of pain, and not in avoidance of it !
>
> (Rice 1991 : 171)

## 8.    A Plan of Action : A Transformational Model for Inner City Housing

The assumption of this study is that true inner city transformation would include decent, affordable and diverse housing options.

The goal of inner city transformation is seriously challenged as long as there is a lack of affordable housing close to the work place, as long as homeless people and squatter residents are marginalised and displaced without alternatives, as long as housing standards drop, as long as banks withdraw and estate agents exploit new property owners. Inner city transformation is hindered by the exclusion of local people and the inner city poor from participatory planning processes.

The inner city housing praxis that I suggest here, would seek to address some of the key housing issues that could contribute to transformed communities, dignity, humanisation and wholeness. The housing praxis that I suggest here co-insides with the development of Yeast City Housing, a church-based housing company in Pretoria's inner city. I will present Yeast City Housing as a ministry praxis for the inner city, embedded within a broader pastoral plan as was suggested in the first section of this chapter.

I will quote extracts from the Yeast City Housing "Project Proposal" (cf. Addendum 1) in suggesting a ministry praxis. I will also discuss and elaborate on this plan, trying to add new insights and dimensions as I have gained them throughout the study.

The "Project Proposal" was a communal process as different role players contributed to the process of reflection on the role of the church with regard to inner city housing. The current ministry praxis for housing has emerged as a collective process between church-based community workers, inner city residents, inner city churches, community development forums, and outside resource people who feel committed to the inner city. This communal or collective development of a project plan and ministry praxis, is in line with one of the early assumptions of this study,

emphasising that theology should be a communal process of shared learning (cf. chapter 2, 3.1.4).

A plan of action for an inner city housing praxis will include the following components :

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2"><b>INNER CITY HOUSING PRAXIS : PROJECT PLAN</b></td></tr>
<tr><td>8.1</td><td>The Institution</td></tr>
<tr><td>8.2</td><td>Mission</td></tr>
<tr><td>8.3</td><td>Values</td></tr>
<tr><td>8.4</td><td>The Process : Holistic Development</td></tr>
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<tr><td>8.9</td><td>Resource Development & Sustainability</td></tr>
<tr><td>8.10</td><td>Summary</td></tr>
<tr><td><b>Note :</b></td><td>The background and nature of the problem have been dealt with in previous chapters already, when the housing situation in the inner city of Pretoria has been analysed against the background of global trends.</td></tr>
</table>

## 8.1    The Institution

The institution is *YEAST CITY HOUSING (Pty) Ltd.* Incorporated in terms of section 21 of the companies act.

(Yeast City Housing; March 1997 : 10)

The churches of the inner city came to the conclusion that inner city housing is an area in which the church can make a unique contribution. The experience and rootedness of the church *in* the inner city, its latent resources, its emphasis on human and social development, its implicit values, and its non-profit character, were all qualifying factors in motivating for a housing institution.

It was felt that a separate legal entity should be established with its own capacity, to focus in a more single-minded manner on the management and development of housing-related programs in the inner city. Yeast City Housing was then established by the churches of the inner city as a section 21 housing company. Yeast City Housing is to be owned by the churches of the inner city, and based within the local inner city communities. Through participatory management the local communities would be represented in the processes and decision-making of Yeast City Housing.

## 8.2    Mission

*The mission of Yeast City Housing is to ensure decent, affordable housing for and with low-income and at-risk inner city individuals and groups* (cf. Yeast City Housing; March 1997 : 3; 9).

Yeast City Housing is a company with a human face (cf. YCH; March 1997 : 3). It is a value-based housing institution, providing an alternative vision and approach to housing management, seeking to combine a physical, human and social management approach in order to create humane and viable housing environments. It is working towards the vision through the development of different objectives.

The name is derived from the parable where Jesus compared the kingdom of God with yeast (Matthew 13 : 33; NIV).

> The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.

John MacArthur (1987 : 372-375), in his homiletic commentary on Matthew, highlights three points that this parable wants to make.

Firstly, small things can have great influence. Secondly, the influence of the kingdom is a positive influence. Thirdly, the positive impact of the kingdom comes from within.

*The first point is "that small things can have great influence"* (MacArthur 1987 : 372). A small piece of leavened dough can permeate a large piece of unleavened dough to make it rise. The kingdom of God has power to impact upon society in great ways. Often the initial appearance of kingdom signs might be small and insignificant. As a sign of the kingdom is erected in the midst of struggle and decay, it starts to work its way through the struggle, bringing hope and influencing change, because acts of the kingdom are acts of the Spirit of God and therefore acts of power.

Where Yeast City Housing establishes a small, seemingly insignificant presence in the inner city, it needs to stay faithful and patient for the yeast to permeate the whole environment and for healing and change to steadily work its way through the brokenness. That is what the vision of Yeast City Housing is about - to get involved with bad buildings, to get involved in small ways in different parts of the inner city, to mix the yeast into different situations which have become desperate - until signs of hope emerge. The church, as agents of God's kingdom, can have a yeast effect in inner city communities.

The *second* point that the parable wants to make, according to MacArthur, is *that the influence of yeast is positive*. It is a pervasive influence, providing taste as it works its way through the dough. The kingdom of heaven contains the same kind of

pervasive and positive influence  with the potential to contribute positively to the well-being of communities. Yeast City Housing, as a church-based housing institution based on kingdom values, could facilitate such a pervasive kingdom influence in the inner city. Sings of God's kingdom could emerge all over the city as the seeds of the yeast of the kingdom is worked into different situations and places.

*The third point is that the positive impact of the kingdom comes from within.*

> The **leaven** must be **hid** in order to have any impact.
>
> (MacArthur 1987 : 374)

MacArthur argues that yeast has to be hid in the dough, not in the sense of not to be seen, but in the sense of deep penetration. The kingdom wants to permeate the world completely "as leaven completely permeate the dough". If the church withdraws from the public arena, it disqualifies itself to be an agent of the kingdom in the city. The image of yeast is recovering the notion of "dying into the city" once more, emphasising that the impact of the kingdom is realised, not in withdrawal from the city, but in the penetration of human realities, however painful they might be. A positive impact will be achieved in as far as the church incarnates itself to become a community in solidarity with the inner city, a church from within the community.

Yeast City Housing seeks to become a vehicle of the church, permeating situations of struggle and despair in the inner city housing arena and allowing God's Spirit to exercise a pervasive and positive influence in the city, through its faithful service.

## 8.3    Values

I concluded in chapter 6 by suggesting a value-based housing process. Yeast City Housing is suggested in this final chapter as such a church-based housing institution driven by certain fundamental values.

YCH is a church-based, Christian housing company, seeking to translate certain Biblical principles into the public arena of inner city housing. As a result of this study, the set of values might be re-evaluated in a participatory process, and it might either be strengthened, expanded or retained as it is.

The following table outlines the core values of YCH (YCH; March 1997 : 21).

1. Yeast City Housing is a **grass-roots community organisation** and the driving force behind it is representation by inner city residents.

2. It values **social justice** in which the poor will have access to decent, affordable housing facilities, centrally located and close to job opportunities.

3. It values the **dignity** of the individual and families, and through decent housing this will be affirmed.

4. It values **compassion and community**, not only providing a housing unit but offering a therapeutic process of healing, meeting people where they are at, and drawing them into community.

5. It values **empowerment**, building on the capacities of people and communities, so that the poor and marginal can be empowered to take their rightful place in urban society, contributing to its well-being.

6. It values **cultural diversity** and seeks to be culturally sensitive and to facilitate **reconciliation** in the process of housing people.

7. It values the **city as a place of hope and opportunity**, acknowledging urbanisation and economic realities.

8. It values **shared leadership** and therefore develops residential capacities to manage facilities in partnership, and eventually even alone.

9. It is a **non-profit organisation** with the sole purpose of serving the interests of the inner city poor without enriching the organisation or anybody else in the process.

10. It functions in close **partnership** with other organisations and is using these networks to help people with their assimilation back into society; the accountability of local government and the need for institutional support in the provision of housing are acknowledged.

11. We value the importance of **stewardship** and offer opportunities to people to be stewards of their time, money and expertise, as they work closely with inner city poor communities; volunteers could assist in various ways which will further support the affordability of housing.

I would like to make some critical comments, which is in a sense self-critical, as I initially drafted these values until it was re-worked in a participatory process within the YCH steering committee. Obviously there might be various shortcomings, but I will suffice with a few suggestions.

I suggest the following :

- that value 1 would be expanded to read : "...the driving force behind it is represented by inner city residents *and churches*".

- that value 8 be slightly altered to read : "...and therefore develops *the capacities of residents* to..."

- that value 9 be altered, replacing the word "sole" with "primary" to read : "It is a non-profit organisation with the *primary* purpose..."

- that it would be considered to include some of the principles for a transformational inner city housing praxis, as outlined in chapter 6, 5.2.3, as part of the set of values; the elements of humanisation indicated in 5.2.3 (ch. 6) are included in the set of values already, as are the notions of social justice and empowerment; the elements of cultural empowerment, as well as the process of holistic discipleship, are probably weaknesses in their absence.

*An adjusted set of values could perhaps read as follows :*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. | Yeast City Housing is a **grass-roots community organisation** and the driving force behind it is representation by inner city residents and churches. |
| 2. | It values **social justice** in which the poor will have access to decent, affordable housing facilities, centrally located and close to job opportunities. |
| 3. | It values the **dignity** of the individual and of families, and through decent housing this will be affirmed. |
| 4. | It values **compassion and community**, not only providing a housing unit but offering a therapeutic process of healing, meeting people where they are at, and drawing them into community. |
| 5. | It values **social empowerment**, building on the capacities of people and communities, so that the poor and marginal can be empowered to take their rightful place in urban society, contributing to its well-being. |
| 6. | It values the **empowerment of a culture**, generating common values and nurturing a culture of mutual responsibility and caring. |
| 7. | It values **cultural diversity** and seeks to be culturally sensitive and to facilitate **reconciliation** in the process of housing people. |
| 8. | It values the **city as a place of hope and opportunity**, acknowledging urbanisation and economic realities. |
| 9. | It values **shared leadership** and therefore develops the capacities of residents to manage facilities in partnership, and eventually even alone. |
| 10. | It is a **non-profit organisation** with the primary purpose of serving the interests of the inner city poor without enriching the organisation or anybody else in the process. |
| 11. | It functions in close **partnership** with other organisations and is using these networks to help people with their assimilation back into society; the accountability of local government and the need for institutional support in the provision of housing are acknowledged. |
| 12. | We value the importance of **stewardship** and offer opportunities to people to be stewards of their time, money and expertise, as they work closely with inner city poor communities; volunteers could assist in various ways which will further support the affordability of housing. |
| 13. | We value housing as a context for **holistic discipleship**, celebrating signs of God's presence, creating opportunities for Christian service, and facilitating the evangelisation and conversion of people to God, to each other and to the public arena. |

## 8.4    The Process : Holistic Development

Yeast City Housing is a value-based housing company envisioning the holistic development of people and communities. It focusses on the physical environment but also on the social, economic and spiritual environments within which people are to live and grow as individuals, families and communities.

As was emphasised in chapter 6, 4.2, housing should be seen as a process and not only as a product. YCH views housing as a process with different stages, and also as a small element of a more integrated inner city pastoral praxis and church-based community development plan. This plan, again, should be seen as a small element of a much broader  plan for inner city transformation, in which various urban stakeholders participate.

The following diagram explains how YCH's model understands the process of housing the inner city poor :

|  | Pre-Stage | Stage 1 | Stage 2 | Post-Stage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Characteristics of the People** | "down & out" homeless unemployed no support system at-risk | in transition | semi-assimilated : still in transition | assimilated into society employed stable supportive community |
| **Physical Environment** | on the streets at-risk | transitional facility shelter | low-cost rental facility | housing supply by the market rental & ownership |
| **Economic Environment** | unemployed | 'Homeless Talk' newspaper adult literacy & skills training business training employment preparation | starting small enterprises employment | self-sufficiency |
| **Emotional, Social & Spiritual Support** | no support system | healing, orientation, rehabilitation, training | empowerment establishing community linkages | assimilated into society |
| **Responsible Organisations** | churches NGO's homeless action groups | churches NGO's homeless action groups local gov't | YCH NGO's private sector (developers) local & provincial gov't | market YCH local & provincial gov't |

This table wants to indicate that Yeast City Housing understands housing as a process, more complex than merely providing housing units. Besides the physical development or provision of suitable facilities, it is vital to introduce support programmes which will include capacity building, economic development, emotional, social and spiritual empowerment, and very intentional preparation for renting or owning property. All these dimensions should be developed in partnership and it will stretch over more than one phase. The fourfold objectives of YCH and the support ministries of the inner city churches and an organisation such as Pretoria Community Ministries will work towards this integrated vision.

This process is closely linked with the broader integrated development strategy of Pretoria Community Ministries, the inner city community development agency formed by a partnership of churches. YCH will focus on stage 2, whilst providing managerial services in stage 1 to temporary housing facilities operated by the inner city churches. YCH will also move into the post-stage facilitating the development of new housing, especially if the private sector continues to be unresponsive to the market's demand for affordable inner city housing.

## 8.5 Objectives & Strategies

Yeast City Housing has four distinctive objectives, on the basis of which its programmes or strategies are also developed (cf. Yeast City Housing; March 1997 : 3-4; 9-10).

### Objective 1 : Consultation Services

***To provide consultation services to the inner city poor with regard to available housing options and procedures, preparing and equipping them for rental and ownership.***

Different strategies will translate this objective into practical actions.

**Strategy 1 :     Housing Advice Desk**
Marginal and disempowered people often lack information to make proper housing decisions. As a result people are dislocated, people find it difficult to have access to government housing subsidies, and new property owners are often exploited or disempowered.

A Housing Advice Desk will assist inner city people with housing information and consultation services, empowering them to make proper housing decisions. The information will be provided through an electronic database and accompanying brochures.

**Strategy 2 :     Property Owners' Education**
The Housing Advice Desk will also provide property owners' education to prospective or current property owners of sectional title units in the inner city. This will be done as a means to empower inner city residents, to fight slum conditions and exploitation, and to facilitate wholeness in inner city housing. The education will be provided in the form of training evenings, mentoring programs, the electronic database, and inner city festivals.

**Strategy 3 :     Training for Caretakers / Building Managers**
Besides equipping people to assume complete ownership of their properties, caretaker training should be developed to assist caretakers in managing change in their buildings. It is increasingly felt in social housing circles, that the job of a caretaker should be elevated to that of a housing manager, rather, requiring a more permanent presence in a building as well as a more holistic job description.

**Strategy 4 :    Linkages to Other Community Resources**
The other consultancy function that the church could play is to advise people on other community resources, and to make the necessary linkages between the needs and requests of people and available resources in the community. Again, this could be facilitated through the Housing Advice Desk and by participation in the various Community Development Forums.

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## Objective 2 : Advocacy and Community Empowerment

*To play an advocacy and community organising role with regard to inner city housing.*

Different strategies will translate this objective into practical actions.

**Strategy 1 :    Lobbying on Specific Housing Issues**
The church, in solidarity with the inner city, will identify housing needs and exploitative housing practices. Through advocacy and lobbying these needs will be highlighted to the agenda of the city, and the church will facilitate a process of public action to reform housing legislation, practices and procedures, and to ensure a healthy housing environment.

The lack of diversified housing options for the inner city poor, absentee landlords, red lining, exploitation by estate agents, increased commitment by government to inner city housing, are just some of the vital issue in inner city areas.

