




**THE NOTION OF RECONCILIATION AS PART OF
THE EMERGING COLOURED IDENTITY**

BY

BASIL JOHN HENDRICKS

NOVEMBER 1996

**U.C.T. RELIGIOUS DEPARTMENT
SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR J.W.de GRUCHY**



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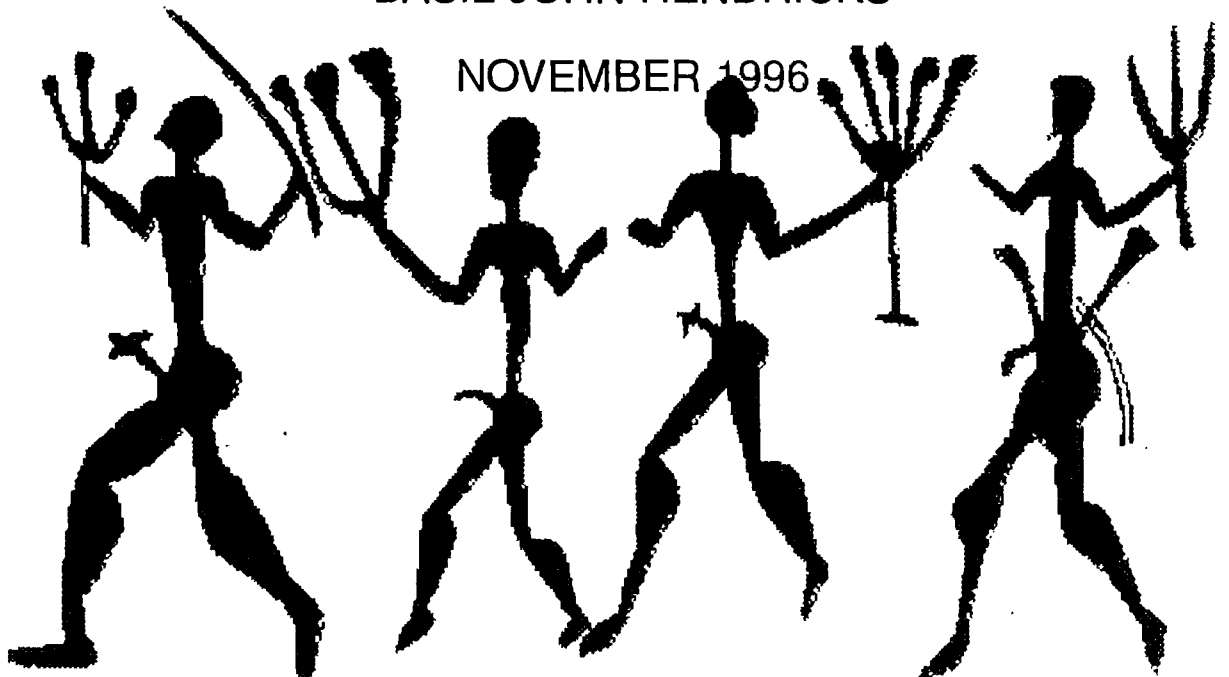
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Theology to the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Cape Town under the supervision of Professor J.W. de Gruchy.

ABSTRACT

The theology and practice of reconciliation emerged as a major issue of contention during the years of struggle for liberation in South Africa. While this notion is central to the Christian message of salvation and an obligation for all Christian believers, Christians differed among themselves depending upon their respective perceptions of the political struggle which ensued.

White theologians urged the oppressed to join them in striving for unity and reconciliation, black and coloured Christians, however, were unanimous in their rejection of cheap reconciliation without justice.

Since this country's first democratic elections in April 1994, South Africa has had to face many new challenges to the democratic process. One of these has been the new assertiveness of coloured people in the Western Cape where the coloured population are in the majority. Lately coloured people have expressed that they are unable to feel the blessings of reconciliation since they do not experience themselves as equally part of South Africa yet.

Coloured people on the Cape Flats form the biggest section of the Catholic population in the Western Cape. The church which exists within history as a reconciled and reconciling community and as a sign for the

community around it, must have something to say to this!

This paper attempts to persuade the regional Catholic hierarchy to permit its coloured countenance to be seen and for it to provide coloured people with the space to tell their story and to place it on the national agenda. This identification of the church with the aspirations of coloured people will involve the church itself in giving hope to those who despair of the future and point to mutual respect and tolerance as the fruits of reconciliation.

Part One of this dissertation is made up of three chapters. Chapter Two explores the theoretical underpinning of the notion of reconciliation by exploring biblical roots and the theological debate around reconciliation. Chapter Three deals with a critique of reconciliation in South Africa. Here I examine critique of the Kairos theologians and other prophetic theological voices in South Africa. Chapter Four deals with the South African Catholic Bishops Conference and other Catholic voices on the subject of reconciliation.

Part Two of this dissertation is made up of four chapters. Chapter Five explores the history and development of the coloured community and of the effect of National Party racial policy on coloured people. Chapter Six examines racial segregation as a violation of human rights. Chapter Seven deals with the methodology involved designing a research survey

of coloured parishioners of Catholic communities on the Cape Flats.

Chapter Eight concludes this section by presenting the research findings and discussions.

Part Three of the dissertation I revisit my hypothesis that a disparity exists between the theological understanding of the hierarchical church and the cultural understanding of the notion of reconciliation of the coloured people. Part Three also consists of an evaluation of the research survey as well as recommendations for the church's mission in the Western Cape.

Finally, it must be said that this is by far **not** an exhaustive study on the doctrine of reconciliation, but only to indicate its various meanings and its importance within religion and especially in Catholic theology and practice. Secondly, I am **not** trying to understand the whole question of coloured identity but to ascertain how this relates to Catholic church parishioners on the Cape Flats.

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PROLOGUE

"I owe my being to the Khoi and the San whose desolate souls haunt the great expanses of the beautiful Cape - they fell victim to the most merciless genocide our native land has ever seen, they were the first to lose their lives in the struggle to defend our freedom and dependence and they who, as a people, perished in the result.

Today, as a country, we keep an audible silence about these ancestors of the generations that live, fearful to admit the horror of a former deed, seeking to obliterate from our memories a cruel occurrence which, in its remembering, should teach us not and never to be inhuman again.

I am formed of the migrants who left Europe to find a new home on our native land. Whatever their own actions, they remain still, part of me.

In my veins course the blood of the Malay slaves who came from the East. Their proud dignity informs my bearing, their culture a part of my essence. The stripes they bore on their bodies from the lash of the slave master are a reminder embossed on my consciousness of what should not be done."

With these moving words Deputy President Thabo Mbeki addressed the nation on the occasion of the adoption of the Constitution Bill and perhaps unwittingly highlighted the essence of the coloured question as an unavoidable sub-text on the national agenda: Coloureds are not an accident of South African history but a portion of the genesis of the South African identity. It is located in the confluence of the indigenous, the slave, the Caucasian in the being of the community known as coloured: it is a community that symbolises a journey from the past in the slave ships carrying our forebears from the Archipelagos of the East Indies, the ships of the invading settlers many of whom were refugees from the ghettos of Europe, onto the ancestral shores belonging to our Khoi-San fathers and mothers.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. AIMS AND RATIONALE

1.1.1. Why I have chosen to focus on reconciliation

Reconciliation is a key Christian concept and is central to the doctrine of salvation. Christians are obliged at all times to exercise a ministry of peace and reconciliation (Mt. 5:9; 2 Cor. 5:18). However, reconciliation is also a central aspect of contemporary politics in the new South Africa.

It would seem that the call upon Christians to assume the ministry of reconciliation takes on a specific contextual urgency. This call is not reserved to only one section of the church but is in fact the mission of every individual Christian and of every Christian community.

The Christian commission to reconcile and be reconciled cannot be reduced to some pietistic devotion or mere religious utterances but has strong social implications particularly at this time within the history of South Africa.

In this thesis I focus on how Catholic coloured people on the Cape Flats

understand and use the theological concept of reconciliation and how it relates to coloured identity. My hypothesis is that Catholic coloured laity in the Western Cape operate out of a particular cultural understanding of religious concepts based upon their own psycho-cultural perception of themselves in the political arena. From this cultural base, coloured people interpret and understand religious concepts. That is, their understanding and interpretation of religious notions are related directly to the debate surrounding coloured identity taking place at the moment. This corporate experience of the coloured community is the locus in which interpretation is taking place. A further part of my hypothesis is that there is a disparity between the cultural interpretation of the notion of reconciliation and the traditional theological understanding out of which the official Catholic church is at present operating.

Since the first national democratic elections in our country (1994) there has been a significantly powerful assertion by coloured people of their identity. This has been articulated in a variety of ways, and includes statements such as:

We feel strongly that it is time for a homecoming of the coloured debate into the larger fold of debates on the politics of difference within (at least) a South African frame [Erasmus 1996:1].

My hypothesis is that there is a disparity or difference in the official,

theological teaching of reconciliation and the cultural understanding of the notion by coloured people on the Cape Flats. Moreover, the local Catholic church in the Western Cape has failed to properly convey the fundamental teachings of Vatican II and to inform itself of post-conciliar thinking on inculturation and its role in reconciliation in situations of conflict and division.

Failure to acknowledge and deal with this disparity is, to my mind, a serious problem for both the coloured people, who form the biggest section of the Catholic population in the Western Cape and for the success and relevancy of the church's mission on the Cape Flats. Christians have a right to expect guidance and inspiration from the church in times of social crisis and confusion. The church would be failing in its duty if it did not critically analyse and evaluate the above discrepancy in the understanding of reconciliation which is, after all, one of the central themes of the gospel.

1.1.2. Why I concentrate on the coloured section of the population and the Catholic community on the Cape Flats.

Reconciliation is a process. It implies a movement from a negative state to a positive one. It represents a change in condition, a being-put-together again. It is the redemption of identity from non-being, because of one's sin, to being recognised as "a child of God". In this sense,

reconciliation is the birth of a new creation. This is a particularly strong element resonating throughout Pauline theology [Eph 2:15, 19; Gal 3:28; 2 Cor 5:17]. In line with this, John Macquarrie defines reconciliation as “the activity whereby the disorders of existence are healed, its imbalances redressed, its alienations bridged over. Reconciliation in turn is continuous with consummation, the bringing of creation to its perfection” [Macquarrie J, 1970:246].

Apartheid, by contrast, deliberately set out to destroy coloured people’s identity and culture. It denied them their symbols, their history, their heroes, and denigrated cultural differences. The exploitation of the heterogeneous composition of the coloured community for the political and economic self interests of white people had a particularly cruel consequence on the psycho-cultural identity of this community of people. Political liberation ought to have reversed and corrected this negative construction, but to the amazement of progressive activists this community chose rather to locate their fortunes with the “devil they knew”. Holding the latter choice up against Macquarrie’s definition of reconciliation, one questions whether after experiencing such grave and deliberate ideological manipulation, the coloured community can speak of having its disorders healed, imbalances redressed, and alienations bridged [Macquarrie 1970: 246].

While other population groups also experienced similar demonisation of

their culture and attempts at destruction of their identity, they were never exploited in quite the same way as were the coloured people. This demonisation of coloured culture was done by propagating a crude form of racism based upon genuinely felt fears within the coloured community, robbing it of its franchise and using its location in the political social ladder as a buffer between itself and the contesting black population.

Dr AbdouMaliq Simone, referring to the debate on coloured identity, adds that coloureds are the most visible harbingers of the flexibility and contention, permitted and required in the configuration of any identity in post apartheid society [1994:161]. This makes the coloured people's position unique in the South African collage.

Whether this coloured assertion and political self-realisation is actually the result of an ethnic awareness or whether it is a political response to socio-economic alienation and marginalisation within the new South Africa, is a question I will briefly touch on. The fact that this assertion is affecting the interpretation, self-understanding and the role coloured people play in the moral reconstruction of South Africa provides a sufficient motivation for this study. It is my opinion that because of the general re-examination of ethnicity underway in the coloured community, (cultural preoccupation with identity), coloured people are less likely to be involved in the processes of national reconciliation, non-racialism and nation-building.

The fact that I am both coloured and Catholic, not only gives me a certain access but also fills me with the necessary passion for this project. Yet, I use the term “coloured” in a very broad sense. That is, as referring to a distinct, yet not homogeneous group, but sufficiently common to have a specific culture, philosophy and identity. Secondly, I use the term here to include all the various strands of which go to make up coloured identity.

The fact that coloureds on the Cape Flats form the largest part of the Catholic community in the Western Cape makes this an important constituency in which to locate my study. It also gives rise to the question: is the Catholic hierarchical church aware of this self assertiveness within the coloured community and the impact of this on people’s interpretation of theological praxis?

1.2 ETHICS APPRAISAL

I chose a research design which attempted to explore the subjective opinions of grassroots people on the notion of reconciliation, as opposed to understanding it from the top down. In other words, it was my intention to ascertain the perspective Catholic parishioners on the subject under study, as opposed to that of local Catholic church leadership. My hunch was that a difference or disparity existed between these two levels of church. Secondly, I also wanted to indicate by this, the opinion that coloured people themselves have something to offer and that they were

not simply passive, objects of scientific study.

