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Narratives of pastoral care, healing and transformation in a community of laity

a practical theological narrative study

by

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SUMMARY

This study's research approach shows the foundation of an epistemology that is taken from a postmodern, postfoundationalist theology. The research method is embedded in the narrative approach as established in social constructionism. The research method is also further upheld by the Seven Movements Model of doing research, which in this research also accommodates a participatory action research methodology.

This research is a study of the narratives of lay people in a local context. It shows and explores the actions of these people in a situation of care and support. Their local context expresses the journey of people who belong to the same church called the Family Trinity Church in Valhalla, Pretoria.

Their backgrounds go back to areas like the Western Cape, Northern Cape and Eastern Cape and are not originally from Pretoria. Their social relationships and church affiliation are compiled from a military background. Their narratives that relate to this research originate from a journey of care and support.

The narratives of my co-researchers discovered and recognized different themes as divulged from their stories in conjunction with their experiences. Some of these themes were related to the literature studies as part of the dialogues between interdisciplinary conversations in the process of research. Apart from the telling and re-telling of the stories, literature studies were used to open up a process of a deeper understanding of these narratives. Literature was used to critically discuss the narratives as to give more clarity on the actions of the co-researchers.

This research shows an open process of discussions and the input of other thoughts of beliefs and reason as presented by the involvement of the scientific community. The in depth discussions helped to clarify the aim and objectives as proved by the outcomes of this research. The outcome of this research is based on the experiences and the real situation that demonstrates a contextual framework.

The narratives and the unique research outcomes clearly support the fact that ordinary laypeople can lead and manage a church without the leadership of a fulltime minister. It shows the important relationship of care and support that transpired in a

deepened spirituality, which brought about healing and transformation. The uniqueness of this research is based on the eagerness of people who journeyed with one another in a group and who also directed this kindness to others who did not belong to this group.

KEYWORDS

- Narrative research
- Social constructionism
- Postmodernism
- Postfoundationalism
- Seven Movements Model
- Six Calls Model
- Co-researchers
- Laity
- Minister
- Care and Support
- Spirituality
- Healing and Transformation
- Unique Outcomes
- Discovery Group
- Class system

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