**Strategy 2 :    Participation in a Co-Ordinated Effort to Combat Inner City Residential Decay**
Banks and estate agents are contributing to the problem of inner city residential decay (cf. chapter 6, 4.3 [Banks : Withdrawal or Re-Commitment]). YCH will endeavour to network with these and other institutions, to advocate for responsible management of the transitional process in the inner city housing market, and to address unfair practices, lack of owners' education or information, and the allocation of housing subsidies or mortgage loans to people who are not really qualifying for it.

YCH will also stay in dialogue with property administrators in the private sector, as represented in the Sectional Title Forum, encouraging them to remain in the city and to be sensitive for the changes and challenges of their buildings.

**Strategy 3 :    Participation in Community Forums**
YCH is involved in various community forums, often in forums that have been facilitated by the churches initially. Community-based forums are places where relationships are formed and can be nurtured, where information can be shared, where specific issues can be raised and goals be advocated for, where the church can engage with the powers, and where networks could be formed which could sometimes lead to meaningful joint ventures. Community-based forums are also contributing to the democratisation of society, as they provide communities with the opportunities to give input on local development and on their local struggles and aspirations. However, it remains a difficult task to ensure that such community-based forums are indeed recognised and listened to.

- **Marabastad Development Forum**
YCH maintains a presence in the Marabastad Development Forum via the church community, walking alongside the residential sector of Marabastad. If formal housing becomes a possibility, which is what YCH is advocating for in Marabastad, then it is important to assist the local community with housing information, organisation, and capacity-building. Initially YCH is playing an advocacy role, which might lead to more intentional organising, training and managerial capacity-building in future, depending largely on the outcome of our collective advocacy together with the local

residential community.

- **Salvokop Development Forum**

In Salvokop PCM has facilitated a local Salvokop Development Forum in conjunction with local residents. The focus is to ensure that the current residents will have access to affordable housing in Salvokop, once the area is developed. YCH is currently playing an advocacy role, wanting to keep Salvokop and its concerns on the agenda of the city in general and the Pretoria Inner City Partnership in particular. It is also playing an organising role, encouraging the community to take greater responsibility with regard to pro-active steps to become the driver of future development.

What is positive is the fact that the churches were able to invest in the purchase of the church property in Salvokop, thereby becoming a legitimate stakeholder in the area, having residents in the area from various inner city churches, and working in close conjunction with other residents, being local people themselves.

- **Berea Development Forum**

In Berea-Burgerspark PCM also facilitated the formation of the Berea Development Forum. YCH is working in this Forum, organising local people to take responsibility for their housing situations, which often implies taking psychological ownership of their units after having purchased the units physically. YCH will continue to work with the Berea Development Forum, advocating for more intentional attention to residential problems in Berea, addressing banks, estate agents and property managers, and lobbying for support from the Pretoria Inner City Partnership.

In situations of individual buildings facing decay, YCH will play an active role in supporting residents to organise themselves, to understand their rights and responsibilities, and to engage in steps that could redeem their buildings.

- **Participation in Other Community-Based Forums**

Board Members or other individuals closely associated with YCH, are also maintaining a presence in the Community Policing Forum, the Pretoria Inner City Partnership, the Schubartpark Development Forum and the Tourist Safety Forum. From time to time all these forums either deal with housing issues, or could be used by YCH to lobby its concerns.

YCH, being a church-based housing institution, has its roots in the City Centre Churches Forum, and maintains close links with the local inner city churches.

**Strategy 4 :    Nurturing Community & Generating a Value-Based Culture**
Through its involvement in community forums, YCH contributes to the nurturing of a community in which people develop relationships of mutual responsibility and commitment. Through the community forums leadership emerges, the latent capacity of communities are discovered and developed, information is shared which is empowering, shared values are generated, and a new culture - of caring and responsibility - hopefully gets established. Housing facilities themselves could become fertile ground to nurture new communities and to generate a value-based culture.

> The St. George's United Church in Joubert Park, Johannesburg, had to be creative about how it utilises its building. They have converted part of their church building into an affordable housing facility. Through a careful selection process, a commitment to shared values, and an intentional attempt to establish community in the city, a unique church-based inner city housing project is emerging. They have weekly resident meetings where problems are discussed, the shared values are re-affirmed, decisions are taken, and fellowship is encouraged. This is another example of a holistic approach to housing, combining physical, social and human elements of development to create a healthy living environment that is conducive for personal, interpersonal and communal growth.

**Strategy 5:     Facilitating Community Linkages**
It is important that YCH does not function in isolation, but that it is connected to the broader community, in order for it to provide the most liberating service to those it serves. Through a broad-based network, YCH would be in the position to serve as a broker, making meaningful community linkages between its residents or those using its services, and relevant resources in the community. An intentional strategy for linking people into the community is important to ensure the reintegration of marginal and at-risk people into society. The goal is, namely, to assist them to become full neighbours and citizens of the city, once again, contributing to the life and well-being of their city.

> Sheila was a resident of The Potter's House, a transitional housing facility for women. At the time she was homeless, unemployed, and expecting a child. In this housing facility she was linked to a secretarial training program, and this has helped her to find a stable job. She moved into Litakoemi, a low-cost residential facility, where she consolidated her social and economic position. She joined the local Anglican church, had her baby baptised, and found day-care in the neighbourhood. Once she was on her feet and confident in her job situation, she found it possible to purchase a small flat in the inner city. Through various community linkages, Sheila was assisted to become a full neighbour and citizen again.

## Objective 3 : Facilitate Management of Low Cost Housing Facilities

### *To facilitate management of housing facilities for and with low-income people.*

Different strategies will translate this objective into practical actions.

**Strategy 1 :     Advocacy & Organising for Proper Management**
YCH will continue to identify at-risk buildings, and will advocate for proper, transparent and fair managerial practices. YCH will support local residents to organise themselves in order for them to address problems in the management of their buildings (cf. Hofmeyr House; chapter 4, 6.3.1).

**Strategy 2 :     Management of Inner City Buildings**
YCH is currently managing two housing facilities (i.e. 85 rooms) and is in the process of adding a third facility to its housing stock (Salvokop). The nature of YCH as an institution qualifies it for housing management in the changing and diverse inner city market. YCH combines physical, social and human elements into its housing praxis, and is intentional about the management of cultural diversity and transition, as well as the nurturing of community.

Central to YCH's housing praxis is the development of strong resident committees that will take local ownership of buildings, working closely with the housing manager.

YCH is not interested in building a large property kingdom, but would respond to the demand. Where possible, YCH would merely facilitate a training or empowerment process, assisting local people to develop their own capacity to manage their facilities.

*A practical project is the 3 Buildings Project, trying to ensure the development of a social housing compact in the Berea-Burgerspark area, utilising and developing three strategically located buildings.*

*(see Addendum 3 : housing)*

### Strategy 3 :    Training and Capacity-Building for Effective Inner City Residential Management

YCH is walking alongside caretakers, cleaners and resident committees, training and equipping them to manage and maintain housing in ways that will ensure healthy living environments.

YCH will also develop training packages for building managers and building caretakers, assisting people to manage housing effectively, to manage change and diversity in the housing arena, and to develop holistic housing projects that will integrate spiritual, social, human and physical elements. Initially this training package will be developed within the social housing arena, but we foresee that it could be of value to the private sector as well, especially in a changing housing environment.

Training local people to manage housing is contributing to community-based leadership development and eventually to the democratisation of the city, empowering local residents in local communities to manage their affairs effectively and comprehensively.

### Strategy 4 :    Setting Up a Community-Based Maintenance Company

This study advocates for housing that is decent, affordable, community-based and community-managed. For decent housing facilities, sustained maintenance is of the utmost importance. To keep it affordable, community-based, and community-managed, YCH will facilitate the development of its own small maintenance company or co-operative, which might grow into a small enterprise creating employment to local unemployed people. The Seven Buildings Project in Johannesburg has facilitated the development of a maintenance company, representing unemployed residents from the Seven Buildings. They are now responsible for the maintenance, not only of the Seven Buildings anymore, but also of other social housing facilities in Johannesburg.

### Strategy 5 :    Establishing a Pastoral Model for Inner City Housing

Yeast City Housing is not just another housing company, but is part of an *integrated pastoral praxis* for inner city communities. It is therefore vital to develop a creative and unique pastoral model in facilities managed by Yeast City Housing. YCH should remain a holistic ministry, not only providing shelter, but also building lives, families and communities in the name of Christ. At the heart of such a pastoral model would be an intentional process of discipleship and value-generation. Links would also be made into local church communities. In 8.6 different options for such a pastoral model are suggested.

## Objective 4 : Facilitate the Development of Low Cost Housing

> *To facilitate the development of housing for low-income people by converting vacant facilities, renovating abandoned facilities and developing new residential units.*

Different strategies will translate this objective into practical actions.

### Strategy 1 :    Advocating for Community-Based, Holistic and Low-Cost Housing

YCH, as a project of the inner city churches, is present in community development forums and other community-based forums, where it advocates for the development of diversified and low-cost housing options in the inner city (cf. Salvokop, Marabastad, etc.).

### Strategy 2 :    Conversion of Vacant Buildings into Residential Facilities

YCH is committed to the conversion of vacant office buildings into residential facilities. The Eloff Building is situated in the centre of town, and the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council has indicated interest to make this building available for conversion into a residential facility (76 rooms).

[It has now been established, however, that the Pretoria City Council is in dispute with the GPMC over ownership of this building. Both parties have their own agendas for this building as well.

**Strategy 3 :      Facilitate New Housing Developments**

YCH is committed to serve as facilitator or facilitator-developer for the development of new housing and / or the consolidation and rehabilitation of existing housing in Salvokop and Marabastad. YCH, in partnership with V&S Project Management, has a proposal for an integrated, holistic housing development on the boundaries of Marabastad (cf. Addendum 4). We are currently exploring the possibility of a similar holistic housing plan for Salvokop (cf. Addendum 4). Another possibility is a creative housing and economic development project west of Church Square to be known as the Good Hope Neighbourhood Development.

**Strategy 4 :      Establishing Social Development Zones & Community Development**
**                  Corporations**

In line with suggested community structures of the Gauteng Department of Development Planning and Local Government (cf. October 1997 : 89; March 1998 : 6-7), YCH will participate in the facilitation of Social Development Zones and / or Community Development Corporations where needed. These structures can contribute to integrated, community-based development processes, in which YCH will offer its specific expertise and experience, whilst also serving as a facilitator.

There are two immediate scenarios that YCH will explore in partnership with Pretoria Community Ministries (PCM), local community development forums, and other community stakeholders. These are for developments in both Salvokop and Berea.

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## Salvokop :

The Salvokop Development Forum is currently representing the concerns and interests of the Salvokop community. Although this is quite a representative forum, it has become rather dormant, not being pro-active about the future of this area. The ideal scenario is for the Salvokop community to structure itself better, in order to play an important role as the driver of future developments in the area. YCH will provide all the possible support it can, if that is the wish of the Forum. YCH has partnered with the inner city churches to invest in Salvokop, through purchasing the church property in the area. The inner city church and its institutions will continue to participate in the Salvokop Development Forum, now not as an outside supporter any longer, but as a legitimate stakeholder, encouraging the Forum to play a more pro-active role.

The first objective would be to develop the Forum into a Social Development Zone (cf. ch.6; 4.4) or a Community Development Corporation (CDC). The local residents, the church, the school, YCH, and Transnet, could all participate to form such a Social Development Zone, which is a community structure to ensure a healthy community. Initially such a structure would initiate and / or support community development projects, social projects, and crime prevention initiatives.

In time it could develop from small community development projects into a structure such as the Salvokop Community Development Corporation (CDC). I suggest this on the basis of the Summerhill example (cf. 6; 4.3) where the local community and the church became strong partners for the revitalisation of an abandoned inner city area. The Salvokop CDC could be in the driver seat of Salvokop's future development process, representing local stakeholders, and utilising the technical expertise of YCH. This should be done in close conjunction with the Pretoria Inner City Partnership. It should not be taken over by the PICP, however.

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> **Berea :**
> The Berea Development Forum represents stakeholders in the Berea-Burgerspark area. Although the key people in the Forum is very active, the BDF needs to secure a broader base for its activities, and needs to become more strategic in terms of the future development of its area.
>
> I want to suggest that this Forum should explore the possibility of engaging with other role players in the area, such as the Tourist Safety Forum, the Holiday Inn Garden Court, Pretoria Community Ministries, Yeast City Housing, and others, to establish a Social Development Zone for the area. This SDZ would collectively initiate and support community projects to combat crime, poverty, and decay, and to pro-actively contribute to the revitalisation and health of the area.
>
> In time and if needed, the SDZ might grow into a Community Development Corporation, to participate in the development opportunities that Berea has to offer. If a local CDC gets formed and becomes the development agent, it would ensure that capital flows back into the Berea community, instead of leaving it at night to build suburban communities even more.
>
> A possible process that is emerging for the partnership of churches in the inner city of Pretoria, is first to create an incarnational or intentional presence in a community. On the basis of trust relationships, the church partnership facilitates and / or participates in a local community development forum (CDF). The CDF might need to become more strategic and active, which might require its restructuring into a Social Development Zone (SDZ). If developmental opportunities arise and the community wishes to engage in those, it might be wise to explore the avenue of establishing a Community Development Corporation (CDC). Hopefully these partnerships might lead to a revitalised community.

The process of community development that is emerging for the partnership of churches, might be as follows :

> incarnational presence > community development forum (cdf) > social development zone (sdz) > community development corporation (cdc) > revitalised community

In working towards the transformation of inner city communities, churches first establish a serving presence. This presence circles out into the creation of a community of Christians and a community of citizens (both within and outside the church). In community development forums, as in Christian fellowships, the inner city church facilitates relationships of covenantal solidarity and promotes the humanisation of people and places. The inner city church has to go beyond that even and in the creation of significant broad-based partnerships, such as SDZ's or CDC's, the goals of justice and wholeness could be facilitated, building a new community, inclusive of all its residents.

## 8.6 Structure, Staff & Community Participation

Yeast City Housing is a church-based housing ministry, based on certain core values and encouraging relationships of covenantal solidarity. Its structure is demonstrating its relatedness to a family of other ministry projects, affirming the holistic nature of Yeast City Housing. Its management is reflecting a combination of suburban church people who invest of their time and resources into the inner city, affirming the notion of stewardship, as well as local emerging leadership, sometimes

from the beneficiary community, affirming the empowerment function of the church.

Yeast City Housing is combining the ministry of stewardship (Zacchaeus) and the ministry of empowerment (Mary Magdalene) in itself, thereby hoping to become a liberating institution, liberating not only those who participate in its processes, but also the broader community (communities) in which it serves.

- YCH was initiated by the inner city churches in general, and by Pretoria Community Ministries, in particular. It is owned by the churches of the inner city, thereby having an ecumenical basis. These churches are representing a large percentage of the inner city population.

- Yeast City Housing is a section 21 company with its own board of directors, comprising of church representatives, project beneficiaries, community members, and housing or development expertise.

  The Board of Directors should include both people of resource (expertise) and people of need (beneficiaries) to co-operate in implementing the vision and objectives of YCH. The directors are volunteers who believe in the vision and they commit themselves to work for the vision voluntarily.

  The Board of Directors are accountable to the church community in the inner city of Pretoria (members and owners of the company) and works in close liaison with Pretoria Community Ministries and the various Community Development Forums.

- YCH is working closely with existing church-based projects, being part of the same family (PCM). Referral between projects, project planning on the basis of what is experienced in other projects, and mutual empowerment and sharing of resources, are some of the assets of such a shared approach to ministry.

- YCH is working closely with community-based forums to ensure rootedness, relevance, and accountability.

- YCH is intentional about networking with other groups, both locally, regionally and globally, to enhance its own understanding of inner city housing and its own output, but also to explore the possibilities of creative and strategic partnerships that could impact positively upon the inner city. YCH has much to learn from the global church and exposes itself to learn from creative models elsewhere, and to incorporate those principles that apply universally.