I also undertook this approach because of my belief that, the authentic voice of a parish does not reside in the management of that parish i.e. the parish priest, nuns and church authorities, but with the people in the pew. Power, however, still resides with the parish priest and the parish council, thus they could not be excluded from either the planning or the execution of the research survey. It was a matter of obtaining the co-operation of this power dimension in the parish without permitting my objectivity to be affected. I suspect that the first two parish priests I interviewed suspected I might interfere with the balance of power in the parish and managed to get me to restrict the survey. I felt that this was a weakness, but decided to go ahead in spite of this for the sake of the study.

Reconciliation, I concluded, would not happen through "forms" or church structures, but through people.

Another ethical consideration involved the sensitivity of subjects like coloured culture, identity and political beliefs. I resolved to show great care and to ensure that human dignity, freedom and privacy be respected. I also resolved in the light of the negativity felt by many coloured people towards political and social surveys to be open about my research intentions, no matter how this knowledge might affect their responses to the questionnaire..

To relieve any suspicion of partiality, I promised that scientific objectivity would be maintained throughout the study and that confidentiality with regard to research information would be considered privileged. I also promised that names of participants would be protected by the disguising of names. Further, I assured respondents that research findings would be reported honestly - with no distortion and no exclusion of relevant data.

It is my hope that this study would engage the church on the Cape Flats in serious and open debate on the "coloured question" with all sectors of this community. Further, that the church as reconciler, would involve itself in the coloured struggle for full partnership in the political, social and economic life of the country, and that it would sponsor research efforts aimed at assisting the coloured community find its place in the new South Africa. Besides this, it is also important that the church realise and acknowledge its part in misrecognising coloured people by co-operating with apartheid borders and racial laws. The church should also acknowledge the history and contribution coloured people made to the evangelical mission and growth of the Catholicism in the Western Cape.

1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research design is used in this study. It attempts to subjectively explore the meanings, interpretations and experiences of reconciliation as understood by coloured people at grassroots level. The

collection of data was done via tape recorded semi-structured, face to face interviews with about 6 parishioners from 5 different parishes. Each interview was guided by selected open-ended questions which included selected Gospel quotations. The purpose of this being to give people a range of possible choices to the given questions.

After collating the verbatim responses, I arranged them into their major themes. I then analysed the results of the responses to my questions to postulate what the laity of the Catholic Church on the Cape Flats understood by the notion of reconciliation.

PART ONE:

CHAPTER TWO: UNDERSTANDING RECONCILIATION

A Theological Debate

2.1. Biblical roots of the word reconciliation

Strictly speaking, the theological understanding of reconciliation (katallage) as Paul uses it in the New Testament is not found in the Old Testament. Dufour [1967:423], however, suggests that it is more implicit than explicit. It is implied in God's unceasing offer of pardon to humanity, and in God's tenderness and pity (Ex 34:6) and God's restraint and mercy (Ps 85:4; 103: 8-12). Hos 2:16-22 reveals God's compassion even towards the unfaithful and rebellious (Ez 18:31f). The purification rites, Dufour continues, are ultimately rituals of reconciliation between God and humankind. However, though a connection may be implied, Domeris argues that there is, in fact, no Hebrew equivalent for reconciliation as Paul understands it [1987:77]. The word which comes closest is repentance which leads to forgiveness and is demonstrated by ritual sacrifice.

Paul takes his understanding of the word reconciliation (Katallage) from the Graeco-Roman legal system which he then interprets in a soteriological sense. Katallage, which means the bringing together of

opposite forces which naturally repel each other, is interpreted in a new way which incorporates the Old Testament (O.T.) categories of repentance, confession and forgiveness, to mean "the process of bringing together a holy God and a world full of sinners" [ibid:78]. This process of reconciliation, which includes restitution, is interpreted in the Christian way as being initiated and fulfilled by Jesus on behalf of humanity [1Tim 2:5]. It is not simply a one-way process though. Paul saw a double dimension to this process :

- [i] reconciliation was understood to mean becoming a new creation - i.e. undergoing a complete transformation.
- [ii] participating in God's ministry of reconciliation.

A second interpretation of reconciliation [apokatallasso] appears in Colossians and Ephesians. Reconciliation in this case refers to two opposing parties being reconciled "in one body" to God (Eph 2:16f, Col 1:22f). It does not mean a reconciliation between the two parties, but rather the removal of antagonisms which separate them and which now makes them equal in their standing with God.

A third interpretation of reconciliation [diallasson] emphasises change in the horizontal relationship between two people which is essential for a right relationship with God. This understanding connects well with the Hebraic prophets (Amos 5:21-24 and Is 58:6f).

Finally, in Acts 7: 26, the term [sunallosso] is used to refer to a reconciliation attempted by an ordinary human being who tries to establish a changed relationship between two fighting people. It is not simply an end to the hostility between them, but also seeks to establish a condition of wholeness to ensure their entire well-being.

2.2. Characteristics of reconciliation

Reconciliation implies both a horizontal and vertical restoration of relationships. It also implies a conversion and a sincere desire to tell the truth, to receive forgiveness and be reconciled. Characteristics of Christian reconciliation include:

1. Recognition of sin and sincere acknowledgement of guilt
2. Full confession of wrongs
3. Resolve to make reparation
4. The re-orientation of one's life so as to avoid repetition of wrongs done.

Vital for the Christian understanding of reconciliation is the action of grace which precedes and completes any genuine human attempts at reconciliation.

From Paul's usage one can conclude that reconciliation is an essential

aspect of salvation. Salvation means to be taken out of a dangerous / evil situation or condition in which one risks perishing it means a rescuing from some or other ill that besets us [JTSA 56/35].

In this case it is Jesus Christ who, by establishing a new relationship between ourselves and God, takes away the barriers which divide us from each other and so establishes the right condition for us by making restitution for our sins and so affecting our salvation. Redemption then refers to this salvific movement. It is the specific way in which these salvific acts take place in history e.g. the liberation of Israel in freeing it from Egyptian servitude (Ex 12:27; 14:13 Is 63:9) and the constituting of Israel as a "special people" (Ex 19:5; Dt 26:18); and, finally, in the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus.

A key concept in the preaching of Jesus of Nazareth is that of the Kingdom of God [cf Nolan: 1976:]. One of the central contents, connected to the kingdom is "shalom", which only inadequately can be translated as "peace". For us "peace" means mainly "absence of war". Shalom means much more, it means the total well-being of people and nature. It is a principal messianic gift so that it could become a name of God (Judges 6:24) and God's messiah (Micah 5:3; cf. Isaiah 9:6f). God is a "God of Peace" (1 Cor 14:33) and Jesus Christ "is our peace" (Eph 2:14). The promise of God's shalom which corresponds to one of the deepest longings especially at this time in contemporary South Africa, is not just an inner or other-worldly peace but also has social implications: "They

will hammer their swords into ploughshares, their spears into sickles. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, there will be no more training for war." (Isaiah 2:4); "All the footgear of battle, every cloak rolled in blood, is burnt and consumed by fire" (Is 9:5). The image of shalom also involves all of nature: The wolf lives with the lamb, the panther lies down with the kid, calf and lion feed together with a little boy to lead them. The cow and the bear make friends, their young lie down together. The lion eats straw like an ox. The infant plays over the cobra's hole" (Is 11:6-8).

In this way the Kingdom of God, or Shalom, includes the breaking down of discrimination and racism, or of the walls that keep people apart, to create "one single New Man in Christ by restoring peace" (Eph 2:15). The vision seeks to establish a state where there "are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free man, male and female" (Gal 3:28). All will share one homeland, "so you are no longer aliens or foreigner visitors, you are citizens like all the saints and part of God's household"(Eph 2:19).

Unity is not the levelling off of diversity. The kingdom of God is the manifestation of the richness of diversity, not kept apart, but shared. It is portrayed as a festival of all nations, a "huge multitude from every nation, race, tribe and language" (Rev 7:9); "They will bring all your brothers (and sisters), on horses, in chariots, on mules, on dromedaries, from all the nations to my holy mountain in Jerusalem" (Is 66: 18-21). All will

come bringing the riches of their cultures and find their home in the "new Zion", the "new Jerusalem": "All call Zion "mother", since all were born in her" (Ps 87).

Reconciliation in the context of "shalom" is much more than temporal and personal well-being. It also has a strong social dimension and is more than human endeavour alone - it is represented in the Bible as "a revolution from above", as God's revaluation of all values (Lk 6:20-26; Lk 1:51-53)!

2.3. Comment on the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation

The first generation of Christians believed in the immanence of the Parousia. This is the context in which the church's practice of reconciliation and incorporation of the baptised person into the church must be seen [Rahner 1975:1193]. The break with the church usually came about through heretical belief and practice. Penance therefore, meant a "coming to one's senses"; seeking reconciliation based upon the new clarification and the integrity of the believer. The practice of Penance, in such a case was permitted only once in a lifetime, though the possibility of salvation for the sinner was never denied. The mercy of God was the predominant characteristic of the church's self-understanding though at times, on the local level, it sometimes demanded proof of repentance [ibid 1194].

In the Third century, the question of the need to forgive capital sins (unchastity, murder, apostasy) arose. Through the influence of Tertullian and based on the Mt 18:15-35 text, the church became more conscious of its own authority and developed a more rigorous attitude towards the penitential element of the sacrament. The third century saw the development of sacramental confession and canonical penance. Reconciliation with the church followed a period of canonical penance through which the person made atonement for their sin - i.e. capital sins only! Afterwards the bishop, by the imposition of hands and prayer, would welcome the offender back into the embrace of the church. The church was seen as the medium of reconciliation [Rahner1975:197]. The influence of the Irish in 11th and 12th centuries introduced regular private confession to a priest. Regularity of confession was based upon the individual's conscience - not simply in the case of excommunication. This broke with public and death-bed confession and that of the formal role played by the bishop, and monks now took on the role of confessor and repeated absolution.

St Thomas Aquinas follows along the lines of the traditional teaching of the church, but places heavy emphasis upon the interior disposition of the penitent. The sorrow felt by the sinner for sins committed was itself a sign of grace and justified the sinner. The emphasis on the *paenitentia interior* in no way diverted attention from the authority and role of the church but clarified for the church the "contribution" of the penitent whose

contrition is an indication that they already are participants in divine grace [Farrel W.1948: 39f]. This interior disposition, Thomas argues, is the *res et sacramentum* that is, wherein the sacrament resides. The church's role is that of a medium for the channelling of the sacrament, but it is God's grace with which the penitent co-operates. This divine grace is God's free expression of love and precedes any act on the part of the sinner.

Thomas seems a little less legalistic in his approach to reconciliation than some of the church Fathers who sought to protect the church against heresy and other challenges to its authority. In this matter Thomas seems to return to Jesus' own message of the reign of God, which demands more than simply external penance in "sackcloth and ashes". Rather, repentance calls for *metanoia*, for a radical and inner reorientation of the whole person, and that person's return to God.

Today Penance is seen as the whole process of conversion, confession, restitution and the acceptance of some form of personal discipline. It is also a sign of one's serious commitment to change and of one's willingness to be restored to full communion with God and with Christ's Body, the Church.

Reconciliation, however, is the stage beyond forgiveness. It is a transformative process. Implied in this fact is the notion that reconciliation

takes place over time and cannot be affected at once. Though the full effects of reconciliation always takes time, the basic decision to forgive or seek forgiveness may take place in a moment. Once that decision is made, there may still be many aspects of an individual's life and relationship that require continual reconciliation. But now, instead of being weapons of antagonism or conditions for indifference, these areas of difference will be material out of which to create a new and mutual understanding and acceptance. The new creation in the New Testament is not envisaged as a long-drawn out process, but new converts must still grow from babes to maturity in faith.

2.4. Reconciliation and contemporary transformation:

As I have stated in 2.2., reconciliation is an aspect of salvation. It is the recognition or acknowledgement that one is in a dangerous or evil situation or condition from which one needs to be rescued or set free.

Recognition of this condition already implies a level of conversion and the need for repentance / restitution. Conversion in Pauline theology is portrayed as a complete transformation of one's whole being (2Cor 5:17).

It is more than an intellectual acknowledgement or a superficial compromise. Reconciliation is understood as a deep change of heart which leads one to re-orientate one's life, turning it around and restoring the value God gives to it. It coincides with justification (Rom 5:9) won for us in Christ, who is "our peace" (Eph.2:14 ; see also Col. 1:22).

Biblical stories depicting acts of reconciliation might better illustrate this point than the biblical dictionary approach above. For example, the prodigal son, the prostitute who bursts in on Jesus' meal with Simon, Peter's denial and repentance, the conversion stories of Acts and especially the conversion of Paul, all illustrate this radical deep change of heart. Reconciliation is a transformation in which even the material world, which shared in the fall (cf Rom 8:19-22), is renewed. Creation too, therefore, is under the action of grace.

As Nicolson puts it :

If salvation makes no difference to the here and now social realities, Christianity may still be true, but should not be looked to for worldly liberation, and Christians must be entirely pietist ... It would be a denial that God acts in history. [Nicolson JTSA 56/35].

That reconciliation is more than personal confession made "direct to God" and that it has communal and structural consequences is clear. De Gruchy adds yet another element to the question of reconciliation, that of corporate guilt:

There is no easy route to redemption white South Africans now have to face the reality of their history no matter how painful this might be; they have to recognise and deal with their individual and

corporate guilt in order to experience healing, transformation, and national reconstruction [De Gruchy 1993:5].

I hope to return to this point of corporate guilt when dealing with the Coloured people and nation-building.

2.5. Theological implications

The history of salvation in the Old Testament is a woeful story, because the Israelites keep missing the point made by the prophets. The prophets speak about the nature of real conversion; the need for a complete change of heart of God's people. God, say the prophets, is not satisfied with the simple observance of the Law alone, and sacrifices, though necessary, are not sufficient. The people had to convert.

We notice the pattern of a father-childlike relationship between God and the Israelites. They break the Law; they are sorry. The prophets denounce this superficial kind of sorrow because the poor continue to suffer and be oppressed. Thus it is not an adult understanding of misdemeanour and its consequences, but rather a childish understanding.

This is the point from which Paul starts (cf The Letter to the Romans regarding the Law). He says that the Law is not enough. By merely

observing the demands of the Law, we, in fact, fail to grasp God's purpose for the Law. The Law is not bad, but it is the minimum requirement and its fulfillment does not necessarily lead to a change of heart. And it is this change of heart which is key. The imagery Paul uses for this converted state is that of the New Man, as opposed to the "old man"; the "new Adam", the "new creation" (2 Cor 5:17f). All this imagery involves transformation, or re-creation - a renewed self-understanding in God for the believer, who becomes a co-creator with God in the world. This is the consequence of an adult relationship with God. This is what Paul means by "now being a new human being". Conversion is being grown-up; to be a totally and deeply changed person and to become a responsible believer.

In conclusion reconciliation is an integral aspect of salvation. It is the recognition or acknowledgement that one is in a dangerous or evil situation or condition, from which one needs to be rescued or set free. Recognition of this condition already implies a level of conversion and the need for repentance / restitution. Reconciliation also implies a conversion and a sincere desire to tell the truth, to receive forgiveness and be reconciled. It is an adult understanding of our misdemeanour and its consequences. In the context of "shalom", conversion has to do with much more than temporal and personal well-being, it also has a strong social and worldly dimension.

CHAPTER THREE: A CRITIQUE OF RECONCILIATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1. The Kairos Document: a moment of grace

Torrance calls the Kairos Document "a deeply moving people's document - the voice of the poor, the powerless and oppressed" written by a group of lay Christian theologians in the context of unrest and revolt against the evils of apartheid and state repression [JTSA 55/42].

The Kairos Document was an attempt at a serious analysis of and theological response to the political crisis which confronted South Africa during the 1980's. It set out to challenge the status quo during what it considered to be a time of decisive significance, a Kairos moment, i.e. a critical time which requires an unqualified response and action. In some ways it was also a response to the National Initiative for Reconciliation's [NIR] theological position on political involvement. The launch of the NIR, also grew out of a growing social consciousness. It was made up of members of a highly influential organisation devoted to evangelising the cities of Africa and who now tried to respond to the political crisis in the country by working towards reconciling the two main forces in the political arena. Part of the NIR's motivation for getting involved stemmed from the fact that they saw both these political foes, black and white, were not only both citizens of the same country, but more importantly, were mostly Christian. The NIR therefore set out to take a neutral position between

the two parties and to work towards reconciliation. Because of its socio-political position in the political arena, the Kairos theologians took a stance which was directly in tension with the view of the NIR.

For the Kairos theologians this was a specific summons of God addressed to the whole of South Africa to prepare itself for the breaking in of God's judgement into the historical process [JTSA 59/69]. The Kairos was a sacred moment not only politically, but for the Kairos theologians it was also a moment in which the critical challenge of faith in Jesus Christ had dawned.

It is a moment when refusal to heed the proclamation of the Kingdom of God will bring on the Nation the terror of destruction it proposes, a theology that begins with the bible and its immediate bearing upon a critical situation of the prophetic word (ibid:69).

This moment required a radical response to the prevailing political situation. To refuse to respond appropriately to this "divine visitation" [Villa-Vicencio, 1986:269] was to betray the strong demands of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; "for very many Christians in South Africa this is the Kairos, the moment of grace and opportunity, the favourable time in which God issues a challenge to decisive action" [The Kairos Document 1].

3.2. An introduction to the South African critique of reconciliation

The Kairos Document distinguished between three types of theology in South Africa; state, church and prophetic theology. State theology supported and legitimated the current regime; Church theology, by professing a personal piety, neutrality, and non-violence, in actual fact supported the current regime by withdrawing Christianity from the political arena and offering "cheap reconciliation". The church, in other words, was divided against itself. The church was part of the problem. This had severe implications for the church which was compelled to address and resolve them. The resolution to this division lay not in some false harmony of conflicting positions, but in choosing sides [JTSA 59 / 71].

Kairos theologians advocated a third option which they called prophetic theology. This directly challenged the unjust rule of the South African government. They argued that the moral legitimacy of the South African state required any truly Christian church "to confront and to disobey the State in order to obey God" [Villa-Vicencio, 1986:268]. With their radical commitment to the marginalised and the oppressed, Kairos theologians advanced a redefinition of among other things, the concepts of violence, justice and reconciliation.

3.2.1. Dealing with the legacy of the past

The Kairos Document challenged the objectivity in the use of the biblical concept of reconciliation as an absolute principle in resolving all cases of conflict and dissention. [The Kairos Document 10]. As a co-signatory to the Kairos Document, Bonganjalo Goba argued that: "Biblical exegesis is clearly not something neutral but it reflects the ideological commitments of those who engage in the critical task of biblical interpretation [JTSA 56/61]. By reflecting upon the biblical requirements of reconciliation and examining them in the light of Christian praxis, Kairos theologians indicated their opposition to the dominant perception of reconciliation, calling it shallow, cheap and unchristian [The Kairos Document:10].

This Kairos understanding of reconciliation emanated from the authors' reading of the problem of oppression in the Bible. It presented a call to action based upon a theology which arose from praxis, rather than as the result of an indirect, deductive secondary application of doctrinal formulations [JTSA 59/71].

The Kairos Document authors' re-reading of the concept of justice, forgiveness and reconciliation made them realise that oppression was one of the central themes of the Bible. They argued that the biblical description of oppression conveyed the experience of being crushed,

degraded, humiliated, exploited, impoverished, defrauded, deceived and enslaved, and that this was also the everyday experience of many South Africans [The Kairos Document.18].

In their critique, the Kairos theologians pointed to the need to differentiate between various types of conflict. They argued that a distinction had to be made between an ordinary quarrel and that of structural or political conflict. They argued that these two could not be equated with each other; "In our situation in South Africa today it would be totally unchristian to plead for reconciliation and peace before the present injustices have been removed" [The Kairos Document 9].

The authors of the Kairos Document challenged society and the Church to reflect on the biblical concept of repentance as a prerequisite to any talk of reconciliation. Biblically speaking, they argued, good and bad are never reconciled or condoned. Rather we are obliged to confront that which is opposed to the will of God.

Genuine reconciliation, according to the Kairos theologians, required a radical eradication of the political situation which promoted conflict, oppression and injustice. Any other notion of reconciliation was suspect and was seen as coming from an "enemy of the church "[Bosch 1988:100].

The Kairos Document, therefore, proposed that the evils of apartheid be

quite directly confronted, and that a harmony between contradictory claims for Christian allegiance be refused. Furthermore, in doing so, it also conveyed a much needed message of hope to those who had suffered the consequences of apartheid.

3.3. The Rustenburg Conference debate on reconciliation

A national Conference of Church Leaders in South Africa was held at Rustenburg in November 1990. The Conference reiterated that apartheid was not just a political reality, neither was it just an economic and social system, but it was also a theological reality. Therefore, any talk of reconciliation or unity was premature without a serious look at the causes for the divisions which existed in South Africa and their implications on Christian witness. The Conference had therefore to make the pursuit of justice, truth and democracy part of its argument for genuine reconciliation. This was not a matter of political ideology, but of Christian justice [Alberts and Chikane 1991:94-95]. Without justice there could be no repentance and without repentance there could be no forgiveness. Without forgiveness there could be no genuine reconciliation [Alberts and Chikane: 227].

The latter point emanated from Kairos theology which considered the concept of reconciliation inappropriate and ideologically biased when the revolutionary change this biblical concept demands is short-circuited by

a simple handshake or warm embrace. Nurnberger concurs:

Instead of leading to equality of dignity such reconciliation reinforces the injustices. In short, it is a fraud. ... Therefore the attempt to reach reconciliation without social justice is counter-productive. It discredits what Christians stand for ... [Nurnberger & Tooke 1988: 119-120].

This point was also made at Rustenburg by Archbishop Ndumiso Ngada of the AIC:

Unless the Christians of this country address the issues that brought about the deep resentment, reconciliation and peace are hollow statements [Alberts and Chikane 1991:79].

This sentiment was confirmed by several speakers at the same Conference, including Molebatse [213], Mkhathshwa [147], Villa-Vicencio [185], de Gruchy [111] [all in Alberts & Chikane 1991].

The traditional view of reconciliation as peace and unity at all costs is heavily criticized as the doctrine proclaimed by those who wish to conceal the brutal facts of exploitation and conflict in the country. It was referred to at the Conference as: "the view of the dominant" (Molebatse in Alberts and Chikane 1991:213); "totally inadequate, if not hurtful; superficial and callous" (de Gruchy *ibid*:120); "not suitable in our situation" (Mpumlwana *ibid*: 84), and that which offers the nation no decisive word

beyond rebuke and unattainable ideal" (Villa-Vicencio *ibid*: 186).

3.4. Third Way Theology

In his study Balcomb and Third Way Theology responded to the challenge posed to theology by the demands for structural change in the nineteen eighties. He showed how one's social location hugely informs one's perception and understanding of the message of the Christian gospel and of one's integrity and commitment as a Christian to the social process, as well as one's interpretation of social reality [Balcomb 1993:119].

He tackled The National Initiative for Reconciliation's [NIR] spiritualising of the concept and act of reconciliation to such an extent that it hinders the process of justice and "thwarts the right of the oppressed" [*ibid* 112]. In a situation of such gross injustice the Christian simply had to take sides. There could be no middle ground without the loss of integrity for such a stance reveals one's interests in the conflict. This is precisely what Balcomb criticises about the NIR's attempt to perform a balancing act between the two opposing social forces operating during the period under discussion. He is particularly critical of their definition of this balancing act, which they call the "Third Way", as the authentic Christian approach to two equally unacceptable and sinful extremes [Balcomb 1993:14].

Balcomb makes the point that "Third Way" theology considered the convictions of the two opposing social forces operating in the country at the time (the political left and political right) as sharing the same level of dignity and integrity. But this in fact was false [Balcomb 1993:18]. When one force is so obviously wrongly defending and securing the collective, illegitimate interests of a particular group at the expense, and to the detriment of another, and does so in the name of Christ, the Church cannot and dare not remain silently neutral but must involve itself in subverting such a system [ibid:20].

A neutral or apolitical position by the Church in such a situation would, in fact, be tantamount to supporting the status quo, thus making the Church guilty of complicity in the excesses of the Right. Third Way theology did not see itself as partisan. On the contrary, it considered itself as objective and neutral. It considered itself as the truth somewhere between the "first way" of support for the status quo and the "second way" of support for the struggle against the status quo. Third Way theology opted for the uncontested centre from where it attempted to subvert the political agendas of both the left and right.

Politics had to be transcended, but not too much; issues had to be discussed, but not too enthusiastically; justice had to be done, but not too passionately; the truth had to be told, but not too emphatically [ibid:18].

This, declared Third Way theologians, would safeguard the unique identity of the church and ensure its neutrality in conflict. Theology however, does not exist in a vacuum and the perceptions of theologians influence their understanding. Chikane's "two worlds, two histories" theory [Alberts & Chikane ed.: 1991:49] reminds us that there were two perceptions of the reality in operation in South Africa at the time. Miguez Bonino, who also does his theology in a similar political struggle as our own, endorses this assertion that there is no such thing as socially uncommitted theology [Balcomb 1993:120].

Balcomb also convincingly shows how one's location on the social ladder influences one's perspective of reality. This social perspective must be taken seriously. It is bred into people by all the experience of growing up and living in a certain location in society, which then becomes the tough sinews of personality, culture and world view. Thus preservation of one's social location becomes part and parcel of self-preservation.

Balcomb exposes the ideological roots and influences of Third Way theology as being liberal democracy. Liberal politics in apartheid South Africa sought to keep intact the fundamental interests of its constituency by merely promising material changes and benefits to the marginalised and the poor [Balcomb 1993:32]. Third Way theology's "middle ground" position, of the church being an alternative community, really exposed its alienation from the black, oppressed perspective.

Any talk of reconciliation was seen as an appropriation of the theological

concept which in fact endorsed liberal political interests. It was perceived as fitting in neatly with the liberalisation or reform strategy of the Nationalist government at the time. However, the claim that it was objective, neutral and apolitical sounded hollow and fraudulent to Blacks.