In terms of the day-to-day activities of YCH, it is important to say something about the staff component and other participants.

- *Volunteers* are recruited to assist in practical tasks ranging from architectural plans, land surveys, quantity surveys or costings, building management, maintenance, as well as specific tasks such as the rehabilitation of old buildings, painting, cleaning, and so forth. A network of volunteer consultants and builders will assist to keep the expenses as low as possible. This is also creating opportunities for people to be involved in practical ministries of stewardship.

- *Beneficiaries* are involved through shared management, caretaking, resident committees, self-help, sweat equity, participation in planning and management teams and on a board level, thereby applying the principles of participatory democracy or self-government, and keeping the actual housing costs as low as possible.

- The *staff component* will be kept rather small, which is possible because of the emphasis on local ownership in the various processes and projects, as well as the mobilisation of outside volunteer support.

The staff component will initially be limited to the *co-ordinator / director* of Yeast City Housing, *caretakers* of buildings as well as *cleaning staff* (1998 - March 1999). Currently the co-ordinator / director is responsible for building management as well as the implementation of the broad vision of YCH. In the beginning of 1999, it will be necessary to employ an *office administrator*, who will be responsible for the administration of YCH, the organising of meetings and events, and providing a drop-in consultation service to the community (April 1999).

By the end of 1999, beginning of 2000, a separate post will have to be created for a *building manager*, enabling the co-ordinator / director to focus on the overall management of YCH and the development of its vision. The building manager will then be responsible for the overall management of YCH's stock, as well as the liaison with caretakers, cleaners and resident committees.

A separate *maintenance company* will be established to serve YCH, but also the broader community. This company will be a job creation project, empowering local unemployed people to become economically active and contributing to the well-being of society.

YCH is intentional about developing a holistic housing praxis in inner city communities. Physical, human, social, economic and pastoral elements need to be integrated into such a housing praxis. To ensure such a holistic praxis, an economic development focus and a pastoral focus need to be included. In terms of the *pastoral focus*, different options exist :

-One option is to add to the staff team a chaplain of buildings, responsible for the pastoral, human and social care in YCH's buildings.

-Another option is the development of a pastoral team that will function on a voluntary basis, made up of pastors from inner city churches.

-A third option is to expand the role of building managers and caretakers to include a more holistic job description. A building manager could then become the "chaplain" of buildings, focussing only on 3 buildings at a time, building the capacity of the caretaker and residents to manage the building effectively, ensuring 100% payment rates, security and healthy living environments.

In this expanded role of the manager, stabilising the housing environment is only the first step. Once the three buildings under his or her supervision are running effectively and without much problems, the role of the building manager becomes that of sustainer and servant-at-large. Now, the manager merely has to support the caretakers and residents to sustain their environments. On the other hand he or she has the time to facilitate and develop other processes such as linkages to the community, specific community projects addressing individual and communal problems in buildings, and the initiation of house groups or cell churches. In this way, the building manager will not increase the number of housing stock under his or her supervision, but will rather increase the depth of involvement in a building, developing it into a holistic ministry project.

If more buildings come along, one would rather employ another manager to facilitate similar intensive processes. This would be an alternative to the current crisis of private sector property administrators that lack the capacity to engage in the intensive processes required of the transitional inner city housing arena. An alternative is that the role of the current caretaker will be expanded to that of building manager, and the current manager will then have the broader responsibility of developing a comprehensive ministry in all the buildings

under his or her supervision. Such an approach might contribute very significantly to the impact the church will have in the city, or to the yeast effect of the church's housing ministry.

[Another possibility is of course that certain buildings will achieve such a level of maturity and mutual care, that an intensive approach as proposed above will become almost redundant in time.]

**Note :**

The above-mentioned holistic approach to housing will be incomplete without attention being given to the *economic aspects* of inner city community development. The one aspect that this study is not focussing on specifically, is local economic development strategies. The study has referred to the economic implications of discipleship and made certain suggestions in this regard throughout. Obviously a local economic development strategy needs to be part of an overall inner city community development strategy. It does not make sense to have a comprehensive housing strategy without being able to employ the city's people. The goal of this study is not to focus on this aspect specifically, however.

There are some implicit economic development aspects, though. Housing in itself will contribute to local economic development, through the employment of caretakers, cleaners and possibly security personnel. Ensuring a healthy housing environment will also contribute to the confidence of local business to remain in the area, and to new investments from outside. The maintenance company that was already mentioned will be a local job creation project. Proposed housing developments in Marabastad and Salvokop will be part of a more integrated development plan for those areas, with housing only being one of the prominent elements of the development.

## 8.7    Relationships, Networks and Partnerships

Nehemia (Bakke 1997 : 109-112) and Paul (Meeks 1983 : 7-50) were both urban networkers par excellence. Through networking and creative community organising, Nehemia facilitated a partnership for urban re-development that included governmental financial support and a political mandate, involvement by the community people themselves, as well as relocation by people from "small towns and suburbs" (Bakke 1997 : 110) surrounding Jerusalem. Nehemia's was an example of transformational urban development that has gone beyond urban renewal, integrating the poor into the process of re-building the city and dealing with the roots of the city's down-fall.

Bakke (1997 : 105-112) speaks of a "Persian Partnership for the Rebuilding of Jerusalem". The rebuilding of Jerusalem required a long-term partnership, which implied the transfer of urban leadership that would be agents of urban transformation. Nehemia has built on the initial work that was done by Esther. Ezra followed in the footsteps of both Esther and Nehemia, focussing more on rebuilding the faith of God's people (cf. Bakke 1997 : 111). Now that the community was restored, he had to continue building the moral fibre or value system that had to sustain or undergird the restored community.

Paul, likewise, was a networker who moved into cities and established ministry on the basis of the relationships that he formed. In every city he looked for an opportunity to establish a presence and through relationships that he developed he

gained access to the city (cf. Meeks 1983 : 26). The networking character of Paul's mission is especially clear from the Pauline letters (Meeks 1983 : 9-10; 28). Meeks (1983 : 28) suggests that Paul communicated

> along the natural networks of relationship in each city and between cities. The families and houses of certain individuals seem to have been starting points, and connections of work and trade seem to have been important.

Paul's mission was probably not an individual enterprise either, but rather the work of a group of mission associates (Meeks 1983 : 8), mobilised by the vision and strategy of Paul.

Nehemia had a networking and partnership strategy to rebuild his broken city. Paul had a networking and partnership strategy to evangelise the cities of the world, to plant churches, and to sustain the on-going ministry of these urban churches. He encouraged global partnerships between churches of resource and churches of need (2 Cor. 8 & 9).

YCH should also develop relationships and networks that might lead to creative and bold partnerships. I touched on it already when I suggested that covenantal solidarity should be nurtured through entering into relationships of mutual trust and accountability (cf. chapter 7; 1.3).

The following networks and partnerships are important in general, but also for Yeast City Housing specifically :

- **Pretoria Inner City Partnership**

The Pretoria Inner City Partnership, after 2 years of intensive lobbying, has finally realised that inner city housing should be a priority on their agenda. The Partnership is in the process of formulating an inner city housing strategy to leverage an amount of R 500 million for the inner city of Pretoria for the period between 1999 - 2004. Yeast City Housing is part of the consultative and planning process to prepare the proposal to the Gauteng Department of Housing, requesting this investment.

- **Community Development Forums**

The various Community Development Forums - Berea, Salvokop and Marabastad - are as important, since they represent the diversity of stakeholders in these communities and these forums would probably be the basis on which to develop future housing projects.

- **Pretoria Homeless Consortium**

The Pretoria Homeless Consortium was mandated by the Pretoria Inner City Partnership to develop a strategy to address homelessness in the inner city of Pretoria. The Consortium engaged in a research process that was consultative, including all stakeholders and homeless people, and eventually the highest priority that was identified by the Consortium was the creation of alternative housing - i.e. social or low-cost housing in and around the inner city. This Consortium would probably become an increasingly important role player in lobbying on behalf of homeless concerns.

- **Association for Social Housing**

The Association for Social Housing includes institutions which focus on the development of social housing projects in partnership with poor inner city communities in Johannesburg, Pretoria and

Germiston. This is a vital network, developing joint training models, sharing relevant information, and creating opportunities for exchange and the sharing of resources.

### • Community Policing Forum

Where slum formation occurs in housing, the environment becomes conducive for crime. Housing then becomes a concern of the police as well. It is for this reason that the Pretoria Central Community Policing Forum is another important networking opportunity, where joint approaches and strategies could be formulated and implemented to effect change in the inner city. The Budget Hotels (ch.7; 1.6) and Hofmeyr House (ch.4; 6.3.1) are two examples of interventions in which this network has played an important role.

### • Tourist Safety Forum

The Tourist Safety Forum is a sub-forum of the Pretoria Central Community Policing Forum, concerned with the safety and security of tourists in Pretoria's inner city. For a safe environment, a healthy housing environment is also required. The Tourist Safety Forum has assisted Yeast City Housing in the past to challenge the management of a "bad building" and to turn this building around. In the past tourists were mugged and the criminals disappeared into this building. Through a joint approach this building was redeemed.

### • Social Housing Foundation

The Social Housing Foundation is an institution with the mandate to provide technical assistance and other support to emerging social housing institutions. There is the possibility for Yeast City Housing to obtain the technical assistance of a European housing expert, supporting the developments of Yeast City Housing. The Social Housing Foundation has also advocated on behalf of Yeast City Housing in the recent past, playing the role of broker between YCH and local government structures, as well as YCH and possible funding organisations. The credibility of this Foundation is contributing to the credibility of YCH.

### • Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council

The Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council is currently developing a specialised housing unit, and it is vital that YCH will continue to be in dialogue with them. The GPMC could provide financial and technical assistance in this regard. There might also be buildings in possession of the GPMC that can be converted into residential facilities.

### • Pretoria City Council

The Pretoria City Council has indicated interest to develop a social housing component in the inner city. I have perceived a great lack of communication internally between the officials and the politicians in the council, however, as both parties have their own plans and strategies on the table, instead of a shared framework. The Social Housing Foundation has brokered a relationship between Yeast City Housing and key politicians within the Pretoria City Council. This relationship is still in the exploratory phases, and the way in which these two bodies would relate would still have to be worked out. It is hoped that the Pretoria City Council would meet YCH with regard to service fees, rates and taxes, and so forth, capacitating it to replicate more facilities as a result of financial savings. The Pretoria City Council also own properties that could be converted for residential use.

## 8.8    Evaluation

Assessment instruments need to be developed to ensure the effective development of YCH according to its vision, objectives and strategies, and to monitor that high quality service is rendered to inner city residents. Specific evaluation will take piace with regard to the four (4) specific objectives (YCH 1997 : 20 ).

The on-going projects will also be evaluated in terms of local government's Integrated Development Plans (IDP's), land development objectives (LDO's), and other relevant policies. The guidelines of the Gauteng Department of Development Planning and Local Government will also be considered with regard to their Four-Point Plan for Urban Regeneration, and other institutional suggestions.

## 8.9 Resource Development & Sustainability

*(cf. Addendum 5; YCH Business Plan, March 1997 : 18-20)*

Yeast City Housing initially requires substantial start-up capital to establish itself in the inner city housing market. Institutional subsidies from government, church-based support for staff, volunteer consultants and donor money, would be some of the avenues to explore.

At present, YCH has been able to attract government subsidies to purchase its first property, and other donor money has contributed to finalise this transaction, as well as the acquisition of a property in Salvokop. Volunteer consultants have kept the running expenditure of YCH at a bare minimum, and Swedish Diakonia, a church-based development funder, has committed themselves to support the institutional development of YCH for at least 3 years (1997-2000).
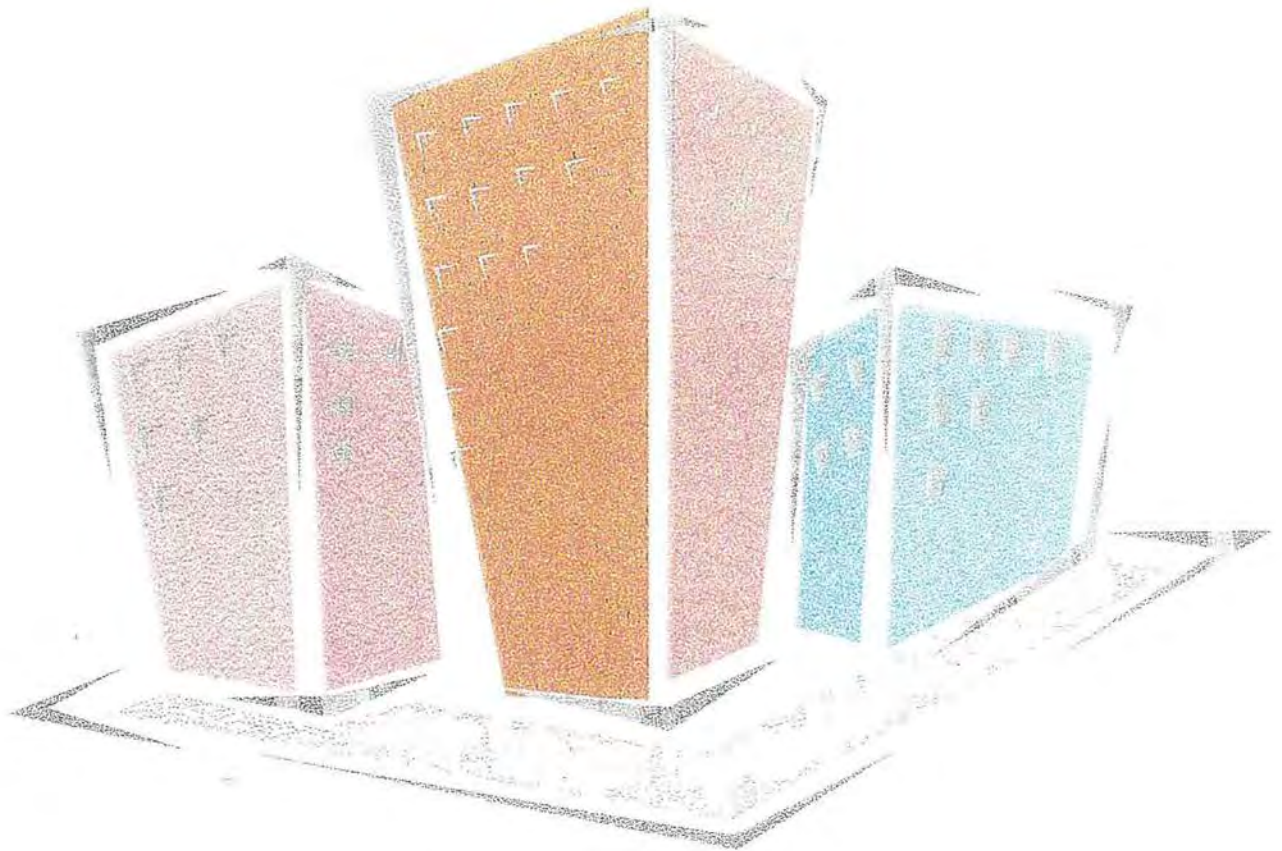
In order to sustain the activities of YCH, the following are important :

- Each building that YCH takes on needs to be developed into a viable, self-sustaining economic unit.

- Although each building needs to be economically viable on its own, YCH might sometimes inherit buildings with a great backlog in maintenance work, as well as significant debts. It therefore needs to acquire one or two buildings that will generate greater profits to cross-subsidise risky ventures that aims at the transformation of "bad buildings".

- YCH will provide consultation and training services, initially only to its primary market, but later also to the private sector, thereby developing reserve funds to sustain its operations.

- YCH's involvement with new developments or conversions should generate some income to be channelled back into the day-to-day sustainability of the project.

- YCH will continue to mobilise church and community support in the form of volunteer consultants, volunteer technicians, bequests, and financial grants.

- YCH values the direct involvement of local people in the process of housing. Not only is this in line with the values of this study and of YCH, but it also contributes to the affordability of housing products, and the sustainability of the housing institution.

# PART 3
# SUMMARY

*PART 3 : SUMMARY is a conclusion to the study, consisting of the following elements :*

| |
|---|
| **1. THE PASTORAL CIRCLE : A REFLECTION**<br><br>I will briefly reflect on the pastoral circle and its use in this study, referring to the theological process and the summaries of the different chapters to indicate how the pastoral circle has helped me in developing a framework for a transformed ministry praxis. |
| **2. THE CHURCH, HOUSING & THE TRANSFORMATION OF INNER CITY COMMUNITIES**<br><br>This section indicates how the proposed ministry praxis of chapter 7 might contribute to the transformation of inner city communities. Chapter 7 is really a culmination of the whole theological process with practical proposals. Therefore this section will serve as a summary not only to chapter 7 but also to the entire study. |
| **3. EPILOGUE** |

## 1. THE PASTORAL CIRCLE : A REFLECTION

A pastoral circle was suggested and applied as a contextual method for doing theology in the city (cf. chapter 1, 4.2; chapter 2, 3.2 - 3.4). The goal of this study was primarily to explore the role of the church in the transformation of inner city communities. In working towards this goal a specific method was used, however, as an attempt to demonstrate a contextual approach to ministry and theology. A contextual approach and theological method are specifically geared towards transformation, as transformation is one of the very specific goals of contextual theology.

I would like to reflect briefly, in conclusion, on the pastoral circle and its use in this study. The following table is a summary of the theological process which was based on the pastoral circle, referring to the different chapters and the core summaries contained in each chapter. After the table I will briefly discuss and evaluate the process.

| | |
|---|---|
| ORIENTATION & THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS<br>: problem, goals, assumptions & theological method     Chapters 1 &<br>2 | |

| | |
|---|---|
| EXPLORING THE CONTEXT & FORMULATING STRATEGIC<br>QUESTIONS<br><div align="right">Chapter 3</div> | INSERTION |

| | |
|---|---|
| TOWARDS A TRANSFORMED PARADIGM<br>: where theology, urban & development studies meet     Chapter 4 | ANALYSIS |
| ALTERNATIVES TO DISPLACEMENT OF THE POOR<br><div align="right">Chapter 4</div> | ANALYSIS |
| ON-GOING & STRATEGIC SOUTH AFRICAN URBAN<br>CHALLENGES<br><div align="right">Chapter 4</div> | ANALYSIS |
| INNER CITY COMMUNITIES, THE CHURCH & THE INSTITUTIONAL<br>RESPONSE<br><div align="right">Chapter 4</div> | ANALYSIS |

| | |
|---|---|
| A FRAMEWORK FOR A THEOLOGY OF INNER CITY<br>TRANSFORMATION<br><div align="right">Chapter 5</div> | REFLECTION |
| A SPIRITUALITY OF TRANSFORMATION : IMPERATIVES &<br>IMPLICATIONS<br><div align="right">Chapter 5</div> | REFLECTION |
| FROM AN ALTERNATIVE IMAGINATION TO A SPIRITUALITY<br>AND THEOLOGY OF INNER CITY TRANSFORMATION<br><div align="right">Chapter 5</div> | REFLECTION |

| | |
|---|---|
| A FRAMEWORK FOR A TRANSFORMATIONAL HOUSING<br>PRAXIS (with hopeful outcomes)<br><div align="right">Chapter 6</div> | BRIDGE<br><br>(reflection) |

| | |
|---|---|
| A FRAMEWORK FOR A TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRY<br>PRAXIS<br><div align="right">Chapter 7</div> | PASTORAL PLAN |

| | |
|---|---|
| YEAST CITY HOUSING<br>: A Proposal for a Church-Based Housing Project in the<br>Inner City of Pretoria     Chapter 7 | PASTORAL PLAN |

| | |
|---|---|
| THE PASTORAL PRAXIS & THE TRANSFORMATION OF INNER CITY<br>COMMUNITIES<br><div align="right">Chapter 7</div> | PASTORAL PLAN |

I will not evaluate the pastoral circle in comparison to other theological methods, but in simple terms by describing my own experience.

I found the pastoral circle to be a very helpful tool for doing theology in the city. It helped me to clarify my own assumptions, problems and questions. It gave me the opportunity to analyse my community in a more disciplined and intentional way. The process of insertion and analysis raised vital questions which the church is not always asking. The process of reflection gave me the opportunity to reflect on these questions, to integrate various resources and disciplines, and to move towards a transformational ministry praxis.

The on-going character of the pastoral circle is also helpful, in that new questions are raised, new problems need to be explored, new insights are gained from interaction with the Bible, with other models of ministry or with other sources, and new lessons are learnt in the heat of ministry. These new questions can be explored more, reflection can be deepened, and the pastoral plan can be evaluated and adjusted, since the pastoral circle allows for that. Even as I write this conclusion, the Board of Directors of Yeast City Housing is re-evaluating and refining its project plan for the next five years. As the context of the inner city changes and as new lessons are learnt, the Spirit of God wants to transform the church to be an instrument of transformation. The flexibility of the pastoral circle allows for on-going change and growth.

Lastly, the pastoral circle is a very useful tool for contextual theology at various levels. It can be used by the individual for more disciplined theologising or by a ministry group as they journey together. It can be used by grass-root groups to guide their own reflections and their own growth from subjective experiences to an informed, responsible and life-giving praxis. It can be used effectively to develop local theologies and to bring social challenges and the Word of God in dialogue with each other. It can even assist in drawing marginal people (and marginal Christians) into dialogue with the Word and into a discovery of the Word made flesh, as they reflect on the realities, death and pain of their own context. In the midst of these realities and reflections, they might just discover the presence of Christ.

## 2. TRANSFORMING INNER CITY COMMUNITIES - THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH AND HOUSING IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION

The goal of this study was to explore how the church could contribute towards the transformation of inner city communities. Chapter 7 is the culmination of the theological process undertaken in this study. This chapter proposes a pastoral praxis for inner city transformation, suggesting certain specific commitments or principles. After suggesting a broad pastoral praxis, it focusses on housing and suggests Yeast City Housing as a transformational housing praxis in the inner city, embedded in the broader pastoral praxis.

With this study I am not necessarily proposing a model for inner city ministry, but rather suggesting a framework for a theology and praxis of inner city transformation. This framework provides certain imperatives and guidelines which serve as broad principles for ministry in struggling urban communities. It could be applied to different areas of ministry.

The focus on Yeast City Housing is to introduce a specific ministry model that is currently being developed against the background of this framework. I have done this firstly because it was the natural outcome of the theological process, but secondly as an illustration of how this framework is contributing to a transformed (and hopefully transforming) ministry praxis.

The following summary indicates how the pastoral praxis which this study proposes might contribute to the transformation of inner city communities.

### A Summary >>>

### How the Proposed Pastoral Praxis Might Contribute to the Transformation of Inner City Communities

I would like to conclude this chapter with reference to the research goals spelled out in chapter 1; 5, as well as the various summaries throughout the study.

In chapter 1 I indicated that I wanted to explore the role of the inner city church with regard to the transformation of inner city communities in general, and how inner city housing in particular could contribute to the goal of inner city transformation.

Throughout the study this was my emphasis and it culminated in a proposed ministry praxis in chapter 7.

- The local church in the inner city of Pretoria - in its collective expression - has become a significant role player contributing to inner city community development and transformation (ch.1, 5.1.1).

- Various traditional inner city churches have made an intentional decision to remain in the city, and are exploring ways to become inner city churches (*"with the city"*). Such a renewed commitment to the city as a place of mission was suggested as the first step towards a transformed (and transformational) ministry praxis (ch. 7, 1).

- There are various examples in Pretoria of inner city ministry projects that facilitate transformation through the establishment of *an incarnational presence* (cf. Salvokop, Lerato and young girls on the streets, Berea, and so forth). A sustained, visible presence coupled with real investment, ensure the kind of credible ministry that can be transformational (ch. 5, 6.4.1; ch.5, 7.4; ch.7, 2).

- Small communities of mutual faithfulness and solidarity become *sources of transformation*, as people share their lives, their gifts and their struggles in creative ways, and signs of transformation can emerge (ch. 5, 6.4.2 - 7; ch.7, 3). The Potter's House, Salvokop, Lerato House, PCM, The Street Centre, and other small communities in Pretoria's inner city, bear the signs of solidarity and faithfulness needed to facilitate transformation.

  These are all fragile communities; yet, their sense of purpose and mutual struggle still seem to have turned them into instruments of individual and systemic transformation. This does not imply that they would ever "fix" the city. They are called, however, to do all they can and often signs of transformation are the result.

- The church cannot facilitate transformation in the inner city without discovering and celebrating *a spirituality of transformation* (ch.5, 5; ch.7,4). A framework for such a spirituality has been suggested based upon the three imperatives of Micah 6: 8 (ch.5, 5). This was further developed in chapter 7 as a spirituality of transformation runs like a thread through the different elements of the proposed pastoral praxis.

- In chapter 5 a framework for *a theology of inner city transformation* was explored in the light of the contextual insertion (ch.3) and analysis (ch.4). Chapter 7 is based upon this framework and gives practical and concrete suggestions as to a transformational ministry praxis, rooted in a theology of inner city transformation.

- *The gospel dialectic of death and resurrection* is another thread running through the study (ch.5, 8.3 - 8.6). In chapter 7, 6 this dialectic has been dealt with concretely in suggesting a pastoral praxis that would confront death and proclaim life. Practical suggestions for ministry are included as part of such a

pastoral praxis. Without the confrontation of death, resistance against evil and liberation from death-dealing forces, ministry in the city would not be transformational. Without proclaiming life over death and expressing this through concrete signs of life, one can also not speak of inner city transformation.

- The *proposed pastoral praxis* is an attempt at ministry that is *holistic* in many different ways (ch.7, 7). Only holistic models of urban mission would be able to facilitate transformation in the city. We need to proclaim life to individuals, but also to death-dealing urban systems. We need to deal with symptoms of evil, but also transform the roots. We need to deal with the souls of people, but also with the soul of the city (cf. ch.5, 6.3; ch.5, 8.2.4).

- The local church has discovered its *latent capacity* to impact upon the inner city housing arena, and this discovery was translated into the formation of an inner city housing company (ch.1, 5.1.2; ch.3, 5; ch.4, 9).

- Housing has proven to be a very appropriate context for holistic ministry with the potential to mediate liberation in spiritual, human and socio-political terms (ch. 1, 5.1.3 - 5.1.4; ch.2, 5; ch.3, 5; ch.4, 1.3).

  Decent, affordable housing is a very practical and visible expression of God's love and the good news of gospel fleshed out in concrete form.

  Housing that nurtures community and affirms human dignity is not only humanising, but another expression of God's love.

  Access to housing close to job opportunities, restructured land arrangements, and the re-integration of the poor into society, are signs of social justice and expressions of God's love.

  Collectively, these different meditations contribute to integral liberation, transformation or shalom in the inner city.

- Housing is a very practical way of becoming church "with the city" (ch.2, 5; ch.4, 9). The process of organising for improved housing or lobbying for new housing bring about close trust relationships between the church-based housing institution and the local or potential residents. YCH is placing an emphasis on the poor (ch.2, 5; ch.3, 5; ch.4, 1.3) and encourages grassroot participation (ch,4, 1.3; ch.4, 3.1.4) in housing processes, as the best way of ensuring a decent housing environment.

- Yeast City Housing has proven that inner city housing does not have to be slum housing (ch.1, 5.2 - 5.3). In fact, YCH has been able to reverse slum tendencies in buildings in order to nurture a new culture and caring communities. Through proper interventions, sound management practices, human and social empowerment processes, and community organising, it is possible to create healthy living environments in inner city buildings.

- YCH is embracing policies and objectives that work against the displacement of the poor (ch.4, 2.5.3.5) and advocates their meaningful inclusion and integration into inner city society. YCH has the potential to contribute to alternative economies where human concerns would not be overruled by rigid market forces (ch.4, 1.3; ch.4, 2.5.3.5).

- YCH is intentional about inner city community development that will be more radical and fundamental than mere renewal programs. YCH wants to address root problems, re-integrate marginal people to become citizens and neighbours, empower the poor and call the rich to accountability. To be successful in its housing endeavours, YCH views as a prerequisite the democratisation of the inner city through community organising, the establishment of community-based forums, and the nurturing of local ownership in the community. Its housing processes are embedded within the broader goal of transforming of the inherited structure of South African cities (ch.3, 5; ch.4, 1.3; ch.4, 3.1.4).

- The strategies of YCH include various activities that will contribute to the transformation of mind-sets, values, attitudes and actions. The strategies of YCH are targeting not only the inner city poor, but also policy-makers, property owners and managers, local government structures, financial institutions, churches, and the general public. It seeks for creative partnerships between diverse stakeholders (ch.4, 1.3; ch.4, 3.1.4).

- In the inner city of Pretoria it has become clear that poor housing stock has a detrimental effect on the surrounding community. On the other hand, the improvement and transformation of housing facilities has a positive impact upon the whole surrounding neighbourhood. This is true in terms of crime and grime, possible investments, quality of life, emotional security, and general well-being.

- YCH wants to be a practical expression of the church as servant community (ch.5, 6), seeking to nurture covenantal communities of humanisation (ch.5, 7), and contributing constructively and prophetically in the public arena to the goal of social justice (ch.5, 8). The specific goals of shalom, humanisation and holistic discipleship - with its sub-goals (ch.6, 5.2.3; ch.6, 5.5) - are included in the proposed ministry praxis of chapter 7.

  *Yeast City Housing wants to contribute to the shalom of the city, the humanisation of its people and places, and holistic discipleship where opportunities emerge. The sub-goals of social justice, value transfer and cultural empowerment, social empowerment, affirmation of dignity, social consolidation, nurturing of community, the participating presence of the church, celebrations of God's presence, and conversion or re-evangelising, are all assumed, envisioned and implied in the proposed ministry praxis of chapter 7.*

## 3.   EPILOGUE

As I write these final words I am reflecting on what has happened in the past few days in the city. Already many of the details of my study are dated since so much is happening every day. The Salvokop community is in the process of being reorganised, the Forum will be re-activated and the dialogue on the future of Salvokop will gain momentum. The church and Yeast City Housing will participate fully in that process.

Yeast City Housing is busy to draft a new, updated business plan, incorporating its vision for the next five years. Many of the suggestions in my proposed ministry praxis will be part of that business plan, but new suggestions or adjustments will help to refine this plan.

The allocation of R1million towards homeless projects will be finalised, and specific projects, geographical areas and homeless groups will be selected to benefit.

I have not suggested that this research would - in itself - transform communities. It has played a transforming role in my life, however, and I have discovered principles and a framework which would direct me more clearly in ministry. I also hope and pray that the inner city church in general, and Yeast City Housing in particular, will become instruments of transformation and healing to inner city people and in inner city places.

The prophets of doom increase by the day in our city... but at the same time people and actions of hope emerge to battle against death in our midst.  May the prisoners of hope be instrumental to bring shalom to our inner cities.