A concept of reconciliation which did not take into account a system which was deliberately designed to keep Black people in an oppressive condition and which did not include justice or set out to rectify the wrongs of that political situation was not worth talking about. By promoting the concepts of peace and reconciliation, Third Way theology attempted to persuade the "first way" and the "second way" to abandon their strategies and to adopt a more economically sound and socially progressive one which would ensure an end to conflict and violence. The conflict here was interpreted as a clash of interests. But genuine reconciliation comes from repentance and forgiveness which results in peace and restitution [Balcomb 1993:70]. As Cassidy saw it, reconciliation "starts with making the vertical primary"; "The pattern is to move from the personal to the structural, from the "spiritual" to the material, and the individual to the corporate" [ibid]. The Kairos Document which was produced two weeks after the NIR conference criticised this appropriation of the concept of reconciliation:

... many Christians have been led to believe that what we need in South Africa is not justice but reconciliation and peace. The

argument goes something like this: "We must be fair. We must listen to both sides of the story. If two sides can only meet to talk and negotiate they will sort out their differences and misunderstandings, and the conflict will be resolved". On the face of it this may sound very Christian. But is it?

The fallacy here is that reconciliation has been made into an absolute principle that must be applied in all cases of conflict or dissension. But not all cases of conflict are the same [The Kairos Document 1986:9].

When one considers the revolutionary nature of the Pauline understanding of reconciliation, Third Way theology's definition of reconciliation, based on the need to harmonise conflicting forces within society by subverting their political agendas, seems rather superficial.

3.5. What is universal about the Kairos critique of reconciliation?

Central to the Kairos theology of reconciliation is the notion of the need for total change or transformation of that which is oppressive within society; politically, socially, structurally and ideologically. This process is not limited to personal conversion neither is it peripheral to the Christian faith. Paul, as mentioned above, develops the O.T. understanding of repentance and, interpreting Jesus, showed that reconciliation was nothing if it was not "of the heart", or the recreation of a total new being.

because it enables them to continue and to discredit the Christians who oppose them. Neutrality is an indirect way of supporting the status quo. [The Road to Damascus:6].

There are certain fights a Christian cannot avoid. There are certain situations in which a Christian cannot be neutral. In the matter of good and evil a Christian cannot be neutral. His / her very silence exposes their intransigence (ruled by the "old creation") and situates them on the side of evil for their failure to prevent its progress. This makes them obstacles to reconciliation.

At the Rustenburg Conference, which in many respects represented the hierarchical or official Church, Kairos theology emerged once more to challenge the dominant theological category. Reparation was here connected to social reconstruction. The latter had to be addressed and become part of the reconciliation process. Justice required this before forgiveness could be granted and reconciliation take place. In our current context this also is the point from which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission takes its cue, in laying bare the truth, seeking justice and making restitution, etc. prior to reconciliation per se.

Balcomb's contribution helps us turn our attention to the ideological abuse of this Christian category to favour a particular political position. He shows how despite its motivation to both transcend and inform

CHAPTER FOUR: THE SOUTH AFRICAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE ON RECONCILIATION

4.1. The Catholic Church and the "struggle"

The role and response of the Catholic church to social involvement during this period was varied. Its overall strategy and practice through the Southern African Catholic Bishop's Conference is regarded by some as being prudent, moderate, realistic, and cautious. Others view the role of its leaders as prophetic, uncompromising, showing clear and consistent opposition to apartheid and unconditional support to eradicating all forms of injustice [The Catholic Church and Apartheid, SACBC, 1993:3].

Yet, while the SACBC made no explicit official statements on the subject of reconciliation per se, its interpretation of what contributes towards or is consistent with reconciliation comes through clearly in its documents and pastoral letters on social justice, discrimination, the Black Consciousness Movement, solidarity with the poor, the migratory labour system, and others. Apartheid was called "intrinsically evil" and blasphemous as far back as 1957 (The SACBC was established only in 1951 and this was already its third statement of condemnation and opposition); "One trembles at the blasphemy of thus attributing to God the offences against charity and justice that are apartheid's necessary

accompaniment" [SACBC 1993:6].

In 1952 in their first Pastoral Letter on race relations the Bishops said:

Justice demands that we give every man (sic) his due. It is a virtue which prompts us to recognise the rights of others and forbids us to hinder their legitimate exercise. These are rights that flow from the very nature and constitution of man (sic), whatever the inequalities in the natural and social spheres. Such rights are fundamental and inviolable, With regard to fundamental human rights, no person or society may deprive the individual of their exercise. The state, though justified in controlling the exercise of rights to the degree required by the common good, cannot abolish them, for the person is superior to the state, which exists for his (sic) benefit. Contingency rights, too, cannot be arbitrarily denied or restricted. They are frequently the expression or adaptation to particular circumstances of fundamental rights, and it would be unjust to refuse them to persons capable of exercising them and of contributing their equitable share to the welfare of society [The Bishops Speak Vol. 1 :16].

A similar statement was reiterated in 1957 and 1962. The 1962 statement concludes: "As Christians we dare not remain silent and passive in the face of injustice inflicted on members by the privileged race group. Colour

must never be permitted to offer an excuse or pretext for injustice".

In Call to Conscience in 1972, the Bishops went beyond mere condemnation of the social situation in regard to trade unions, minimum wages, welfare, redistribution of wealth and the church's responsibility to the poor; the Bishops also began to speak out for the detained, banned and restricted, saying:

All that we know of many of them is their struggle and protest on behalf of the voiceless who suffer under discriminatory legislation and way of life, and this deserves our sympathy and praise [The Catholic Church and Apartheid, SACBC 1993:9].

After the Soweto uprising in 1976 the Bishops published the Declaration of Commitment on Social Justice and Race Relations, which called for a "radical revision of the system" which kept people oppressed:

We affirm that we are on the side of the oppressed and, as we have committed ourselves to working within our church for the clearer expression of solidarity with the poor and deprived, so we commit ourselves equally to working for peace through justice in fraternal collaboration with all other churches, agencies and persons dedicated to this cause [SACBC 1993:10].

The linking of a new political order with the quest for justice is noted. It is also clear that there is a change in the Bishops' strategy. They have moved from disseminating knowledge and promoting convictions and attitudes to more direct action. This move is important. Up to now what was being said was very much in line with what other Bishops, in similar situations around the world were saying. But from now on the Bishops move from pastoral declarations, appeals and condemnations, to a commitment to action. This included personal attempts to meet with government in an effort to curb the repression and violence. But most important of all the Bishops were seen to support peaceful initiatives against injustice and oppression. This went some way in encouraging and empowering members of the Catholic church to take an active role in the struggle.

The 1980's saw greater involvement in the ecumenical church and community organisations. The Report on Namibia (1982), Urgent Message to the State President (1986) and the pastoral letter on Economic Pressure for Justice (1986) were not only bold challenges to the government but also marked the SACBC's support for non-violent action to end apartheid. Up to now the Bishops had addressed mainly the white Catholic church and the government, appealing for a radical revision of the system. Their emphasis was on encouraging whites to stop unjust practices. But very little support was given to the oppressed in their active struggle against the racist government. Now however, the

Bishops made it clear that they would actively engage themselves through peaceful means in the struggle for justice and a new political order:

Let there be no mistake - we are not neutral in the current conflict in South Africa. We support fully the demands of the majority of people for justice. It is our concern for the speedy attainment thereof that has led us to support the use even of economic pressure to achieve this. We remind them of Jesus' words "Blessed are those, who hunger and thirst for what is right; they shall be satisfied" (Mt 5:5) [Open Letter to Detainees].

This was followed by the 1986, 1990 and 1991 statements on Economic Pressure and Negotiations.

Other actions supported by the SACBC included the funding and establishing of the New Nation newspaper (1980's), initiating the Standing for the Truth Campaign (1988), actively supporting the Mass Democratic Movement's (MDM) defiance campaign in that same year, and cooperating in the ecumenical committee for refugees (1991).

However, such reflection on official Catholic church statements could easily lead one to conclude that the church's role was totally positive and

constructive, but this is not necessarily so. Archbishop Hurley in his lecture at the Archbishop Naidoo memorial lecture in Cape Town [3rd July 1990] noted that:

The church's activities have tended to be much more concerned with disseminating knowledge and promoting convictions and attitudes than with direct action. the church is inclined to be strong on ideas but weak on action" [p 8].

Hurley continued in the same address to say that because the church had failed to use their normal methods of communication and education, such as the Sunday sermon, youth and adult education programmes and opportunities offered by church schools to promote social concern, the church had generally not succeeded in mobilising widespread public opinion. The reason for this appears to have been because church personnel seemed to lack the necessary training - it had not been a priority either at theological colleges or pastoral practice. This left the advancement and interpretation of social causes to church leadership, which was to a large degree white and expatriate and to a small, but significant group of prophetic voices involved in black politics and with strong ecumenical links.

This unprophetic silence and the church's cautious policy in the face of such brutality and repression on the part of the state was acknowledged

at the Rustenberg Conference where the Catholic church confessed its negligence and sins in this regard:

We recognise that its message applies to our church as a corporate body. We must admit with sorrow that although as a church we have often spoken out against the sin of apartheid we are not innocent of all complicity in supporting or going along with it. So we ask forgiveness from all those, both within the church and beyond, who have suffered from our actions, blindness and negligence in the past. We recommend to our members that they reflect upon the message of Rustenburg, pray over it and put it into effect. For our part, we reaffirm our commitment to remove all vestiges of apartheid in our institutions and procedures [The Church and Apartheid SACBC 1993:31].

4.2. Some other responses from within the Catholic church to reconciliation in the context of the "struggle".

4.2.1. The Black Priests Manifesto

As far back as January 1970, The Black Priests Manifesto shocked the white Catholic community by publicly challenging the hierarchy, church structures and agenda. A group of black Catholic priests, supportive of the Black Consciousness Movement, together with a large following of lay

people staged a major demonstration during the Plenary Session of the Bishops' Conference. In the Manifesto which they delivered at the Conference they expressed the frustrations, marginalisation and social exclusion black people endured not only within society, but also within the church itself.

The Manifesto declared that black people wanted to be represented and heard in the church and not just seen; They wanted to take an active part in the life of the church and in the direction which the church was taking. The Manifesto objected vigorously against what it saw as the exclusion of black clergy from the real centre of power and influence in the church and to the perception that black clergy were not yet mature or responsible enough for leadership within the church.

It also called for genuine integration and non-racialism in all Catholic seminaries, convents, hospitals, schools, monasteries, associations and parishes. Later in 1977, in a Declaration of Commitment on Social Justice and Race relations within the Church, the church admitted that it was "lagging behind in witness to the Gospel in matters of social justice" [The Bishops Speak Vol.II: 42]. The Declaration proceeded to respond positively and practically to the challenges first made in the Manifesto. Many within the church still see this event as a watershed in the history of the evangelisation of the Catholic church in South Africa.

4.2.2. The Southern African Council of Priests

The Executive Committee of The Southern African Council of Priest (Catholic) also commented on the Kairos Document. Though they expressed disappointment about:

- [1] the poor theological analysis, saying that it "presents its case as a critique of other positions rather than as a rivetting, challenging statement in its own right. Many assertions are sociological";
- [2] it also criticises the selective and sometimes out of context use of biblical texts;
- [3] the recognition that Original Sin makes us all sinners; that their are sinners on both sides;
- [4] that the Document idealises the oppressed.

Priests welcomed the Document as a starting point and challenge. It acknowledged the frustrations and sufferings, and even despair of the victims of the Apartheid system. It further admitted to divisions among Christians and even within the same denomination and considered the criticisms against church structures and the attitudes they have embodied, as valid. They also accepted the existence of a State Theology and conceded that Apartheid was dangerous to Christianity and that there was a need for a prophetic proclamation of Christian values. The Council admitted that "even the lowliest should explore their own

potential and reach out for the rights which are their due" [The Southern African Council of Priests, Hammanskraal, 4 November 1985:1].

However, though the Council clearly wanted to be seen as being on the side of the oppressed, it remained terribly defensive and apologetic of its own position and its leadership [Southern African Council of Priests: p.3].

4.2.3. The prophetic voice of some individuals within the Catholic community.

Walshe asserts that SACBC's public utterances were usually low key in comparison with the brutality and obscene repression of Apartheid [Walshe 1995: 107ff]. Except for a few individuals like Archbishop Denis Hurley, the late Bishop Zwane, Frs Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, Buti Thlagale, Albert Nolan and others who made a brave stand in ecumenical circles, the official SACBC position was always a cautious one (Archbishop Hurley privately comments that the Catholic Bishops Conference, in the beginning, viewed the Kairos Document as a bit provocative and a little fire-brand).

It was, however, largely through the influence of individuals like these on the almost all-white SACBC, together with the rising tide of black opposition to State repression, and ecumenical institutions like the Institute for Contextual Theology, SACC, Diakonia and the whole debate

around the Kairos Document, that the Catholic Bishops' Conference came to discover more and more its true role within South African society and the liberative power of the Gospels.

Yet Pastoral Letters, Press Statements and other official condemnations of State repression, did not succeed in educating and converting the people in the pew to their social and civic responsibilities which ought to flow from the Christian faith. For one thing, these were often hesitant and cautious, and written in a language unfamiliar with people living in the townships. For another, as Hurley reminds us,

The reason in turn for this appears to be reluctance on the part of church personnel to get involved in that kind of promotion, reluctance flowing, it would seem, from lack of training. Communication and education in regard to social issues has not been a priority either in theological colleges or pastoral practice ... Such advancement has remained the preserve of church leadership and of ad hoc groups. [Hurley: 1990 Archbishop Stephen Naidoo memorial lecture, Cape Town].