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**Engelbrecht, Hennie**
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(Jacaranda Sector), 10 April 1997


**Gabriel, Peter**
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**Mthembu, Mduduzi**
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### 3. *Minutes of Meetings*

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1996. Minutes of meeting, 29 April 1996

**Marabastad Development Forum**
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**Pretoria Central Community Policing Forum (CPF)**
1997. Minutes of meeting, 7 May 1997

**Pretoria Central Community Policing Forum (CPF)**
1997. Meeting between the Station Commissioner of SAPS Pretoria Central
and community stakeholders on problems in the AJO building, 15 May 1998

**Pretoria Homeless Consortium**
1998. Workshop on Homelessness hosted by the Pretoria Homeless Consortium,
25 May 1998

**Salvokop Development Forum**
1996. Minutes of meeting, 24 July 1996

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### 4. *Site Visits*

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1994. Tour of community and ministry sites with Bob Lupton in Atlanta, GA,
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**Church of the Savior.**
1994. Tour of community and ministry sites and participation in fellowship at Lazarus House, a project of Church of the Savior, Washington, DC, November 1994

# ADDENDUM

# ADDENDUM 1

# WE VALUE...
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1. We value God's total redemption in Jesus Christ. His redemption is suffi = cient to bring healing in brokenness, salvation from both personal and systemic sin, reconciliation in division, justice where there is oppres = sion, and social transformation where systems are corrupted and communities deprived.

2. We value the city as a place where needs and resources meet, where justice and redemption could be experienced in individual relationships and in social structures, and where signs of God's peace and kingdom could be established.

3. We value incarnation. We believe God's challenge in Christ was for us to be an incarnational community in the city, a place of hope, an opportunity for friendship, a channel of God's love.

4. We value community as a place of intimacy, where people's dignity could be affirmed, a place of sharing within covenant relationships, a place of healing as people seek and struggle together.

5. We value the people of the city, envisage relationships in which liberation and empowerment could be experienced, and commit ourselves to the development of indigenous leadership in partnership with community people.

   We appreciate and respect the cultures of people, their own resources and capacities, and their capability to be empowered for the well-being of themselves and their communities.

6. We value compassion. In the spirit of Jesus who cried over the city and its people, we need to show compassion and tenderness in the brokenness of urban communities.

7. We value justice. We see in Christ on the cross not only salvation, but also justice being done. We desire to follow Christ and the prophets of old in calling for justice in the city.

8. We value reconciliation. We call for reconciliation between people and God, people amongst themselves, people and nature, different churches, cultures and races, men and women, and so forth.

9. We value partnerships. Through shared vision, resources, facilities, people power, and training programs, we are able to be more responsible stewards of God's resources to us. We avoid duplication and fight against a spirit of competition and power.

10. We value risk. We call for pioneer ministries into new areas of need and opportunity. We call for bold and creative ministry initiatives knowing that God would provide where He guides into new places.

11. We value a simple life-style. In the opposite spirit of our materialistic society, we call for simplicity and contentedness. We seek to be a prophetic witness against unnecessary and irresponsible consumption of God's resources.

12. We value servant leadership which is committed to the city and in solidarity with the marginalised. We call for partnerships between those of resource and those of need, we call for accountability from those in decision-making positions.

13. We value the integration of social ministry and evangelism. Christ's redemption is complete and we oppose the superficial dichotomy which exists between sacred and public affairs. We call for holistic ministry which would demonstrate the love of God in every area of life.

14. We value biblical principles. We call ourselves and our ministry to continual reflection in the light of the Word in order for us to be faithful and responsible in our engagement with the world. We seek to be accountable and we appreciate critique as an opportunity for growth.

15. We value brokenness and confession. We recognize our own weaknesses and need for healing. In a spirit of brokenness we should be a community in which confession and repentance form the foundation of our commitment, healing and reconciliation.

16. We value truth. In a society where there is such a lack of integrity, honesty and transparent relationships, we seek to create a space in which we could live in truth.

17. We value a spirituality which celebrates God in the city. We call people to a personal relationship with God, to the grace of the Father, the love of Christ and the guidance of and fellowship with the Holy Spirit. We call for radical discipleship as the only way to follow Jesus.

# ADDENDUM 2

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## BACKGROUND

Homelessness has become an entrenched feature of the inner city of Pretoria – it has seen a huge increase in scale and a marked change in the composition of homeless people since the commencement of democratization in South Africa in 1994. According to observers, the number of homeless people has doubled or tripled during recent years. Furthermore, the single, middle-aged vagrants with addiction problems have made way for masses of healthy but homeless, poverty-afflicted youth who live an invisible life in the shadows of the city.

Recent government-led poverty intervention – at all levels – in urbanizing areas focused on the provision of infrastructure and services for the poor on the outer fringes of towns and cities at the cost of the homeless in town and city centers. Hence, the presence of homeless young people and even families in the inner city of Pretoria indicates a structural problem in our society.

The imperative for government intervention in homelessness in cities comes from the 1994 RDP Document: "... all South Africans have a right to a secure place in which to live in peace and dignity. Housing is a human right. One of the RDP's first priorities is to provide for the homeless."

## AIM

This report aims to assist local government and its partners to address homelessness by describing the scope and nature of the problem and providing a model for implementing intervention strategies.

## PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

South Africa – and its major cities such as Pretoria – has neither a valid knowledge base nor a policy or strategy based on research findings to alleviate the plight of homeless people in city centers. In the absence of a cohesive strategy for addressing the problem, current intervention is short term, incomplete, narrow-focused, uncoordinated, mostly unprofessional, under-resourced, addressing symptoms rather than root causes, and often based on subjective opinion. Service providers are evidently unable to address the issue on their own.

## THRUSTS

This study is guided by four thrusts:

1. **Reintegration**: Homeless people should be reintegrated into city life. Eradication of sub-human living styles is the aim. For people who are certified as non-integratable, long-term care should be provided.

2. **Sustainability**: Although the government has a fundamental responsibility, particularly to set reintegration in motion and supply certain basic facilities and services, the reintegration program should be run in a co-ordinated manner, with clear financial goals. Individuals should be able to find work opportunities through the program.

3. **Human dignity**: Homelessness is a complex set of poverties. No homeless person should be regarded as a third-rate citizen. Reintegration should strive to restore individuals and families to a full and purposeful life. The reintegration program should contribute to the general improvement of quality of life in the city.

4. **Integrated strategy**: A holistic and comprehensive approach should be followed, involving all role players, stake holders and the homeless people themselves, based on an integrated view of the problem and its solution.

# STRATEGIES

The model of the *Pretoria Homeless Reintegration Program* consists of specific strategies within four main environments:

**1.    Institutional environment**

■    Develop and implement a *cohesive policy framework* with detailed management and operational plans.

■    Establish and maintain a *management structure* for public–private partnership (Sect 21 Company/Trust) for the Pretoria Homeless Reintegration Program.

■    *Enable* homeless people to engage meaningfully in decision-making on their own future.

■    Draw up equitable *regulations* and ensure that service providers and homeless people comply with them.

**2.    Economic environment**

■    Provide easy access to *entrepreneurial training* and after-care advice for homeless people.

■    Ensure *sufficient funding* for the Homeless Reintegration Program through joint funding ventures, investments and grants.

■    Provide access to *information on employment and training* for homeless people.

■    Integrate homeless people into *economic public works programs* (e.g. in tender specifications for appropriate projects).

■    Provide better *regulations and facilities* (such as storage space) for the informal commercial sector.

**3.    Physical environment**

■    Establish and maintain short-term (crisis), medium-term and long-term accessible *support and housing* for various categories of homeless people.

■    Engage homeless people in a *physical public works program* (city cleaning and beautification).

■    Provide *public wash houses and ablution blocks* at various points in the inner city.

**4.    Social environment**

■    Intervene in the process of *becoming homeless* and in the stake of *being homeless* at the earliest stage possible.

■    Provide *educational programmes and skills training* for homeless people.

■    Launch a *public awareness programme* on homelessness and ensuing risks, as well as on information on support and help.

■    *Capacitate* homeless people to fit into normal life through life-skills training, advice, support and mentorship.

■    Provide co-ordinated health, legal and welfare services.

■    Provide easy access to information on life skills, health and legal matters and other life-improving opportunities.

## PRIORITY PROJECTS

Seven projects in the model of the *Pretoria Homeless Reintegration Program* are critical for immediate alleviation of homelessness in the inner city of Pretoria. These projects should run concurrently. Some projects may effect positive results earlier than others. Where possible, projects should link up with existing initiatives.

1. Establish **a core homeless centre** (preferably at an existing drop-in centre) for health, employment, legal, housing and life-skills information; trauma care; the professional assessment of homeless people; and referrals to specialist institutions.
2. **Train service providers and volunteers** to run services from the core centre.
3. Establish a **transitional facility** for the homeless (preferably at an existing facility) which renders professional therapeutic and rehabilitation services.
4. Provide **low-cost housing** for the homeless through procuring available funds for this purpose.
5. Establish a **Section 21 Company** to drive the Pretoria Homeless Reintegration Program as a joint venture with other stakeholders (churches, service providers, businesses and professionals) and the homeless people.
6. Provide **ablution blocks and storage space** for informal traders at Marabastad, central town and Sunnyside and manage these facilities through the Section 21 Company.
7. Conduct a **scientific study of homeless children in Marabastad** with the aim to understand their situation and to make practical recommendations.
8. Finalize the development of an **assessment instrument** of which the guidelines are provided in this report, in order to enable service providers to identify social, mental and health disorders, trauma and other aspects of homelessness that need to be urgently addressed.
9. **Commence with Phase Three of this project**, namely guiding the implementation, monitoring and adaptation of the model.

<br>

For Pretoria to become both the
**"Showcase of the New South Africa"**
and
**"Africa's Rising Star"**
it will have to adopt a bold, innovative and developmental approach
to the issue of entrenched homelessness in the city.

economic factors. The housing problem has however also been recognized as a vehicle for social and economic development. People in varying socio-economic conditions can indeed choose individual circumstances and priorities to a certain extent.

- Learn from needs and priorities: The success of development programs depends on the accurate interpretation of needs and priorities. Those best as identifying these needs and priorities are the people living in the situation. Communities should therefore be involved in problem identification, decision making and implementation.

- Use the resourcefulness of the community: Learn from the negative aspects, particularly those associated with health and safety, and develop them into positive aspects by using the resourcefulness and initiative tied up in the community. The capabilities of the various communities to participate in self-help programs should be established.

- Involve the private sector: Experience has shown that no government can satisfactorily provide for the housing and related needs of the population by relying solely on its own resources. Alternative means, such as involving the private sector, should be recognized and developed to supplement government efforts.

- Ensure security of tenure and legal mechanisms: The nature and security of tenure and the availability of and access to material and skilled resources are critical issues affecting the level of success of the project.

- Access development funding: The issue of homelessness is a development issue and funding from development agencies should be sought (see addendum 4).

- Use an overall strategy that will include the development of sensitive legal and administrative mechanisms.

## LIST OF PROPOSED PROJECTS

The following list of projects was compiled by the Homeless Consortium after much deliberation with the homeless people themselves, the Homeless Steering Committee and service providers. The projects identified in this list is the conclusion to the study – starting with the information gathered in the literature study, questionnaires, focus groups and interviews, to meetings held with the Steering Committee and the analysis of all the findings.

### Institutional environment

1. Establish an Information Center for the homeless, which includes a Housing Desk, in the inner city, the townships and all places where people congregate, such as railway, taxi and bus stations. This program should commence with a Core Homeless Center in the inner city that provides information on health, employment, legal, housing and life-skills; trauma care, the professional assessment of homeless people, and referrals to specialist institutions.
2. Establish a Section 21 Company to drive the Pretoria Homeless Reintegration Program as a joint venture with other stakeholders (churches, service providers, businesses and professionals) and the homeless people.
3. Set up a special Homeless Task Force within the City Council of Pretoria to deal with the immediate practical needs.

4.  Conduct a scientific study on homeless children in Marabastad with the aim to understand the situation and to make policy and practical recommendations.
5.  Finalize the assessment instrument of which the guidelines are provided in this report, in order to capacitate service providers to identify social, mental and health disorders and other aspects of homelessness that need to be urgently addressed.
6.  Commence with Phase Three of this project, namely guiding the implementation, monitoring and adjustment of the model.
7.  Establish a public awareness program on the need for law enforcement.
8.  Empower the existing service providers through funding, information and advocacy to improve their service rendering.
9.  Create a crime preventative framework.
10. Set minimum standards for service providers, e.g. a proper record system for their clients, and promote adherence to guidelines through incentives.
11. Co-ordinate services for the homeless and promote permanency planning.
12. Extend the White Paper on Welfare to include the needs of the homeless.
13. Promulgate regulations and bylaws that will protect the homeless against all forms of exploitation.
14. Train service providers to assist with the permanent solution of the homeless issue.
15. Develop a strategic plan for the City Council of Pretoria and the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council, based on this report.
16. Join hands with the newspaper for the homeless, *Homeless Talk*, and distribute it widely, also beyond the boundaries of the inner city.
17. Lobby against the early deinstitutionalisation of mentally ill persons without providing them with a sustainable housing solution.
18. Provide legal advice and legal protection for homeless people.
19. The City Council of Pretoria and the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council should co-ordinate their policies and strategies with those of the Gauteng Province.

## Economic environment

1.  Public awareness program on the need for improvement in productivity.
2.  Transform defunct factories and sheds into training facilities and craft workshops.
3.  Apply for grants from donor agencies. (This function can be outsourced.)
4.  Revitalize the inner city through urban upgrading projects.
5.  Create jobs by transforming defunct office buildings into residential buildings.
6.  Provide access to business information.
7.  Encourage outsourcing by companies to homeless people, e.g. crafts for tourism.
8.  Train homeless people for SMME development.
9.  Initiate pilot SMMEs linked to training activities.
10. Mentor emerging SMMe managers

## Physical environment

1.  Provide ablution blocks and storage space for informal traders at Marabastad, central town and Sunnyside and manage these facilities through the Section 21 Company.
2.  Establish low-cost housing for the homeless through unlocking available funds for this purpose.
3.  Strengthen existing housing facilities for the homeless in the inner city.
4.  Provide bathhouses for the homeless in the inner city.
5.  Develop a strategic plan for low cost housing for the homeless in and around Pretoria, not necessarily only high density.

# Social environment

1. Train service providers to run services from the Core Homeless Center.
2. Establish a transitional facility for the homeless which renders professional therapeutic and rehabilitation services.
3. Promote a stronger social security and welfare safety net.
4. Promote community awareness and advocacy for the alleviation of the plight of homeless people.
5. Provide training in life-skills to the homeless people.
6. Provide training in lay counseling to volunteers.
7. Provide training to service providers in identifying the needs of homeless people, to allocate the appropriate care to people and to monitor the situation.
8. Establish a 24-hour call center for the homeless and other people at risk.
9. Promote the distribution of information, such as *Homeless Talk*.
10. Promote a healthy value system and set examples of applying such values, similar to the Human Rights and AIDS publicity drive.
11. Establish school vacation programs for the youth in Marabastad during the school holidays.
12. Establish a crèche in Marabastad.
13. Provide access to recreational amenities and facilities to homeless people.
14. Provide education and training to leaders of homeless people with a view to be able to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes.

# CONCLUSION

South African cities and their hinterlands are currently in a critical period in their development. If problems are not dealt with appropriately, our cities may collapse under the enormous weight of urbanization. People, especially the homeless population, should be empowered to deal with their own problems and find their own solutions.

The literature study and the findings of this study support each other. It can be deducted from both the literature and the practical research that part of the homeless problem can be ascribed to the disadvantaged socio-political circumstances of the African population. As a result of the apartheid Africans were confined to inhuman circumstances in the reserves, homelands and townships, where they had to make a living. Legislation and controls could however not keep the Africans from urbanizing, because although circumstances were bad in the cities, they were worse in rural areas.

Homelessness is the result of a complex set of circumstances that push people into poverty and force impossible choices between food, shelter and other basic needs. Only a concerted effort to ensure jobs that pay a living wage, adequate benefits for those who cannot work, affordable housing and access to health care will bring an end to homelessness.

Some individuals or families are homeless because of one very severe blow. Others come from families where poverty has been destructive for generations. Different factors contribute to homelessness, however, and no single denominator could explain the phenomenon altogether.

Some see homelessness as a social problem, threatening the stability and economy of cities; others see it as a psychological problem affecting mental and emotional health; or an aesthetic problem affecting the quality of life in cities. The common response is to institutionalize homeless people, or to marginalize them by removing them from sight, or to renew an urban area.

It was, however, clear throughout the study that people with dignity still have plans and dreams. Those who lost their dignity also lost a sense of identity and purpose in life. They became passive victims, surrendering to whatever life brought their way. Hence, being homeless threatens the essential dignity of human beings, undermining and often destroying their ability to be seen, and to see themselves, as worthwhile persons.

It is clear that a key to ending homelessness is closing the gap between income and housing costs. In such an equation, jobs that pay a living wage are critical. Government, labor and the private sector must work in concert to ensure that all South Africans who can work, have an opportunity to obtain a job which pays a living wage.

In conclusion, the solution to homelessness should be rooted in a fundamental quest to transform the inner city, in order to:

- Establish a socially just city
- Give access to poor households closer to job opportunities
- Integrate housing
- Ensure economic development and psychological and social intervention programs
- Develop partnerships in which the homeless themselves and local communities will be in the driver seats.

If this can be successfully implemented, the problem of homelessness can be drastically alleviated in the city center of Pretoria.

# ADDENDUM 3

# YEAST CITY HOUSING

**a project of Pretoria Community Ministries
based in the inner city of Pretoria**

## A BUSINESS PLAN

## PRETORIA

## March 1997

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Address :** | Yeast City Housing<br>P O Box 11047<br>TRAMSHED<br>0126 | **Telephone :**<br>**Facsimile  :** | 012-320 2123<br>012-322 9354 |

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1.   BACKGROUND

### The External Environment

Globally inner cities face transition and decay and the inner city of Pretoria is no exception. Much of this decay is evident in the housing sector where slum conditions are arising in which the poor and at risk groups are living.

### The Challenge

To ensure that the inner city poor will have access to decent and affordable housing options, be integrated into urban society, and are encouraged to contribute towards its well-being.

### The Project

Yeast City Housing (YCH) emerged out of the activities of Pretoria Community Ministries (PCM) and the city centre churches, recognising the lack of affordable and decent housing options for at-risk or low-income groups in the city. YCH believes that an intentional social housing strategy will contribute towards a healthy inner city environment, combating emerging slum conditions and empowering the more vulnerable groups and sections of the inner city. A sound and integrated process of housing the inner city poor, will also contribute to more effective management of the urbanisation process.

## 2.   YEAST CITY HOUSING:   "A company with a human face"

### The Mission

To ensure decent, affordable housing options for and with low-income and at-risk people in the inner city.

### The Role

Yeast City Housing will facilitate the development and management of low-cost housing facilities in the inner city, and advocate for housing for the inner city poor (rental & ownership). A consultation service will be provided to inner city residents, counselling them on possible housing options that exist and establish community linkages.

### The Strategy

YCH understands housing as an integrated process, more complex than merely providing low-cost housing units. Besides the physical development or provision of housing, it is vital to introduce support programmes which will include capacity building, emotional and social empowerment, and very intentional preparation for renting or owning property. YCH is built on the basis of relationships with the people in its projects, and people are taken through a process of healing, training, and empowerment, towards a point of self-sufficiency where people take responsibility not only for themselves but also for their communities.

### The Programmes

YCH will engage in four programmes, i.e.: *Consultation Services, Advocacy and Community*

*Empowerment, Facilitation of the Development of Low Cost Housing, and Facilitation of the Management of Low Cost Housing Facilities*

## The Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries will include people in transition moving from sheltered environments, rehabilitation institutions, long periods of unemployment, and so forth. Low-income residents as well as disability pensioners will also benefit. Indirectly this project will affect the whole of the inner city environment.

## The Resources

YCH intends to secure start-up funding immediately for setting up its office and for implementing a pilot project. The Inner City Partnership, local development funders and foreign funding will be sought. Church based contributions are essential. Volunteer resources and expertise will also be mobilised.

## 3. FINANCES

The operating budget of YCH for the next five years is estimated as follows:

|  | FY97/98 | FY98/99 | FY99/00 | FY00/01 | FY01/02 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total annual expenditure: | R 220,000 | R 400,000 | R 500,000 | R 560,000 | R 610,000 |
| Church base donations | R 60,000 | R 120,000 | R 150,000 | R 170,000 | R 180,000 |
| Other donations | R 150,000 | R 260,000 | R 325,000 | R 360,000 | R 400,000 |
| Special fund raising events | R 10,000 | R 20,000 | R 25,000 | R 30,000 | R 30,000 |
| Total annual income: | R 220,000 | R 400,000 | R 500,000 | R 560,000 | R 610,000 |

The capital budget of the pilot project, i.e. the purchase and management of the Potters House and Litakoemi Hof facilities is as follows:

| POTTERS HOUSE | |
|---|---|
| Proportional purchase price of 2 properties: | R 335,000 |
| Contingencies & costs: | R 25,000 |
| Total employment of capital: | R 360,000 |
| | |
| Equity contribution by PEWS TRUST: | R 130,000 |
| Temporary shelter subsidy: | R 71,250 |
| Mortgage loan: | R 158,750 |
| Total capital employed: | R 360,000 |
| | |
| LITAKOEMIE | |
| Proportional purchase price: | R 490,000 |
| Contingencies & costs: | R 50,000 |
| Total employment of capital: | R 540,000 |
| | |
| Equity contribution by PEWS TRUST: | R 20,000 |
| Capital subsidy: | R 187,500 |
| Other donations: | R 218,500 |
| Mortgage loan: | R 114,000 |
| Total capital employed: | R 540,000 |

# PRETORIA : YEAST CITY HOUSING

•  *building lives, building communities*

## 1.    INTRODUCTION

This proposal indicates how Yeast City Housing envisages the assimilation of the inner city poor into society, and their empowerment through ensuring decent, affordable housing options.

> This plan should not be seen in isolation, but fits into a broader housing strategy as well as a broader development strategy for the inner city, as developed currently by Pretoria Community Ministries, as well as the Inner City Partnership, an initiative of the local government, to draw all stakeholders into a process of strategic planning for the revitalisation of the inner city.
>
> Globally inner cities face transition and decay and the inner city of Pretoria is no exception. We believe that inner city decay could be reversed, however. One of the key factors to be considered is the integration of marginal and lower-income groups in urban renewal plans. When these groups are not empowered to make a contribution towards a revitalised city, the process of revitalisation will never be complete. For inner cities to remain healthy communities, it is vital that the more vulnerable groups participate in programmes of revitalisation.

## 2.    BACKGROUND : A PROJECT MOTIVATION

### 2.1    Institutional Need

The City Centre Churches Forum (CCCF) gave birth to an ecumenical development agency in 1993, with the purpose of addressing specific areas of need in the inner city communities. Pretoria Community Ministries (PCM) was established with this purpose and became the church's development agency in the inner city, under the auspices of the PEWS Trust, an ecumenical Trust which provided a framework for legal and financial accountability.

PCM has developed an integrated development plan for the inner city, in which housing is very central. PCM and the churches recognised that Yeast City Housing (YCH) should be established and strengthened in its capacity to focus on housing specifically. YCH was launched in 1996.

There is no other institution in the inner city of Pretoria that addresses the housing situation of the inner city poor specifically and sensitively.

### 2.2    The housing problem

The housing problem and resulting needs in the inner city of Pretoria manifests itself in different ways:

> •       Loss of employment and poverty has social implications. It often results in evictions, homelessness and dependency on family and friends. Women and children are affected first and most. It is for these people that YCH, in

---

conjunction with Pretoria Community Ministries, caters for.

- Urbanisation is an on-going phenomenon which cannot be reversed. It needs to be manage properly. Migrants from rural areas come to the city and need a transitional facility for up to 6 months. Domestic workers from other provinces seek accommodation to bring their family and live closer to their jobs. (Certain inner city churches have a large domestic worker membership. People are even willing to live on the streets or in inadequate, informal housing, as long as they are close to job opportunities.)

- People with employment in the informal sector and low paid jobs in the formal sector in Marabastad and the CBD can only afford low rental accommodation. An informal settlement of mostly women and children has sprung up in Marabastad, an area on the periphery of the CBD, characterised by degeneration due to government neglect.

- The inner city is a place of concentration for a diversity of marginal groups and people in transition, such as disability pensioners (physical & mental) who are cut off from their families, recovering addicts, ex-prisoners, and others. Single mother families concentrate in Pretoria's inner city and in one large government housing project (1 000 units) up to 80% of the households are headed up by single mothers.

- The authorities have only relatively recently begun to address the inner city housing problems. A general institutional incapacity exists to deal with homeless and low-income people. The facilities managed by YCH and PCM are examples of very few temporary shelters (for homeless) and low-cost rental facilities (for low-income & transient groups) in the inner city.

- Urban renewal projects, such as city lakes, new roads, business developments, and so forth, dislocate the inner city poor without providing alternatives for them. For these developments to happen buildings that come in the way have to be demolished and often these buildings accommodate lower-income people who have limited alternative options.

- A lack of integrated urban planning results in ad hoc-decisions, such as the re-zoning of particular buildings without having a broader plan for the inner city. This has a serious effect on residential options for lower-income groups.

- A number of corporate and individual landlords have resigned themselves to a worsening inner city housing situation. Symptoms include lack of management, no contracts, no house rules, overcrowding, cultural prejudices, physical deterioration of buildings, and so forth.

- There are a limited number of low-cost housing units available in the inner city as it is. For unemployed and homeless people the number of available transitional housing options is even more alarming. In the city centre of Pretoria there are only 10 beds for women in transition at night.

- A perceived lack of vision from local government, property developers and managers with regard to housing the lower-income sector of society, is leading to a housing crisis in the inner city of Pretoria.

## 2.3 The housing need

There is a great need for an integrated plan and process to house the inner city poor. Without such a plan as part of the strategy for inner city development, the poor will remain marginal, the inner city will not undergo real transformation, and social problems will affect renewal efforts negatively. More people will live on the streets and in overcrowded slum buildings, and the city will become a nightmare.

YCH seeks to be involved, in partnership with others, in pro-active and integrated planning which will ensure viable and realistic housing options to the diversity of inner city people, including the poor.

## 2.4 Scope of the project

YCH will focus on housing the inner city poor, lower-income groups, and at-risk groups. It will be more than the physical creation of housing units, however, since it will be part of an integrated development strategy for the inner city, focusing on building individual lives and communities.

The geographical area of focus will be the inner city of Pretoria, initially and narrowly defined as the areas including the Central Business District (CBD), Marabastad, Berea-Burgerspark and Salvokop.

## 2.5 Holistic Development

YCH accepts its responsibility to generate innovative housing options for the poor. It bases its interventions on the following *principles* :

- the need for affordable housing
- the need for centralised location of housing
- economic realities
- the need for institutional support in the provision of housing
- the strength of partnerships
- the accountability of local government
- the prerequisites of a physical facility to administer healing and encouragement
- the need for capacity building to empower people to make informed housing decisions
- the dignity of individuals and the community

    YCH acknowledges the importance of holistic development by highlighting both the physical environment, i.e. the buildings, etc., and the social and spiritual environment within which people are to live. It also views housing as a process with different stages.

The following diagram explains our model as we understand the process of housing the inner city poor :

|  | Pre-Stage 1 | Stage 1 | Stage 2 | Post-Stage 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Characteristics of the People** | *"Down & out" Homeless Unemployed No Support System At-Risk* | *In transition* | *Semi-assimilated; still in transition* | *Assimilated into Society Employed Stable Supportive Community* |
| **Physical Environment** | *On the streets / at-risk* | *Transitional Facility Shelter* | *Low-cost Rental Facility* | *Housing Supply by the Market Long-term Rental or Ownership* |
| **Emotional & Spiritual Support** | *No Support System* | *Healing, Orientation, Rehabilitation, Training* | *Empowerment Establish Community Linkages* | *Assimilated into Society* |
| **Responsible Organisations** | *PCM - project team: homelessness & others* | *PCM, welfare organisations, churches, NGOs, in partnership with local government* | *Institutions Developers YCH* | *Market* |

This table wants to indicate that Yeast City Housing understands housing of the inner city poor as a process, more complex than merely providing housing units. Besides the physical development or provision of suitable facilities, it is vital to introduce support programmes which will include capacity building, emotional and social empowerment, and very intentional preparation for renting or owning property. This should be done in partnership and will stretch over more than one phase. The fourfold objectives of YCH and the support ministries of PCM will work towards this integrated vision.

This process is closely linked with the integrated development strategy of Pretoria Community Ministries. YCH will focus on stage 2, whilst providing managerial services in stage 1 to temporary housing facilities operated by PCM.

It is important to note that another integrated process is currently emerging for urban *economic development*, which will support people in the housing process.

|  | Pre-Stage 1 | Stage 1 | Stage 2 | Post-Stage 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Economic Environment** | *Unemployed* | *Homeless Talk newspaper Adult Literacy & Training Centre* | *Starting Small Enterprises Employment* | *Economic self-sufficiency* |

## 3.   MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

### 3.1   Mission

The abridged mission of the project is:

> *To ensure decent, affordable housing options for and with low-income and at-risk people in the inner city.*

### 3.2   Objectives

YCH has to develop itself institutionally to perform well in the four areas indicated by our objectives.

### Objective 1 : Consultation Services

To provide *consultation services* to the inner city poor with regard to available housing options and procedures, preparing them for rental and ownership.

> Inner city people don't always have the information to make proper decisions with regard to housing. As a result people are dislocated, people who qualify for government subsidies have difficulty accessing them, and so forth. We want to support people to make informed decisions about their own lives. A housing help desk is envisaged, which provides advice on all housing related issues. At present this is happening on an ad hoc-basis, but we would like to be more intentional about the provision of a consultation service. In setting up the Yeast City Housing office this will be the first aspect the office will have to deal with.

### Objective 2 : Advocacy and Community Empowerment

To play an *advocacy role* with regard to inner city housing.

> The issue of housing for the inner city poor must be placed firmly on the agenda of local government and other stakeholders. We participate in forums such as the Inner City Partnership and community development forums, to put these issues on the agenda. Through *community organising* we are involved in three inner city communities, i.e. Marabastad, Salvokop and Berea. Our role is to help facilitate community development forums in these areas, to participate in an on-going basis through *capacity-building, leadership development* and the *sharing of information,* and *to address housing issues* in these communities. The basis for this involvement is our belief that grass-root communities should take responsibility for their own future and should be empowered to take bold initiatives that will affect their own lives - this will obviously have to happen in partnership.

### Objective 3 : Facilitate the Development of Low Cost Housing

To *facilitate the development of housing* for low-income people by converting vacant facilities, renovating abandoned facilities and developing new residential units.

We would like to encourage the development of additional residential facilities for lower-income groups, as well as getting involved ourselves in the conversion of vacant buildings for residential purposes. Again this will have to be done in close partnership with other stakeholders, local and provincial government, as well as organised business.

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**Objective 4 : Facilitate Management of Low Cost Housing Facilities**

To *facilitate management of housing* facilities for and with low-income people.

There is just a limited number of housing options available for lower-income, disabled or at-risk groups. In order to secure a healthy inner city, this will have to be addressed. Another problem is that people who move from shelters or transitional facilities often find the bridge into the present, conventional housing market too difficult to cross. We are proposing a process with different phases, allowing a smooth and effective transition and assimilation into society. There is a need for short-term residential facilities at a low rental, as well as longer-term housing options to purchase or rent.