"Leadership" here refers not exclusively to the Bishops Conference, but includes those individuals mentioned above. It was this small group of clergy, with their strong ecumenical and civic links, which helped give the church the context in which to understand strong and emotive Christian concepts, such as justice, peace and reconciliation.

to the church's mission, was never present in Christian scriptures as an automatic acquisition. Reconciliation came about as a result of a very definite and deliberate process. It was underpinned by confession and restitution, and initiated by conversion.

Hurley, (and the other "prophetic voices" above) used the Christian category of sin as their starting point in their understanding of reconciliation. They argued that Apartheid is a social sin which contradicts the Gospel injunction to follow Jesus in his identification with the sufferer: "When I was hungry ... when I was thirsty ... when I was naked ... when I was sick and in prison ..." and "whatever you did to the least of my bothers and sisters you did to me" [Mt 25:11-46].

Apartheid, because it inflicted social, political and economic suffering, is therefore a sin. Social sins are the consequences and the legacy of personal sins - personal sins multiplied, imitated, replicated, and repeated until they create a network, a veritable interlocking social framework, that perpetuates the sinful situation and guarantees suffering in the victims. The church cannot back away from that. Church members had to do all in their power to change this sinful system [Stephen Naidoo Memorial Lecture; Cape Town July 1990].

For both Buti Thlagale and Smangaliso Mkhathshwa social justice is at the heart of their understanding of reconciliation, with injustice being

understood as a sin. Quoting Leonardo Boff, Thlagale argued that "the love of God is verified, "made true" in the love of neighbour" [JTSA 76/60].

For Buti Thlagale, the goal of social justice is the emancipation of humanity from all forms of slavery. Any talk of genuine reconciliation must therefore take as its point of departure the dignity of the new humanity all have in Christ. According to Thlagale, "the dignity of the human person is the highest value"[JTSA 76/ 57]. In this sense, reconciliation ought to be emancipatory; it ought to involve a form of liberation - a liberation from pain and suffering, from exploitation, from discrimination and from fear.

The dilemma for the Catholic church, according to a spokesperson for Thlagale, was that it was divided on the issue of the Kairos Document. Confusion lay in Catholic language concerning reconciliation and forgiveness:

We use the word "forgive" far too lightly in our church. We rarely acknowledged the pain and hurt people experienced, and worst still we take the prerogative away from them to forgive and decide to do the forgiving themselves. When the townships were burning in the early eighties, there was often a call from some sections of our church for reconciliation. This we rejected. We had people

who were sinned upon, and we had sinners. What we wanted but was unthinkable at the time was for the sinners to ask forgiveness from the sinned upon. Obviously at that time that would not happen. However, it was also fair to say that we did not expect the people who were sinned upon to reconcile with their oppressor. As you can well imagine the armchair theologians who had no idea of what was happening in the townships found this position difficult to swallow [Fr Sean O'Leary, Co-ordinating Secretary: Justice and Peace Dept. SACBC].

Whatever therefore exploits, inhibits, or seeks to jeopardise, the development of humanity is sin and must itself be destroyed. The collective vocation of humanity is to build a world that is fully human. Christian authenticity is only possible when one is actively engaged in the eradication of structural injustice [JTSA 76/58].

Mkhatshwa also defined reconciliation within the social context of sin and justice. The pursuit of justice is a form of restitution - an attempt to rectify wrongs done. Arguing from an ecclesiological stand-point, Mkhatshwa declares it is part of the church's very nature to be "good news"; this indicates that evangelisation has a practical dimension. Evangelisation, Mkhatshwa continues, has undergone a fundamental transformation. No longer does it concern itself solely with preaching, proselytising and sanctification of Christians. It goes beyond all that. Evangelisation also

includes a critical analysis of the existing structures of injustice and economic exploitation. It includes a quest for justice and peace [JTSA 76/118].

In line with this understanding of the church and its mission in the world, justice is more than a claim of the liberative Gospel of Jesus Christ, but is, as "rather a constitutive element" thereof. An ecclesiology which ignores or disparages the socio-political context, Mkhathshwa continues, "mutilates the heart of Jesus' message and pervert(s) the very mission of the church" [JTSA 76/118]. Reconciliation which follows on from a quest for justice is not just an important part of the church's ministry but as Mkhathshwa's definition implies it is a "constitutive element" of the Gospel understanding of evangelisation.

Albert Nolan argues that the Bible sees all forces opposed to the will of God as sin [1988:32]. No distinction is made between two kinds of sin, personal and social - "all sin is both personal and social at the same time" [ibid:43]. Therefore, Apartheid is a sin. God disapproves and condemns it ... it is an "offence against God"[ibid 32]. It is not the result of fate or chance, but has been deliberately designed by human architects. Apartheid therefore is the social consequence of personal sin. In its structures, laws and customs, personal sins have become institutionalised and systematised [ibid:44].

Nolan argues that because the sin of apartheid is a human construct it can, and must, be changed [ibid 33]. The Christian cannot be reconciled with what is opposed to the will of God. Because the sin of apartheid has social and relational implications, change must include the restoration of what apartheid has destroyed. Reconciliation requires restorative justice otherwise it is not only false and unjust, but is also ungodly. Without this type of social conversion, there can be no true peace within society. Nolan concludes that restorative justice alone will lead to true reconciliation. It is not only costly but can also be divisive because "Christians tend to abhor polarisation and division. But the tendency to look for peace, unity and reconciliation at all costs and in all circumstances is simply not Christian" [Nolan 1988: 153].

In conclusion, it is clear that the SACBC had moved in its position on the socio-political struggle in our country. Despite its shortcomings and failures (expressed at The Rustenburg Conference), it moved from simple condemnation of and letters of appeal to the white Catholic minority, to a direct support of the causes and protests of the oppressed, and to an open defiance which sometimes came very close to civil disobedience. That the church's progressive understanding of the struggle against apartheid and of its mission in the face of such grave injustice, repression and brutality came as a result of its ecumenical alliances and the prophetic witness of individual members within its congregations and clergy, is without question.

With this proximity to the poor, a new identity and self-understanding began to emerge. A new language and style of communication became evident. Statements were now addressed to the oppressed members of the community, containing messages of solidarity and support. Once absolute concepts and definitions were re-interpreted and understood in a new way. One such concept was that of reconciliation.

This conversion, though not a conversion of the total church body, bore some fruit when the SACBC, together with the SACC and many other groups and individuals, joined in the call for a Truth Commission. They insisted that past terrorism, torture and brutality had to be exposed, even if those responsible were not prosecuted [Walshe 1995:148].

4.3. Summary and Conclusion.

In this first part of my paper I have attempted to demonstrate that reconciliation is fundamental to Christian teaching and that this must guide our deliberations and struggles towards nation-building. I traced the biblical and theological roots of the concept 'reconciliation' and tried to show its theological characteristics and the development of this concept in the Church. What emerged theologically speaking was that conversion is at the heart of reconciliation. It is both an inner and an external operation. Reconciliation has to do with an internal conversion which affects external behaviour.

I followed this with an examination of how the Church in South Africa had interpreted and implemented the concept of reconciliation in the context of the "struggle". Included in this section was some discussion of the critique of reconciliation as traditionally understood, as expounded by the Kairos Document.

I then examined the South African Catholic Bishops response to and interpretation of the crisis in the country. I tried to show what forces motivated it to progress in its position. I concluded by selecting a few prominent individuals within the Catholic community whose ecumenical affinity and understanding of Black politics motivated the church to progressively play a prophetic role within the South African society.

In Part Two of my paper I will attempt to find out what ordinary coloured Catholics on the Cape Flats think about reconciliation and how they experience it. I also wish to test my hypothesis that the laity not only have their own understanding of reconciliation, but that coloured people work out of a psycho-cultural understanding of the notion of reconciliation which differs from the classical theological understanding reconciliation and possibly even from the Kairos Document. It is my contention that as long as the official / hierarchical church continues to operate out of this particular theological understanding of the concept of reconciliation only, it will fail to understand how reconciliation is related to the psycho-cultural understanding of coloured identity.

Does this then mean that there is a deviation in coloured people's understanding from that of the traditional understanding of reconciliation? Is reconciliation skewed by self-interest or conservatism within the coloured perception of identity? These are some of the questions we will research in the questionnaire.

We now begin to enter the debate on coloured identity, tracing its historical development and the effect of successive governments and their policies on coloured peoples' self-understanding. We will also join the present discussion on the interpretation of the political left and right on how coloured people fit into the South African collage. This next section of the paper will conclude with a research survey designed to determine whether there is a discrepancy between the cultural understanding of the notion of reconciliation among Catholic coloured people on the Cape Flats, and the traditional theological understanding of this concept out of which the Catholic Church here is operating.

PART TWO

CHAPTER FIVE: EXPERIENCE RECONCILIATION

A struggle of Identity

5.1 Introduction

Though made up of different and mixed racial and national groups from both within the boundaries of South Africa and from outside South Africa (See Van der Ross 1979: 39f; Du Pre 1994:36-39), coloured people strove to become part of the mainstream of South African society. The term did not imply an inferiority, neither did it imply a homogeneous population group; the colour bar and its consequences only became part of South African life and its vocabulary with the coming to power of the National Party in 1948.

This, of course, does not mean to say that discrimination did not exist before 1948, or that Afrikaners alone practised discrimination. History reveals that the division of society along colour lines existed in the Cape colony when governed by the British. Professor Jakes Gerwel reminds us that the statutory categorising of people as coloureds had its origins in colonial times. In Ordinance 50 in 1828, he says, people were already speaking of coloured. With the emancipation of slaves, this name for a specific, heterogeneous group of people grew in popular usage [Article by Ferdinand Tjombe for Rapport (Extra) 1981].

Various restrictions concerning movement and land ownership were enforced against people of colour. However, the engineering of people of mixed origin into an inferior national race group for political purposes, was the immoral doing of the National Party.

This is the same National Party which stood for the first national democratic election in the 1994 and canvassed in black and coloured communities. The election results shocked many as coloured people seemed to have chosen their oppressors to lead them! What were the reasons for this apparent aberration? To understand this question, we need to locate it within the National Party's (NP) apartheid ideological strategy for the coloured people.

5.2. The historical development of coloured identity

I would like to begin by trying to understand the development of the notion of coloured identity in the Western Cape. I will show that this notion actually pre-dates apartheid and was not simply something imposed upon coloured people by whites and which they in turn merely adopted. I also want to examine how the content of coloured identity, being a social construct which could be negatively and positively influenced by social, economic and political factors, was affected by the power relations prior to, and with the arrival of, the National Party's policy of apartheid.

I will follow this up with a focus on the present newspaper debate around the question of coloured identity. In the light of the African National Congress' (ANC) non-racialism policy, I would like to pursue the perception, held by some coloured activists who accuse the latter's policy of cultural chauvinism, which questions the idea that there is only one way of being African.

I also would like to state that although I accept the heterogeneous nature of coloured people in South Africa, I shall, for the purposes of this study, speak of coloured people as if they are a homogeneous group. The reason for this being that despite the inherent differences (Coloureds, coloureds whose heritage is closer to black people, coloureds who are closer to whites, Malays, Griquas), they all share common historical and socio-political and economic conditions under the apartheid government.

5.3. The period up to 1951

Analysts of South Africa's first national democratic elections have realised that out of 1,7 million coloured voters, 0.5 million people voted for the African National Congress (ANC) while an estimated 1,2 million coloured people voted for the National Party (NP). From this it was concluded that in the Western Cape an estimated 60-70% of the coloured community voted for the NP [Mattes R 1995: 89].

These figures stunned both the ANC as well as coloured activists. Up to now they were of the opinion that coloured people would use their newly acquired democratic right to vote against the party who had oppressed them in the past and vote for the ANC with its history of non-racialism. However, it was precisely because the ANC chose to ignore the historical aspiration of coloured people for a separate identity which led to its political miscalculation. [Oosterwyk T. Cape Times 19.02.1996; Dikeni S. Cape Times 05.03.1996].

The struggle for a coloured identity is a process which has been contested long before the dawning of apartheid [R. van der Ross 1979:74;R. Du Pre 1994:36f]. This contestation arose out of their ability to distinguish themselves as a group from others (Zimitri Erasmus 1996:8). That its context also included less honourable motives, like that of seeking a better social position over black people, especially by skilled members of the coloured working class and petty bourgeoisie, is also an important consideration to acknowledge. After all, colonial racism was the locus of much of the ideological and political conflict of the day [Marks S and Trapido S. 1987:156].

As whites sought greater political and economic dominance, being classified black meant huge social and economic disadvantages. With political pressure by whites mounting on blacks, many of the coloured elite had themselves reclassified as white. The intention behind

reclassification was that a white identity would secure them a better social position and privileges. This would not have been the case had they opted for a separate coloured identity which was in fact their strong motivation originally. Not only did this cause much heartache and division, but also led to the loss of a potential coloured leadership in the Western Cape [Lewis 1987:13].

In 1902 the first coloured political organisation, made up of skilled and intellectual coloured people, established the African Political Organisation (APO) to develop a distinct coloured identity. Despite its name, the APO effectively excluded Africans in a serious attempt to assert its distinctiveness as a coloured people. The motive for the assertion of a distinct identity was to escape the attacks directed at non-European people by whites who, especially since 1890, sought political and economic dominance in the Cape Colony.