Presently we manage one small residential facility with 31 rooms, accommodating 45 people. People in this facility generally use it as a stepping stone towards more permanent housing. The rental is affordable and the building provides a decent, healthy environment for personal healing and growth. Yeast City Housing would like to secure more similar facilities to replicate our current service in this regard. At some stage we could even transfer management to a residents' body or other institution - as long as it serves the purpose for which it was established in the first place.

## 4. INSTITUTION

### 4.1 Name of Institution

The institution is *YEAST CITY HOUSING (Pty) Ltd.* incorporated in terms of section 21 of the companies act.

### 4.2 Nature of Institution

Yeast City Housing is currently developed as a non-profit housing company. It is a project of Pretoria Community Ministries, an inner city development organisation which was founded in 1993 as a partnership of city centre churches.

Pretoria Community Ministries has been extensively involved with the homeless and poorer sections of the inner city, providing transitional housing to women in crisis - The Potter's House, doing organising amongst homeless and deteriorating inner city communities (Marabastad, Salvokop), offering social and life skills as well as leadership training to community people, working alongside two church-based economic initiatives - the Wesley Mission Shop and the Five Loaves Restaurant - and managing one residential facility housing lower-income people.

As housing is becoming a real crisis in the inner city, the churches have reached consensus to develop the capacity of this organisation to deal with housing in a more focused manner. A project steering committee was tasked to establish YCH.

Yeast City Housing remains a project of Pretoria Community Ministries. It therefore has to be accountable to PCM, which in return needs to be accountable to the PEWS Trust and the city centre churches.

YCH has its own legal persona, however, empowering it to function freely within a given, mutually accepted framework. PCM, PEWS and the CCCF will be represented on the YCH Board. Project ownership will be with PCM and Yeast collectively, with YCH taking responsibility for the day-to-day management and development of the housing ministry.

YCH fits organisationally as follows into the family of development and welfare organisations:

```
                            ┌──────────┐
                            │  PEWS    │
                            │  Trust   │
                            └────┬─────┘
                                 │
                            ┌────┴─────┐
                            │   PCM    │
                            └────┬─────┘
        ┌───────────┬───────────┼───────────┬───────────┐
  ┌─────────┐  ┌─────────┐  ┌───────┐  ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐
  │ Women & │  │ Street  │  │  YCH  │  │Community │  │ Support  │
  │ Teenage │  │ministry │  │       │  │Businesses│  │ministry: │
  │  girls  │  │         │  │       │  │          │  │ Legal    │
  │ministry │  │         │  │       │  │          │  │ Medical  │
  └─────────┘  └─────────┘  └───────┘  └──────────┘  │ Literacy │
                                                     │ Social   │
                                                     │ Work     │
                                                     └──────────┘
```

| Programme: Consultation Services | Programme: Advocacy and Community Empowerment | Programme: Facilitate the Development of Low Cost Housing | Programme: Facilitate Management of Low Cost Housing Facilities |

| Marabastad Development Forum | Litakoemi residents Committee | Salvokop Development Forum | Berea Development Forum |

A Board of Directors will be appointed for Yeast City Housing, representing above-mentioned stakeholders, beneficiary communities, and other relevant stakeholders. A management committee will be empowered to deal with the day-to-day operations of YCH.

An interim steering committee was elected to guide activities until the Board is in place. It is envisaged that the members of this committee will serve as members of a technical committee advising the Board of programme issues in future. Names, functions, affiliations and skills of individuals on the steering committee appear in the Annexure hereto.

YCH will initially have a small full-time staff to implement the pilot project. A managing director will run YCH. This person will be nominated to PCM by the YCH Board, appointed by PCM and seconded to YCH. A part-time caretaker and full-time cleaner for Litakoemi will also be appointed. Soon, in setting up the office, it will become necessary to appoint a full-time administrative assistant to YCH.

When more than one project develop under the auspices of YCH each of the different projects might have a separate project team, accountable to the Board of YCH. It might happen that YCH could eventually be divided in different divisions, e.g. management division, maintenance division, development division, and so forth. Each of these divisions will remain accountable to the Board of YCH.

A host of other stakeholders and expertise will be mobilised to work in conjunction with YCH. These would include town planners, quantity surveyors, architects, landscape architects, engineers, and so forth.

## 5.     MACRO-ISSUES

### 5.1     Policy Fit & Functional Linkages

YCH meets the policies of national, provincial and local government.

The vision and objectives of YCH fits within the framework of the provincial government of Gauteng's 4-point plan for "Regeneration of the City".

It also fits within the strategic planning framework as proposed by the Inner City Partnership, in which YCH and PCM have been actively involved since its inception. Certain objectives and action proposals have been formulated for the built- and social environments of the inner city, which could be implemented by YCH.

This project also fits into the envisaged priorities outlined by the National Minister of Housing, Ms. Sankie Mthembi-Mhanyele, i.t.o. rental accommodation in the inner city.

### 5.2     Socio-economic concerns & environmental Impact

YCH will contribute towards a healthy, safe and fair inner city environment.

The project is situated in the inner city with its economically diverse population. The mixed-income nature of the inner city population contributes to the economic viability of YCH's projects. The beneficiaries belong to the lower-income groups and at-risk groups, but support programmes, capacity building and economic development initiatives would develop the capacity of beneficiaries to ensure sustainability of the project. Despite large-scale dis-investment from the city centre, there is still a strong and healthy financial and business base, and people who are committed to secure the inner city as a healthy and economically viable community. These local resources should be mobilised via the Inner City Partnership and other coalitions to support the long term economic sustainability of YCH and its projects.

YCH intends to contribute towards a healthy, sustainable inner city, preventing slum conditions and addressing neglect and poor quality housing for the poor. It will have an impact on the social make-up of the community, helping poor and vulnerable people to help themselves, and to be integrated into the inner city society.

The mixed-income, mixed-culture nature of its projects, will also contribute towards the smooth socio-cultural transition of the inner city and reconciliation at a grass-root level.

By addressing slum conditions and neglect, encouraging the recycling of vacant buildings and the use of vacant land, alleviating homelessness, by managing low-cost housing in a professional way, and facilitating social empowerment and development, YCH will contribute towards crime prevention in the inner city.

## 5.3    Financial Considerations

The long term affordability of the project will depend on on-going church-based support as well as increasing community-based support from the private sector. The donor community as well as government capital subsidy schemes will be accessed where appropriate.

Other means of maintaining the affordability of projects include shared office space with local churches, mixed income developments, the use of volunteer expertise and labour, government subsidies, additional income generating mechanisms & community-based enterprises, sweat equity by residents in the various projects, a shared management policy including residents, and cost recovery in the event of developments for ownership. YCH is of the opinion that the infrastructure could be kept as small as possible by including residents in management and volunteers to provide expertise and labour.

## 6.    BENEFICIARIES, STAKEHOLDERS & OTHER PARTNERS

### 6.1    Direct Beneficiaries

Direct beneficiaries will include people in transition moving from sheltered environments, transitional housing facilities, prisons, rehabilitation institutions, long periods of unemployment, and so forth. Low-income residents (working people) as well as disability pensioners would also benefit.

### 6.2    Other Stakeholders & Partners

Indirectly this project will benefit the whole of the inner city environment, since the empowerment of the most vulnerable groups will result in an empowered and stronger inner city population.

Yeast City Housing, as a project of Pretoria Community Ministries, is rooted in the communities and grew out of the City Centre Churches Forum and works closely with *Community Development Forums* (i.e. Marabastad, Salvokop & Berea). Future projects would probably happen in close liaison with these community-based forums.

YCH is also part of the *Inner City Partnership Forum* where we are represented on both the housing and social sub-forums. This Partnership is a local government initiative to draw various stakeholders into a strategic planning process for the inner city.

On the basis of these relationships project partnerships will develop. We also envisage partnerships with the provincial government (subsidies, technical assistance). The board of Yeast City Housing includes representatives from the Department of Housing, the Development Bank of Southern Africa, residents of the inner city, a private developer, property manager, and so on. The Board will help us to develop partnerships that will affect inner city housing positively.

Others implicated through the project will include property managers, slum landlords, local business, and so forth. Groups such as the Afrikaanse Sakekamer, Business Against Crime, Pretoria Chamber of Commerce, Veesa, and others, would also either be implicated, or be partners in this process.

The University of Pretoria is a potential stakeholder and its Department of Architecture has already indicated their intention to be involved.

Local and overseas funders will also be stakeholders in this process.

## 7. PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

Based on the objectives that YCH has set itself the following programmes were identified. The activities associated with each programme are summarised below:

### 7.1 Consultation Services

- Maintain a housing help desk at a central location
- Advise inner city residents on housing related issues
- Assist with the preparation of applications for housing subsidies
- Gather and disseminate information for use by beneficiaries and stakeholders in the pursuance of the housing mission.
- Build technical capacity of housing associations and community (neighbourhood) fora

### 7.2 Advocacy and Community Empowerment

- Advocate housing for the inner city poor and place the issue onto the agenda of local government and other stakeholders
- Assist with the setting up of community fora
- Facilitate the building of support systems, networks and partnerships in inner city housing.
- Build capacity of fora to empower them to take initiatives which will affect their own lives
- Develop the organisational capacity of fora
- Provide for leadership- and other training in an effort to promote inner city housing
- Facilitate in the creation of social compacts

### 7.3 Facilitate the Development of Low Cost Housing

- Assist with the setting up of housing associations
- Facilitate the packaging of financial products for low cost housing developments

- Promote the conversion of existing buildings into housing for low income people
- Facilitate and/or participate in the development of new residential buildings
- Facilitate commercial developments
- Manage resources and co-ordinate skills to ensure decent, affordable housing options for and with low-income and at-risk people in the inner city.

## 7.4 Facilitate Management of Low Cost Housing Facilities

- Build on existing experience of managing residential facilities
- Administer housing for low income people by concluding contracts, collecting rent, staffing, maintaining properties, ensuring safety & security, enforcing rules & discipline, paying expenses, controlling finances, etc. on behalf of the landlord.
- Develop managerial skills

## 8. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME

The following are logical elements in the initial implementation phase of Yeast City Housing.

| | Element | Starting date | Completion date |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Establish company | Jan-97 | Apr-97 |
| | Prepare legal documentation for the registration of the Section 21 company | | |
| 2 | Secure pilot project | Sep-96 | Jun-97 |
| | This pilot project includes a low-cost residential facility, Litakoemi Hof (31 rooms) and temporary house for women & children, Potters House. | | |
| 2.1 | Feasibility Study | Sep-96 | Oct-96 |
| 2.2 | Offer to Purchase | Nov-96 | Nov-96 |
| 2.3 | Secure funds to purchase | Nov-96 | May-97 |
| 2.4 | Finalise purchase & register property | Jun-97 | Jun-97 |
| 3 | Set up Yeast City Housing office | | |
| | Establishing Yeast City Housing with its own office, prepare letterheads and information brochures, develop capacity of staff and introduce systems and procedures for the efficient and effective operation of the office. Plan and engage in special fund raising events. | | |
| 3.1 | Develop staff | May-97 | Mar-98 |
| 3.2 | Introduce systems & procedures | May-97 | Oct-97 |
| 3.4 | Fund raising | Nov-96 | Ongoing |
| 4 | Develop Strategic Partners | Aug-96 | Ongoing |
| | Participate in the Inner City Partnership, engage beneficiary communities as well as volunteers and sponsors. | | |
| 5 | Identify follow-up projects | Jun-97 | Dec-97 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Very important for the sustainable development of Yeast City Housing, is to establish a second facility as a replication of the pilot project and building on what we are doing well at present. | | |
| 6 | | Consultation services | Jun-97 | Ongoing |
| | | To be able to perform objective 1 well we need to enhance our own capacity first and then offer the consultation service to our beneficiaries. | | |
| | 6.1 | Enhance own capacity | Jun-97 | Mar-98 |
| | 6.2 | Consultions | Apr-98 | Ongoing |
| 7 | | Advocacy and Community Empowerment | | |
| | | YCH is involved in various community-based development forums and in the Inner City Partnership, facilitating the organising of communities and advocating for decent and affordable housing, which will also accommodate the inner city poor. These functions should continue. | | |
| | 7.1 | Facilitate Marabastad DF | Aug-96 | Oct-98 |
| | 7.2 | Facilitate Salvokop DF | Aug-96 | Jan-99 |
| | 7.3 | Facilitate Berea DF | Aug-96 | Mar-99 |
| | 7.4 | Participate Inner City Partnership | Aug-96 | Ongoing |
| 8 | | Development of Low Cost Housing | | |
| | | The market creates some housing options but these are not varied enough to address the needs of the inner city poor. At first the existing facilities will be upgraded and redeveloped. The existing processes in Marabastad and Salvokop will identify opportunities for YCH participation, e.g. vacant land in Marabastad can be developed, abandoned houses in Salvokop renovated or empty buildings in the city centre converted to residential facilities. | | |
| | 8.1 | Upgrade Litakoemie | May-98 | Dec-98 |
| | 8.2 | Redevelop Potters House | May-98 | Dec-98 |
| | 8.3 | Marabastad pilot project | Sep-98 | Aug-99 |
| | 8.4 | Salvokop pilot project | Jan-99 | Dec-99 |
| | 8.5 | Conversion of small vacant building | Apr-99 | Sep-99 |
| 9 | | Management of Low Cost Housing Facilities | | |
| | | YCH has a proven track record of 3 years of successfully managing the Litakoemi flats. This experience needs to be replicated for the benefit of inner city residents and landlords. | | |
| | 9.1 | Litakoemi | Aug-96 | Ongoing |
| | 9.2 | Marabastad | Oct-98 | Ongoing |
| | 9.3 | Build capacity in other facilities | Apr-98 | Ongoing |

## 9. IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMME & BUDGET

The recurrent expenditure budget to run the office is estimated as follows:

|  | FY97/98 | FY98/99 | FY99/00 | FY00/01 | FY01/02 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Advertising and publicity | R 6,000 | R 7,200 | R 7,200 | R 7,200 | R 8,400 |
| Auditor's and accounting fees | R 20,000 | R 22,000 | R 24,200 | R 26,620 | R 29,282 |
| Capital expenditures |  |  |  |  |  |
|    Furniture, equipment, etc. | R 1,500 | R 1,500 | R 3,000 | R 3,000 | R 3,000 |
| Equipment lease & rentals | R 17,531 | R 25,044 | R 25,044 | R 25,044 | R 25,044 |
| Insurance | R 6,000 | R 8,400 | R 12,000 | R 13,200 | R 14,520 |
| Legal fees | R 600 | R 1,000 | R 2,000 | R 3,000 | R 4,000 |
| Material & resources | R 18,000 | R 18,000 | R 25,200 | R 36,000 | R 36,000 |
| Motor vehicle expenses | R 1,800 | R 3,600 | R 3,960 | R 4,356 | R 4,792 |
| Municipal services | R 4,800 | R 9,600 | R 11,520 | R 13,824 | R 16,589 |
| Petrol | R 3,600 | R 7,200 | R 7,920 | R 8,712 | R 9,583 |
| Photocopies & stationary | R 3,000 | R 6,000 | R 6,600 | R 7,260 | R 7,986 |
| Refreshment & catering | R 1,200 | R 1,680 | R 2,400 | R 2,880 | R 3,120 |
| Rent | R 7,200 | R 14,400 | R 16,128 | R 18,063 | R 20,231 |
| Repairs & maintenance | R 2,400 | R 4,800 | R 5,280 | R 5,808 | R 6,389 |
| Salaries |  |  |  |  |  |
|    MD | R 91,000 | R 100,100 | R 110,110 | R 121,121 | R 133,233 |
|    Consultant | R 0 | R 71,500 | R 78,650 | R 86,515 | R 95,167 |
|    Secretary | R 13,000 | R 28,600 | R 31,460 | R 34,606 | R 38,067 |
|    Project manager | R 0 | R 39,000 | R 94,380 | R 103,818 | R 114,200 |
| Staff development & training | R 5,000 | R 10,000 | R 11,000 | R 12,100 | R 13,310 |
| Subscriptions | R 400 | R 800 | R 880 | R 968 | R 1,065 |
| Telephone & fax | R 4,800 | R 9,600 | R 10,560 | R 11,616 | R 12,778 |
| Travel | R 3,900 | R 7,800 | R 8,580 | R 9,438 | R 10,382 |
| Total annual expenditure: | R 211,731 | R 397,824 | R 498,072 | R 555,149 | R 607,136 |

Operating income is budgeted for as follows:

| | FY97/98 | FY98/99 | FY99/00 | FY00/01 | FY01/02 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Church base donations | R 63,519 | R 119,347 | R 149,422 | R 166,545 | R 182,141 |
| Private sector donations | R 21,173 | R 39,782 | R 49,807 | R 55,515 | R 60,714 |
| Inner City Partnership contributions | R 10,587 | R 19,891 | R 24,904 | R 27,757 | R 30,357 |
| Foreign donor aid | R 84,692 | R 159,130 | R 199,229 | R 222,060 | R 242,854 |
| NDA contribution | R 21,173 | R 39,782 | R 49,807 | R 55,515 | R 60,714 |
| Special fund raising events | R 10,587 | R 19,891 | R 24,904 | R 27,757 | R 30,357 |
| Total annual income: | R 211,731 | R 397,824 | R 498,072 | R 555,149 | R 607,136 |

The capital- as well as the operating budgets for the pilot project, i.e. the purchase of the Potters House and Litakoemi Hof flats is estimated as follows:

Potter's House:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Employment of capital:** | |
| Proportional purchase price of 2 properties: | R 335,000 |
| Contingencies & costs: | R 25,000 |
| **Total employment of capital:** | **R 360,000** |
| | |
| **Capital employed** | |
| Equity contribution by PEWS TRUST: | R 130,000 |
| Temporary shelter subsidy: | R 71,250 |
| Mortgage loan: | R 158,750 |
| **Total capital employed:** | **R 360,000** |
| | |
| **Recurrent expenditure** | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Municipal expenses (Taxes, electricity, water, sanitation): | R 26,000 |
| Insurance: | R 1,000 |
| Maintenance: | R 15,000 |
| Management: | R 14,000 |
| Mortgage loan: | R 32,000 |
| **Total annual recurrent expenditure:** | **R 88,000** |
| | |
| **Operating income** | |
| Contribution from PCM | R 88,000 |
| **Total annual rental income:** | **R 88,000** |

## Litakoemi Hof:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Employment of capital:** | |
| Proportional purchase price: | R 490,000 |
| Contingencies & costs: | R 50,000 |
| **Total employment of capital:** | **R 540,000** |
| | |
| **Capital employed** | |
| Equity contribution by PEWS Trust | R 20,000 |
| Capital subsidy: | R 187,500 |
| Other donations: | R 218,500 |
| Mortgage loan: | R 114,000 |
| **Total capital employed:** | **R 540,000** |
| | |
| **Recurrent expenditure** | |
| Municipal expenses (Taxes, water, sanitation & refuse)(Electricity paid by residents): | R 25,000 |
| Insurance: | R 5,000 |
| Maintenance: | R 30,000 |
| Provision for bad debts: | R 10,000 |
| Management: | R 24,000 |
| Mortgage loan: | R 23,000 |
| **Total annual recurrent expenditure:** | **R 117,000** |
| | |
| **Operating income** | |
| Rental income for 31 units | R 117,000 |
| **Total annual rental income:** | **R 117,000** |

## 10.    RESOURCE MOBILISATION

### 10.1    Financial Resources

YCH intends to secure start-up funding immediately for setting up its office and for implementing the pilot project. A follow-up project will be pursued once the pilot project is secure and up and running. The Inner City Partnership, local development funders and foreign funding will be sought in this regard.

> It is intended that YCH be developed in such a way that its projects generate a large percentage of the income required to cover recurrent expenditures of the institution. *Management of housing facilities*, such as Litakoemi and similar rental units, should generate income to be used in this regard.

---

A percentage of funding towards running of the office will come via *church support* towards staff salaries. It is important that each new project - the pilot project included - plan administrative and staff expenses into its budget. YCH must become self-sufficient as soon as possible.

Individual, institutional and temporary shelter *government subsidies* will be accessed for the various projects intended now and in future. These subsidies will guarantee the affordability of projects and support the purchase of rental facilities, the creation of low-cost ownership options, the conversion of vacant buildings for residential purposes, and even new residential developments on available vacant land in the city centre and surrounding areas.

Government subsidies will be supplemented by YCH generating *additional funds, locally and overseas* (Great Britain, Germany and Scandinavia). YCH will continue to target *individuals* and *churches* who want to invest in inner city projects, through the Inner City Partnership. The *private sector* will be encouraged to enter into creative inner city housing initiatives, and local funding agencies need to gear themselves for low-cost housing projects in inner city areas.

YCH expects to be supported by *local government structures* with reductions on taxes and municipal levies. YCH also advocates for the local government to offer incentives where low-cost residential options are created in the inner city, increasing the residential component and addressing potential social problems pro-actively.

*Local residents* in a housing initiative would also invest themselves in these initiatives, either financially (rental or purchase of units), or by means of sweat equity. It is important that the residents assume responsibility from the outset, ensuring their ownership of a given project.

Through *volunteer technical expertise* (drawn from the broader Greater Pretoria community) and *volunteer labour* (mainly from local churches) costs will be kept low in implementing the various projects. Volunteerism is also a way of conscientising people and it is a mechanism for utilising available but under-utilised resources.

YCH is only interested in *bank mortgages* when it is realistic to service these from recurrent income and where the larger percentage of funding has already come in the form of grant money.

Bridging *loans*, such as the short-term, low-interest loans of the Christian Development Trust, will be used selectively, e.g. as bridging capital.


## 10.2   Labour

Staff and board functions have already been spelled out under a previous heading. When construction and / or renovation work become relevant, YCH will appoint a project manager with the necessary experience to lead the project. Eventually YCH aims to appoint a full-time project manager (maintenance, renovations, construction) to develop a separate division of YCH.

Different projects will be dealt with in different ways. In some projects the project manager will be assisted by residents and volunteer labour only. Other projects could be opportunities to train unskilled people while they do the job. It could also be a combination of people in training, residents, volunteers and skilled labourers. The

nature of a specific job will determine the labourers needed.
Certain jobs would require skilled labourers.

## 10.3  Accommodation

The YCH office will be accommodated at the PCM centre to ensure continuity and to save costs. In one of its future projects, YCH might use more space to accommodate a larger staff at a later stage.

## 10.4  Equipment

Initially YCH will only need office equipment to ensure efficient running of its activities. Initially the equipment of PCM will be shared for this purpose.

## 11.  PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND INDICATORS

Yeast City Housing will function as a non-profit housing company (section 21) which is a project of Pretoria Community Ministries. Yeast City Housing will be accountable to its own board, to the broader group of donor churches represented by Pretoria Community Ministries and its legal entity, the PEWS Trust, and to the community in which it serves. Financial and project reports will be available on request.

Specific evaluation will take place with regard to the 4 specific objectives :

Consultation Service:

How well do we support people to make informed decisions (quality)? How many people benefit from this service (quantity)?

Advocacy:

How well do we succeed in placing housing of the poor on the agenda of relevant stakeholders - is this issue recognised as an integral aspect of the broader strategy for inner city revitalisation?

Do the community based development forums give adequate attention to housing for low income people as part of their agendas? How well do we influence this process?

Development:

How many additional housing units, accessible to low income people are added to the available stock in the inner city as a result of YCH's interventions?

Management:

How well do we manage our current residential facility - i.e. physical and social / human management?

How well do we live up to the implementation programme with its specified time frame and budgets?

# ANNEXURE 1

## THE VALUES OF YEAST CITY HOUSING

Yeast City Housing accepts its responsibility to generate innovative housing options for the poor. It is based on certain values and acknowledgements, which are its perceived strengths.

1.   Yeast City Housing is a **grass-root community organisation** and the driving force behind it is represented by inner city residents.

2.   It values **social justice** in which the poor will have access to decent, affordable housing facilities, centrally located and close to job opportunities.

3.   It values the **dignity** of the individual and families, and through decent housing this will be affirmed.

4.   It values **compassion and community**, not only providing a housing unit but offering a therapeutic process of healing, meeting people where they are at, and drawing them into community.

5.   It values **empowerment**, building on the capacities of people and communities, so that the poor and marginal can be empowered to take their rightful place in urban society, contributing to its well-being.

6.   It values **cultural diversity** and seeks to be culturally sensitive and to facilitate **reconciliation** in the process of housing people.

7.   It values the **city as a place of hope and opportunity**, acknowledging urbanisation and economic realities.

8.   It values **shared leadership** and therefore develops residential capacities to manage facilities in partnership, and eventually even alone.

9.   It is a **non-profit** organisation with the sole purpose of serving the interests of the inner city poor without enriching the organisation or anybody else in the process.

10.   It functions in close **partnership** with other organisations and use these networks to help people with their assimilation back into society; the accountability of local government and the need for institutional support in the provision of housing are acknowledged.

11.   We value the importance of **stewardship** and offer opportunities to people to be stewards of their time, money and expertise, as they work closely with inner city poor communities; **volunteers** could assist in various ways which will further support the affordability of housing.

# ADDENDUM 4

The next two insertions focus on Marabastad.

- The first drawing is a proposed spatial development framework for Marabastad, suggested by Aziz Tayob and Partners. Note that this is still just a proposal, which needs to be approved by the City Council of Pretoria.

  I have included this to illustrate the emerging vision for the redevelopment of this area. One of its weaknesses is the absence of a Christian church in the redevelopment plan, although there were churches in Marabastad before the forced removals took place.

  The question Yeast City Housing should ask, is what their role could be in the future development process. The church needs to ensure that it creates a visible presence in Marabastad, both for the present situation and a future transformed Marabastad.

- The second drawing is the proposal for an inner city housing development in Marabastad, prepared by V&S Project Management. This proposal can still be adjusted radically, as it was developed in isolation for the purposes of a competition. It was then used as a way to place inner city housing on the agenda of the different stakeholders.

  Yeast City Housing has now taken this proposal and its principles as a basis from which we advocate for housing in and around Marabastad.

  YCH will probably look to do a pilot project, much smaller than the proposed one of V&S, but breathing the same spirit and using the guidelines as spelled out in this proposal.
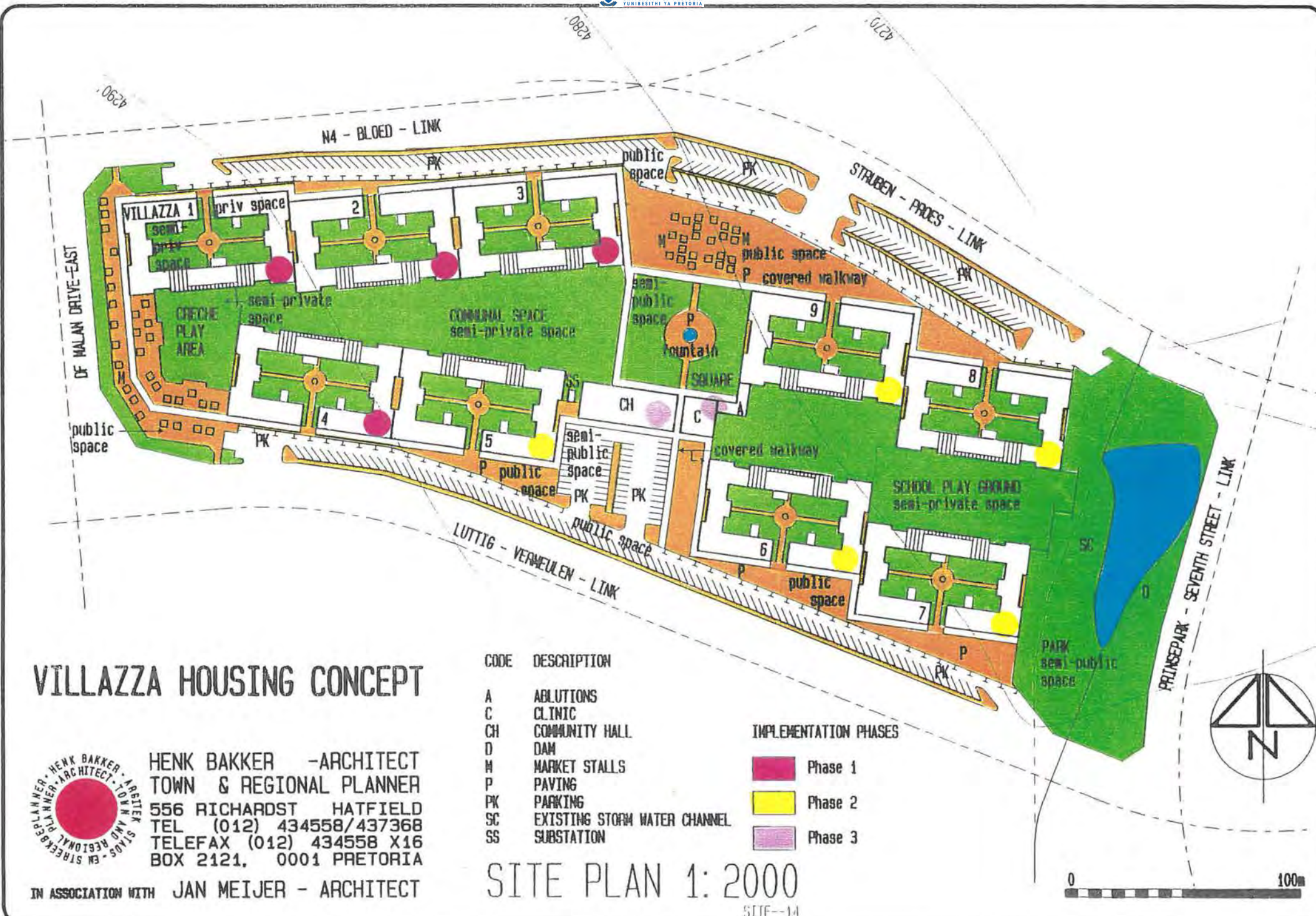
# VILLAZZA HOUSING CONCEPT

**HENK BAKKER — ARCHITECT**
**TOWN & REGIONAL PLANNER**
556 RICHARDST HATFIELD
TEL (012) 434558/437368
TELEFAX (012) 434558 X16
BOX 2121, 0001 PRETORIA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH JAN MEIJER — ARCHITECT

| CODE | DESCRIPTION |
|------|-------------|
| A | ABLUTIONS |
| C | CLINIC |
| CH | COMMUNITY HALL |
| D | DAM |
| M | MARKET STALLS |
| P | PAVING |
| PK | PARKING |
| SC | EXISTING STORM WATER CHANNEL |
| SS | SUBSTATION |

**IMPLEMENTATION PHASES**

- Phase 1
- Phase 2
- Phase 3

## SITE PLAN 1: 2000

SITE—14

0 100m

Figure 9.3.1 — Integrated Spatial Development Framework for Marabastad — Proposed Zoning

# ADDENDUM 5

This insertion is a rough drawing by one of the YCH Board Members suggesting ways in which the current pilot project of YCH can be redeveloped into a multi-use community centre, developing additional low-cost housing, a transitional house for women, an administrative centre, and a chapel at the heart of the development in the centre.

3/723

Wilakaemie

Chapel

New
Development

1/723

2/724

Burgerpark Inn