It seems whites like Lord Selbourne, the High Commissioner and later JBM Hertzog supported coloured people's drive for distinctiveness declaring " that coloureds and Africans were two totally different races and that coloured people were part of the whites" [Du Pre 1994:52]. Selbourne is supposed to have argued,

Our objective should be to teach coloured people to give their loyalty to the white population. It seems to me sure folly to classify

them with the natives and by treating them as natives to force them away from natural allegiance to the whites and making common cause with the natives [Marks and Trapido 1987:163-164].

People like Hertzog argued that coloured people were part of the European; that their culture, civilization, outlook on life and language were those of the European and that there should be no segregation in their case. In 1976 the Theron Commission concluded that coloured people "were not culturally different or distinguishable from the white population" [Du Pre 1994:3].

With the introduction of the Separate Representation of Voters Act, of 1951, the National Party showed its hand. It sought to remove coloureds from direct representation and to place them on a separate voter's roll. According to Marks, et al [1987:170], this was because coloureds had become a source of vocal opposition to white domination. Du Pre graphically describes this history, from the opposition of coloured people towards the NP since 1894, and the NP response of trying to woo coloured voters [Du Pre 1994:134] to how the NP "got even" in 1951. By disenfranchising coloured people, the National Party effectively removed coloured opposition which many white people saw as a threat to the survival of the white race.

As compensation for the loss of direct representation in government, coloured people were promised, according to Marks et al, that the Western Cape would become a coloured labour preferential area. This resulted in the removal of large numbers of blacks from the area and increasing coloured / black racial tension. The establishment of a coloured labour preferential area was another attempt to reconstitute a distinct coloured nation in South Africa.

The status of coloured people was always considered as a problem to successive governments and they have always applied segregationalist laws to coloured Afrikaners, coloured Englishmen, Coloured Africans, coloured anything, to form them into a separate nation or manipulate them into a population group for the governments' own selfish political gains.

Later, we will hear how coloured people themselves sought to establish a more Africanist identity and of the two basic strands of coloured identity which exists in this population group, namely the one strand which can trace its roots to the more western, European, white heritage, and the second strand whose heritage has stronger black, African roots.

5.4. The Period to 1980: The emergence of a coloured Africanism in the Western Cape

The National Party government's African tribal homeland policy was established to keep black people out of South Africa. A similar solution was investigated for coloured people but it was found to be politically and economically impractical to establish. Instead, the government passed the Coloured Persons' Representative Council (CRC) Act in 1964. The CRC represented coloured people and dealt with all matters relating to finance, local government, education and community development of coloured people. All decisions, however, were subject to governmental approval. Opposition to the CRC came from the Labour Party (LP) who criticised it for being a puppet body of the government. Ironically, in time, the LP themselves replaced the CRC as "junior partners in apartheid", as Boesak referred to them. This set the stage for a whole new political ball game in South African politics.

The Soweto student uprising of 1976 marked a turning point in South African (SA) politics. Despite the brutal repression by the state, a new found solidarity between coloured and African youth began to emerge in the Western Cape. Here, over 107 people (54 Africans and 53 coloured people) were killed by police in 1976. This new alliance caused grave concern within the National Party. "It was, after all, the prevention of such an alliance that lay behind coloured preference policies" of the past

(Goldin 1987:207).

The Cillier Commission of Inquiry into the Riots concluded that the cause of the Western Cape Riots "was undoubtedly the sense of solidarity with Soweto and its people" (in Goldin 1987:207). The Commission expressed the opinion that a large section of the coloured community rejected "not only the word "coloured" but also the notion of a separate coloured identity" and that they had "joined up with the Black community so as to remove [their] grievances and obtain their rights through concerted action" (ibid). The Commission further recognised that the attitude of coloured people "had changed to the extent that they were prepared to regard the black man (sic) as their comrade in distress and to continue the struggle for improvement with them (ibid:207).

In 1980 the country's most serious political upheaval had its epicentre in the coloured communities of the Western Cape. Up to then, blacks were seen to have initiated such resistance and the coloured students were seen to have acted in sympathy: "the significance of the coloured uprising was not lost on the National Party; coloured preference policies had failed in their primary purpose of preventing the disaffection of the coloured" (Goldin 1987:208). The carefully nurtured relationship by the government failed to prevent the solid bond which developed between coloured and african protestors.

When the Director of Coloured Education conceded to some of the demands of coloured students, his offer was rejected by the students who refused to consider a settlement which distinguished between coloured and african education. In their joint manifesto, the "Committee of 81" explained that:

The boycott has deliberately been made a coloured issue by the ruling class newspaper and television. To attempt to solve the problem of coloured education is not enough. In spite of the deliberate tribalism fed into our brains we realise that our inequalities spring from the same root causes and that we are not Bantus, coloureds or Indians, we are human beings (Goldin 1987:209).

1980-84 saw a dramatic development of coloured and African organisations formed to resolve the social ills besetting these non-racial organisations. Based on the principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter, organisations like the powerful Cape Housing Association(CAHAC) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) aimed at co-ordinating information and resistance over issues relating to shortages of community services and inadequacy and costs of housing. Grassroots campaigns around township issues were orchestrated by door-to-door visits, street meetings, mass protests and demonstrations in which residents from different townships, both coloured and black, campaigned alongside each other.

Opposition from within these communities came from the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM), the Teachers League of South Africa (TLSA), the South African Council of Sport (SACOS), the Federation of Cape Civic Association (FCCA), the Cape Town Municipal Workers Association (CTMWA) and the Labour Party.

The latter groups (Neum, TLSA, Sacos, FCCA, CTMWA) mainly argued against the African National Congress aligned Charterists (UDF, CAHAC) who welcomed all-races and organisations opposed to Apartheid and its structures. Charterists followed the policy of the ANC's Freedom Charter which declared that "South Africa belonged to all who live in it, black and white". It proposed non-racialism, non-sexism and a unitary state. However, though the anti-Charterists exercised a powerful influence within coloured communities, by 1981 support for the African National Congress easily out-numbered that of the NEUM in the townships of the Western Cape.

According to Goldin, a poll conducted in coloured areas by the Argus newspaper of the time, revealed that over 50 percent of the respondents supported the ANC while less than 6 percent were in favour the NEUM.

The launch of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in August 1983 was attended by about 12000 people, including 4000 affiliated organisations. Its political sympathies were obvious with the appointment of former ANC

leaders such as Archie Gumede, Oscar Mpetha and Albertina Sisulu as presidents. Nelson Mandela and Dennis Goldberg, imprisoned at the time, were elected patrons of the organisation.

The success of the UDF alliance was demonstrated in its opposition to the 1984 elections of the Labour Party which it called 'junior parties in patrons in apartheid'. The number of votes cast country-wide amounted to 272 854, "the lowest percentage polls recorded in the Cape Peninsula, where the average poll was 11.1 percent with Table Mountain constituency recording a 4.1 percent poll, Manenberg 4.7 percent, Liesbeek 5.2 percent and Hanover Park 5.5 percent.

This period also saw the remarkable development of the independent trade union movements countrywide. By 1982, over 107 unions existed with a combined membership of between 400,000 and 500,000 workers, of which approximately 10 percent of the total came from the Western Cape.

However, despite the initial failure of the unions to marshal the support of coloured workers in the red meat strike, division between African and coloured workers was overcome by the time the "Fattis and Monis" boycott was organised. Goldin remarks: "The most noteworthy features of the strike were the solidarity shown between coloured and African strikers, despite attempts by management to undermine their unity"

(P.224).

While CAHAC in the Western Cape provided the organisational base of the UDF, it failed to build strong foundations in black townships therefore giving the impression that the UDF was biased in favour of issues affecting only coloured people. (In fairness it must be stated that CAHAC was never intended to extend to black areas). The whole purpose of its establishment was for the UDF to fight the 1984 elections by mobilising coloured and Indian peoples against it. After the elections, the UDF found it difficult both to sustain its operational base in coloured areas and to extend its organisation in the black townships.

In summing up, it is important to note that the 1980's period is significant because it signalled the beginning of the ANC's non-racial politics into coloured areas. However, it is also interesting to note that while the politics was ideologically non-racial, in practical terms people were organised along racial lines. That is, coloureds organising in coloured areas and whites organising in white areas etc. This had important implications in terms of the assertion that non-racialism never really took root amongst the coloured masses.

Before we look at the question of coloured identity, it is important to understand the effect of the National Party's (NP) strategy for the coloured community and on the identity of coloured people. This will help us understand coloured people's fear of the africanisation policy of the

ANC and Pan African Congress (PAC). It will also explain the hesitancy of coloured people to trust the ANC as a vehicle to meet their material needs and demands.

5.5. National Party strategy in the Western Cape

Though coloured and black people share a common history of racial oppression and political repression, the regime created a cleavage between them through its policy of separate development. This it did through the false creation of a Coloured People and the sustenance of this group from a disparate community of coloured peoples [Van der Ross 1979: 36-39; Du Pre 1994:4].

While coloured citizens were oppressed by apartheid, they were also relatively advantaged in relation to black people, not least because the western part of the old Cape Province was traditionally defined as in labour legislation as a "coloured preference hiring area" [Johnson & Schlemmer(eds.) 1996:4].

Surveys [ibid] reveal that while a large section of the black community was made up of migrant workers from the rural Bantustans who lived in shacks, coloured people, by comparison, were relatively better-educated, better-housed, more employed and more prosperous. In its attempt to modernise apartheid, the previous regime instituted limited "power-

sharing" among the officially demarcated white, coloured and Indian race groups. It was a move which led to a split in the ruling party who stood by its policy of accommodating coloured people at the risk of party unity. The Tricameral system of parliament was by no means the granting of full democratic citizenship to coloureds, but it did allow locally elected coloured authorities to obtain real, "albeit limited powers because they now had an important access point through their members of parliament and, at times, cabinet ministers who took up their plight at the national level ...". From 1984 to 1989, available funds for development programmes in coloured communities doubled.

Several different indicators reveal the relative embourgeoisement of coloured South Africans during this period, especially in comparison to blacks. Under the Tricameral system, over 100 000 houses were built (60 000 in the Cape Town area). The numbers of coloured children in secondary school increased by one third, and the number of successful graduates doubled. Finally, the birth rate among the coloured community declined from 6 per female in 1960 to 2.9 in the late 1980's." [Johnson & Schlemmer 1996: 6].

The significance of these "benefits" not only polarised black and coloured communities on the basis of economic differences and marginalisations, but they also increased the level of fear and anxiety between the two population groups.

politics of unequal recognition damages those denied recognition. It is a form of oppression [Taylor 1992:36]. With equalisation, i.e. equal recognition of all, comes the promise of civil and voting rights being extended to all in the socio-economic sphere. "Recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need "(Taylor 1992:26).

Racial classification in South Africa was a negative recognition, or a misrecognition. The formation of the Coloured People from a disparate group of mixed raced people, was not only a false creation, but in the final analysis, it was also a denial of one of the most basic human rights.

Steve Biko most graphically describes the devastating effects of apartheid discrimination on the identity of all oppressed people of South Africa in his article We Blacks:

To a large extent the evils-doers have succeeded in producing at the output end of their machine a kind of black man who is man only in form. This is the extent to which the process of dehumanisation has advanced. ... All in all the black man has become a shell, a shadow of man, completely defeated, drowning in his own misery, a slave, an ox bearing the yoke of oppression with sheepish timidity. ... No wonder the African child learns to hate his heritage in his days at school. So negative is the image presented to him that he tends to find solace only in close

identification with the white society [Aelred Stubbs CR ed. 1978: 28-29].

Biko goes on to speak about the role black consciousness would play by engaging people in an emancipatory process, which would attempt to free them from a situation of bondage.

6.2. Coloured Identity in the present political debate

If anything positive can be gauged from the 1994 national and local election results for the Western Cape, it must be that at long last the coloured question is out of the closet and that the badly defined notion of non-racialism, is being renegotiated. Non-racialism as previously defined did not allow or enable groups to grapple with questions of difference and specificity [Erasmus 1996:9].

In a recent newspaper debate, these questions were pursued with fervour and in a lively manner. Questions on whether the coloured community should be recognised and treated as a minority group with a distinct cultural heritage, language and aspirations, or whether pursuance of this policy would lead to attitudes of ethnic or racial superiority and so frustrate the goals of nation-building and reconciliation were considered. The debate highlights the controversy around the question of coloured identity.

The debate was sparked by Oosterwyk (Cape Times 19.02.1996) who decried the fact that coloured activists in the African National Congress (ANC) do not enjoy "the same degree of ownership as they had in the United Democratic Front (UDF). The question was not an act of hostility towards the ANC. It came from a loyal ANC member who felt alienated from his environment within the organisation and felt that the way the ANC was structured, together with its declared strong policy of africanisation, made it unable to address the genuinely felt needs of the coloured people.

Dikeni pinpoints the Africanism espoused by ANC's non-racial policy as "arrogant and ethnically ignorant" (Cape Times 04.06.1996). Non-racialism is defined by this policy "in a strange, homogeneous way" which is so exclusive that it defeats the purposes of the struggle for an understanding of Africa and its complexity. The ANC's non-racial policy was also negatively interpreted as failing to acknowledge not only the independence, but also the cultural difference of the coloured community.

According to Cullinan (in James 1996:14), this dilemma goes to the heart of one of the key difficulties facing the new South Africa: how to forge a national, non-racial identity while ensuring that ethnic and cultural groups also feel at home. Wilmot James concurs with Cullinan. He sees the dilemma confronting the new South Africa as the cultivation of a sense of ownership of a political organisation that goes beyond, but also

recognises, the parochial concerns of the coloured townships and embraces a national progressive direction [James 1996:21].

However, not everybody interprets the need for identity and recognition within a national, non-racial framework. Mervyn Ross of the Kleurling Weerstandbeweeging (KWB) advocates a separate homeland. He argues for an ethnic nationalism, a revival of the Coloured People as a separate identity within the South African collage:

We are proud that we are ethnic. And once we are ethnic and being recognised by various other people, we can also go further and say, "Look, we are ethnic. We have our own language, our own culture, our own land and we want to govern ourselves" [James 1996:10].

Marais (NP) holds a similar view (Cape Times 22.03.96), claiming that coloured identity exists as separate from other races, though it shares more in common with the Afrikaner than with other race groups. He argues for the establishment of a coloured nationalism.

The Cape Times (20.06.96) editorial condemned Marais' propagation of secessionist politics in the Western Cape as "dangerous drive!", and accused him of possessing "warped ethics" and "woolly ideas" around his call for Afrikaners to migrate to the region to ensure the survival of the

Afrikaans language:

While it may suit the tactics of the National Party to promote ethnic divisions, we run the risk of exacerbating existing racial tensions. Marais' ranting reinforces a damaging perception that the people of the Western Cape would prefer to be cut off behind a "grape curtain" and develop an own identity.

Despite this strident criticism by the Cape Times, the newspaper does not deal with the question of coloured identity and the challenges raised to the ANC by the coloured community. This is especially what a group of coloured activists of the late 1970's and 80's, who associated themselves with blacks in the struggle against oppression and exploitation in the past, now revisit. They set out to reclaim the term coloured from its apartheid connotations when it was used to divide the oppressed.

Proponents of this new coloured cultural movement include people like Oosterwyk, Erasmus, Marco, Abrahams and others. They claim that the present non-racial policy of the ANC does not take seriously the question of coloured people within the social structure of South African politics. Secondly, they take issue with the ANC, without hostility, for not addressing the problems arising in coloured communities, regarding the fruits of liberation. This is precisely the point so vigorously exploited by the racist propaganda of the NP and coloured nationalist groups like the

coloured persons, would therefore be expected to support and be committed to democratic values. One could expect them to be conscientious and diligent about civic rights and duties. They would be individuals whose rights were recognised and who then recognise the rights of others, whose cultural differences were tolerated and who in turn would tolerate the cultural differences of others. These individuals would feel that they belong in society and that others also belong. They would feel that they have a future here and that others also have a future. Within this connectiveness, they also have a right to their distinctiveness as do others and the assurance that one group is equal to others, which in turn translates into civic rights and the eligibility to vote.

This, however, is not the perception most coloured people have of their future in the new South Africa. If anything, they feel greater fear and even less security in the new dispensation. Wilmot James sees the reason for this perception among coloured people as being based on very genuine concerns and from expectations that would be considered normal in any democratic country:

Non-racialism, freedom and equality usher in a future of competing equally for scarce resources, without preferential treatment or according to the same rules ... coloureds are not so much racists as they fear non-racialism" ... they perceive it will all be done at their costs. The new democratic order is expected to be a reversal

of fortunes between coloured and African communities. The scrambling for housing, land and jobs [James 1996:57].

It is Abrahams' [1996:3] contention that the ANC's national policy position simply does not apply automatically to this province. Part of that policy is an insistence on a strong national african leadership. It is applied in a way which puts the interests of the african constituency first, at all times - even in a region where africans do not constitute the majority. It is therefore not to be wondered at that coloured people sometimes feel cynical, sceptical and in doubt about what benefits this new democracy will bring. Grievances range from feeling left out, being given poor treatment and being bumped out of the queue for anticipated state benefits [DIA 9:2.21].

This is confirmed by coloured people whom Cullinan interviewed, among these, Florina Serfontein:

Our people are losing their jobs. Our children can't find work. Wherever you go, if you are not Xhosa speaking, people will not employ you. And I can say it is something that is bugging our people because we are not being heard and that is what we want to see. We want to be heard. We want to be looked at as South Africans. We are being pushed aside and just being grouped to one side .. [James 1996:14].

Nissen, former ANC leader in the Western Cape, and others argue for coloured identity to be seen as something fluid and in the context of the broader non-racial tradition which is the identification with all the oppressed in the country. He, however, stops short of calling for coloured people to identify themselves with the term "black". He knows that on both sides of the coloured debate, this identification is being thoroughly questioned. He acknowledges though that there are specific problems faced by coloured people which must be addressed. He is convinced that the ANC can in fact solve these specific problems. Non-racialism is not anti coloured, in his opinion, but inclusive of coloureds.

Alexander [Cape Times 28.03.96] argues against an exclusive coloured identity but takes a different line. He in fact finds any talk of a separate coloured identity as provocative and dangerous to the task of building national unity. He argues for a broader South African identity, which recognises the roots and diversity of coloured people but rejects the idea of a separate coloured identity.

Once shielded by the coloured labour preference policy in the past, coloured people are now facing an open, competitive job market with no substantial advantages and, in the face of affirmative action pressures. This, compounded with the racist mobilisation of the NP and other coloured nationalist groups, create a situation where coloured people feel feeling at a considerable disadvantage in the present dispensation.

Ebrahim Rasool (MEC for Health in the Western Cape) put his finger on the real question, asking whether the clamour for a coloured identity is the result of a genuine cultural awakening or a political response to a sense of economic and political marginalisation [DIA Sept.1996:8]. The key to addressing the problem, he argues elsewhere, lies in "translating non-racialism, freedom and equality into socio-economic programmes which visibly include the coloured community in ways which balance degrees of need with the claims of the majority group in the Western Cape"[James 1996:8].

The anxiety and fear experienced by coloureds is elaborated on by James:

It is an anxiety about whether they will be squeezed out of the long job queue by a corporate rush to act affirmatively and a fear, however exaggerated by racist assumptions, that they live on the cutting edge of African impoverishment not easily contained by a railway line or some other spatial divide bequeathed by apartheid" [DIA 9:2/19].

James concludes that because of this, coloured people took the opportunity to register that "they favoured a restrictive definition of who they were, instead of taking on the broader nationalism non-racialism espoused [DIA.9:2/20].

David Abrahams maintains that the call by coloured people call for an equal share in the "fruits of liberation" is a genuine one. He adds that: "this is not about the so-called racism of coloureds but about whether coloured people trust the ANC as a vehicle to meet their material needs and demands" [Abrahams:1996:3].

Non-racialism is, to some degree, considered to be nothing but another way of expressing africanisation in a narrow, black chauvinist sense. If this is in fact the case, then the "ANC's concept of African leadership programmatically and organisationally" as applied in this province is seriously flawed. This concept, Abrahams argues, will always prevent the ANC from winning the confidence of the coloured majority in this region.

In the final analysis, as Erasmus reminds us, "all identities are constructed and need to be consistently reinforced through complex and intricately woven socio-cultural practices / repertoires" (Erasmus 1996:8). This may help us realise that coloured identity is being continually reinvented to be sufficiently contemporary. Acknowledgement of this fact ought to give hope to those who are thinking of giving up on coloured people and of their ever playing a positive role in the nation-building project in the new South Africa.

6.4. Racism and National Party Strategy.

Racism found among coloured people is the almost inevitable result of successive governments' segregationalist policies against coloured people and their status within society. These segregationalist policies became fully part of the South African legislature with the coming to power of the National Party. Racial segregation was the centre-piece of National Party ideology and through concerted and unrelenting propaganda over the years and the severe structures the party employed to ensure white domination, created tensions between races. The physical distance between races also increased tension between the various oppressed groups, thereby unnaturally heightening minor differences and creating a false hierarchy of importance between them. The racism bedevilling South African politics today can only be understood in relation to the decades of explicit NP segregationalist ideology and propaganda; the very same racist methods recently employed in its local election campaign.

Allport defines racial prejudice as:

an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalisation. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed towards a group as a whole, or towards an individual because he (sic) is a member of that group. [Allport 1958:10].

Racism as "an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalisation" accurately explains the entrenched social attitudes which still permeate our heterogeneous South African society. Far from diminishing racial classification and cognition, the end of apartheid has significantly expanded the range and vitality of racial significance [AbdouMaliq Simone: 1994:162].

The racial classification policy based on physical appearance, acceptance by a race group, and one's descent, is so deeply entrenched in the consciousness of people of South Africans, that these faulty and inflexible generalisations about racial identity have become the tough sinews of the South African personality.

The severe barriers to communication between the various groups, together with the size of each social group in relation to the total population, has served to increase tension and prejudice rather than preventing it. Allport confirms this: "where segregation is the custom, contacts are casual, or else firmly frozen into superordinate - subordinate relationships ... such contacts do not dispel prejudice, it seems more to increase it" [Allport 1958:263]. The reason for this, he claims, is that our thinking about these "out-groups" remain on an autistic level, therefore creating superficial and ineffective communication.

The deliberate stratification of South Africa's diverse society has

therefore socialised South Africans into these attitudes. They are part of our culture and experience teaches us that we identify so much with our culture that the preservation of it is part and parcel of self-preservation. According to Allport, this culture is survival and social attitudes are the bone structure and sinews of culture. Prejudiced people are unlikely to be merely prejudiced towards a specific group:

It is more likely a reflection of his (sic) whole habit of thinking about the world he (sic) lives in" [Allport 1958:175].

This then was the rich soil which the National Party (NP) had cultivated over the years through its apartheid policies and structures and which now formed the foundation for its racist propaganda. Preying on the fears existing within coloured communities, the NP amplified rumour and suspicion, kept alive stereotypes and false assumptions, whilst all the time increasing the gap between the groups in contention and heightening the tensions between them.

... it seems safe to conclude that when barriers to communication are insurmountable, ignorance tends to make a person an easy prey to rumour, suspicion and stereotype. This process is most likely to occur, of course, if the unknown is also a potential threat [Allport 1958:234].

According to a survey done by IDASA, coloured citizens look primarily to the mass media for their political information. They place the highest trust in the information provided by television (47%), the family (43%), radio (32%), and friends (23%) for explicit clues on how to vote. It is no wonder therefore, that the ANC who depended upon its history in the struggle and upon community based sources for the propagation of political information, failed dismally in the coloured townships [Mattes 1996:120].

Part of the NP's campaign strategy had been, on the one hand, to try and convince coloured people that they and the Afrikaner are tied together historically by language and religion, whereas the ANC are atheists and support communism. On the other hand, it played on the actual fears of the coloured community. Their strategy included criticising blacks, whom they had previously caricatured as evil, uncivilised, violent and different, and as being unreliable and unpredictable in a volatile situation. This implied that coloureds were a little more superior, acceptable, responsible and civilised. The NP campaign included also criticising blacks who had occupied houses built for coloureds; for example, the case site relating to a group of black squatters who illegally occupied houses in Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain. The NP took this issue and milked it dry in an attempt to convince coloureds that blacks were out to take the houses which were built for coloureds (Mattes 1996:193).

In their campaigns, the NP had no scruples about using crude racism to

undermine their political opponents. Here for example they used the fear of upsurging violence in the country, unprecedented strikes which according to them, this country had never seen previously, and the poor economy, all of which they blamed on the ANC. The NP also used the all too familiar "swart-gevaar" ("black threat") slogan to draw on coloured people's fear and bring them into their (NP) fold. In a Cape Times article, Tony Yengeni of the ANC states that the NP, in order to win coloured voters simply perpetuated the idea that blacks were a menacing mob of unruly and toyi-toying group of thugs [Cape Times: 8 July, 1996].

For coloured people, another very sensitive issue in the elections was the policy of affirmative action. Many coloured people saw this policy as favouring black people at the expense of coloureds. Many coloured people feared that their jobs would be taken over by blacks once the ANC won the local elections in their areas. The NP showed its expertise in propagating and even fermenting these fears.

Other issues exploited by the NP included the education crisis which meant the relocation of many coloured teachers and the possible uprooting of their families. The NP called the education crisis a fiasco and blamed the ANC for incompetence, forgetting that it was Martha Olckers who in the past had threatened to retrench 6000 teachers and that it was the ANC who had lobbied central government for more funds for the education budget.

Solutions to overcoming the racism vary from a separatism to non-racialism. (See also Allport 1958:238). Those arguing for separatism are warned that "it does not necessarily have a transformative impact on the dominant politics .. it could result in ghettoisation of various coloured needs, experiences and views. This does not imply that some level of autonomous coloured space(s) should not be respected. However, the articulation of this different black voice (with its variations) needs to be done within the dominant politics in order to be effective" [Erasmus 1996:4]. Non-racialism, on the other hand, which does not take differences into account and allow them to be articulated also fails, for not recognising racist inequalities and the social power relations resulting from racism-as-power.

Gordon Allport advises effective, equal status rather than casual contact between majority and minority groups, "that bring knowledge and acquaintance [which] are likely to engender sounder beliefs concerning minority groups, and for this reason contribute to the reduction of prejudice"[Allport 1958:268].

6.5. Coloured Identity: the danger of reticence and caution

The whole debate on coloured identity and minority rights in general represents an essential tenet of multiracialism in a democracy. It can be a vehicle to cohere relationships and transactions occurring across wide

geopolitical divides and distances, for example, Palestinians or the Chinese [AbdouMaliq Simone 1994:169]. As Marco (Cape Times 09.04.96:6) asserts:

It is not unhealthy that coloureds are asserting themselves and creating space for themselves. It is not unhealthy that other marginalised communities are doing the same. We do not assume that these social constructions make us a culturally or a ethnically homogeneous group. These are, however, shared experiences within these communities that are common.

James sees the rise of coloured political groupings and movements as the collective search for identity. Whereas apartheid imposed a definition of coloured identity in the past, today the question of coloured identity is undergoing a process of rigorous self-examination [James W. 1996:10]:

We are building a nation, whether we like it or not. We don't believe in a fragmented South Africa. We've got to bring together all that is positive and non-exclusivist, regardless from which group of people it originates. The task for our new society is to have space for multiple identities" [DIA 9:7].

I am optimistic, In the light of the above and Idasa's research findings, that "there is no evidence to support the claim that

coloured people are any more racist than anyone else. In the absence of any such evidence, I assume that coloured people are no more racist and no less racist than any other South African ... To interpret the coloured vote as an act of racism has little basis in fact [James 1996:42].

6.6. Summary and conclusion to Part Two: How is the notion of reconciliation related to identity?

Is there a link between coloured identity and reconciliation? This is the question I have set out to research. If reconciliation is that new stage in a relationship beyond and including forgiveness which represents a movement from:

fracturedness to recovery,
brokenness to wholeness,
alienation to togetherness,
rejection to acknowledgement, belonging and recognition.

If reconciliation is defined as bringing all things into the harmony of God's plan, how then is the constant historical struggle and desire of coloured people to be recognised as equally part of South Africa, related to the notion of reconciliation?

Secondly, how does this cultural understanding of reconciliation relate to the theological concept of reconciliation? If there is a discrepancy between the theological and cultural understandings of reconciliation, what would be the implications for the Catholic church in the Western Cape where its largest constituency is made up of the coloured people?

These are the questions that I will now attempt to answer by critically reflecting on the responses to my questionnaire. But first let us consider these responses.

What follows next is an analysis of the responses to the questionnaire focussing on coloured identity and reconciliation.

CHAPTER SEVEN: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.1. Introduction

In this chapter I try to ascertain how the coloured identity of Catholic coloured parishioners on the Cape Flats relates to the notion of reconciliation. I try to determine whether or not coloured people operate out of a deeper cultural understanding of this notion and if so, how it relates to the theological understanding of reconciliation.

7.2. SAMPLING APPROACH

7.2.1. Selection

I selected five parishes on the Cape Flats based on the following factors:

1. these were 'typical' of the majority of parishes on the Cape Flats;
2. where these parishes were situated in relation to the black formal or informal settlements in order to test whether their proximity to these had any bearing on their levels of prejudice,
3. and finally, selection also had to include Asian Catholics who also formed part of the Catholic community on the Cape Flats.

I decided, out of respect, and to ensure accessibility to people, to contact all parish priests connected to those selected parishes in my sample. I explained the nature of my studies, sought their permission and co-operation in my research and asked them for suggestions on how best to go about making a random selection of parishioners to participate in the survey. The parish priests at the first two parishes I approached expressed the opinion that it would be unwise to randomly select people from the parish list saying that they suggested such a simple selection would not get the best views from the most informed and articulate people of their parishes. Though I tried gently to move them to see the value of obtaining a variety of views from a random selection, their suggestion was that I conduct my survey with parish leaders in their respective Parish Pastoral Councils. These Councilors, they argued, were not only representative of the whole parish, but were also elected by the parishioners themselves.

In the end I decided it was more important to have their support and agreed to conduct the survey in this manner.

7.2.2. Meeting with Parish Pastoral Councils (PPC)

I met separately with each Council. The Parish Priest welcomed and introduced me to the Council and invited me to explain my project and its

relevance, how I intended conducting my survey and how they could assist.

I took time to explain why their parish and the Parish Pastoral Council was chosen. I made it clear that I was not judging their faith, nor their loyalty to the church or to their parish. I emphasised that I needed their gut response to a series of questions and wanted to hear their honest views on the subject of reconciliation. I made it clear that their identities would be anonymous and untraceable. After discussion and clarification I asked for six to eight volunteers from each Council to be part of this survey.

Although I requested between six to eight volunteers per PPC, only five from Parish One and three from Parish Five responded. Nevertheless, I decided to proceed with the survey because I felt I had a big enough sample.

An exception to this process was Parish Five where I did not meet with the Council. In my exploratory meeting with the parish priest, he informed me that there were only two Indian Catholics on the PPC and that in order to obtain a wider response from Indian Catholics, I should contact the parish Deacon, who was Indian. He, in turn, would furnish me with a list of possible interviewees. It should be noted that at this time, the crisis surrounding the anti-drug and gangsterism campaign had flared up

violently in this area and people were reluctant to either visit or receive visitors at night. Another factor which influenced the low response from Parish Five was that I had only one week to complete the interviews. Therefore, time constraints on the part of both interviewer and potential respondents (most of whom worked during the day) made it difficult to conduct any further interviews. This resulted in only 3 people from the Indian community being able to participate in the survey.

The following parishes participated in the survey:

PARISH	NO. OF RESPONDENTS
One	5
Two	8
Three	8
Four	8
Five	3
	32 [Total]

(The names and locations of the parishes under study have not been included to ensure confidentiality.)

7.3. DATA COLLECTION: The Interview

All interviews took place in the homes of respondents and at a time which

was convenient to them. The interviews lasted about an hour each, though the introductory discussion often took as long again, with the result that the entire interview often lasted for two hours in total. With the permission of the respondents, I tape-recorded all replies.

On several occasions interviewees asked whether their partners could be present to assist them. Although I listened with interest and made notes on the responses of non-interviewees, I did not include it as part of the research data.

I found all the respondents relaxed and co-operative. At no time did I get the impression that they were either evasive or intimidated. I often got the impression that respondents were rather flattered to be asked to participate in the survey. This helped in easily establishing a good rapport with them. It was also my impression that at least some of the interviewees were quite genuinely interested in the debate raised in the questionnaire.

7.4. DATA ANALYSIS: Biographical Information

- * All the interviewees are on their respective Parish Pastoral Councils, are group leaders and generally active in the local parish community.

- * 53% of the sample have 2 or more incomes. This falls into the coloured middle-income group. I did not specifically ask questions about the exact income of the respondents as I felt it a rather personal question. This I thought they might be reluctant to reveal to me because my position as a priest in the church. The impression gained by the interviewer was that this group was more middle class than representative of the poorer/working class coloureds.

This impression was gained by observing the relative material wealth of respondents, viz.:

- that respondents possessed their own transport
- they either owned their better quality homes or rented permanent residences in the better areas of the Cape Flats [some had, or were in the process of renovating their homes].
- many owned TV sets, Hi-Fi systems, M-Net decoders.

- * 75% of the sample surveyed were either full time (56,25%) or part-time (18,75) employed, which indicates relative economic security / stability.

7.5. LIMITATION INHERENT IN THIS METHODOLOGY

7.5.1. The pilot Interview

I conducted a pilot interview with 4 people unrelated to any of the parishes in the survey as a pre-test for the main survey. One was a housewife, others were, a teacher, an office worker and an unemployed person. Their ages ranged from 25 - 57. The questionnaire presented to them required simple "Yes"/"No" answers. The aim was to obtain and develop ideas as well as to research hypotheses and to clarify my own. It was also important to obtain ideas about various themes and topics I needed to include in the depth interview.

I found participants spontaneous, open and quite willing to assist. No one objected to the use of the tape-recorder. I noticed that some participants tended to stop talking when I tried quickly to write down ideas and comments which struck me during the interview. I was not sure whether this was because they felt interrupted or whether it was just a courtesy. I decided to keep writing to a minimum in my future interview.

I also took note of where I needed to be prompted or where they needed clarification. This helped me broaden and deepen my original plan of research and to decide on a more open-ended interview.

7.5.2. The Questionnaire

The fact that I allowed myself to be talked out of my original intention to do a random selection of respondents limited my research sample

somewhat. Parish pastoral councils, though representative in one respect, are not necessarily fully representative of the various social classes, religious commitment, and age groups. Though responses were generally spontaneous, I did feel that the way the questions were phrased quickly gave them an impression of my own views and influenced the way they responded. I also felt that the interviewees often found it difficult to separate my role as priest from my role as student. Respondents could therefore have given responses which they believed would broadly coincide with my position on these matters.

While attempting to draft a questionnaire which would ensure in-depth interviews as well as being easily analysable, I lost sight of the fact that some of the questions were too broad and unrestricted. In retrospect, I also feel that my interviews were too long and that I had too many questions. As most of my interviews took place in the evening, usually soon after workers arrived home and often before they had had their supper, I often felt I was intruding and that respondents were tired.

Sometimes I had to rephrase the question for participants to indicate that some of the questions were not immediately clear. With regard to questions referring to the parish, the church in general or parish-priests, respondents presumed I already knew the answers to these and therefore had to be coaxed into giving their responses. Two people in the sample expressed the view that this was the first time they spoke of reconciliation

in this way and they that thought it important to do so. However, I did not get the impression that coloured Catholics held any very different views about themselves, the future, the role of the church etc., to what is generally considered the coloured point of view.

7.5.3. Interviewer Bias

I found the new social role as interviewer a pleasant experience. I did not find it difficult to get people to talk or to trust me. Managing the questionnaire and the tape-recorder were also not a problem for any of the participants in the sample.

The fact that respondents put down their own names, I felt, indicated their willingness to participate in the survey. The fact that all interviews were done in respondents' own homes at a time arranged with them, made interviewing them almost something contractual. This had both a negative and positive aspect to it. It might have been negative for people who genuinely wanted to help but who during the interview wanted to withdraw from being part of the interview but did not want to offend. It was positive in that people who really wanted to participate put their names down. Credibility for the survey was approved by the parish priest and the Parish Pastoral Council in each case.

The fact that people knew me as a priest (I declared it at the outset so as

not to appear to deceive them) and kept referring to me as "Father", might have betrayed their lack of objectivity. Though I tried, I cannot say with confidence that I successfully managed to reduce my role in this regard. How it ultimately influenced the responses I do not know for sure. Judging by the high scores for questions answered, I conclude that the responses are relatively accurate, though they may possibly have omitted some controversial aspects in their replies. The presence of marriage partners at the interview might also have influenced the reliability of responses. However, I did not notice any obvious evasions, hesitation or gaps in their responses. The fact that questions often required respondents to reply in the third person also helped overcome this problem.

"Switching off" my personality and attitudes were not easily achieved as I am naturally inclined to want to put people at ease and so take the pressure off them by talking about myself and my own interests. I had to consciously struggle to be aware of my biases particularly when setting up a rapport with the respondent at the beginning of the each interview or whenever I was asked then to explain a question or a word in the questionnaire.

Finally, while the parish selection is typical of Catholic Parishes on the Cape Flats, I gained the impression from the interviews that contrary to what parish priests indicated above, Parish Pastoral Councils seemed not

to be truly representative of the parish. Rather they tended to be better educated, economically more stable and older than the average adult parishioner. This skewed my sample somewhat. On another occasion I would insist on a random selection of parishioners from the parish list as this, I am sure will produce a better sample of people for such a research.

CHAPTER EIGHT: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

8.1. MAJOR THEMES EMERGING FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

Theme 1: The theory of reconciliation

[Questions: 8-14]

Theme 2: Racial prejudice

[Questions: 15-18;22-23;25;28;30-31]

Theme 3: Coloured Identity

[Questions: 19-21;23-24;27;29;31]

Theme 4: The Catholic church

[Questions: 32-34]

[For biographical analysis see Tables 1(a),(b) & (c)].

The aim of the Questionnaire was to discover what Catholic coloured people on the Cape Flats understand by the notion of reconciliation. In doing this I examined whether there was a strong cultural basis which underpinned this understanding and if so, does this cultural understanding deviate from the traditional theological understanding of reconciliation?

Themes 1 and 4, above, deal with Catholic coloureds' understanding of reconciliation and with the traditional theological understanding out of which the church operates.

Themes 2 and 3 deal with the cultural situation used as the premise for discovering the level of cultural preoccupation.

8.2. THE THEORY OF RECONCILIATION AND ITS APPLICATION [Questions 8-14]

This section deals with how and what is understood by reconciliation and how it is applied by Catholic coloured people in practice.

What is immediately noticed is that the terms "forgiveness" and "reconciliation" are used interchangeably by respondents.

Obligation of all Christians to exercise a ministry of reconciliation.

All the respondents agreed that Christians are obliged to exercise a ministry of peace and reconciliation at all times. They all, however, also saw the practical responsibilities and application of this ministry as being very difficult.

They all intellectually accepted the Biblical understanding of

reconciliation. Some of the respondents added that this ministry was imperative regardless of the situation one found oneself in, and that the Christian was always responsible for taking the initiative in pursuing reconciliation:

If you have done wrong ... or if not the culprit, you should still reach out and make peace or speak to the other person in an effort to make peace, that's my understanding (ED).

It is important in this era. It is more than going to church and doing penance. (MM)

Two people in the sample commented on the fulfilment of certain conditions before reconciliation and peace could become a reality. This was directly linked to the South African situation. Another respondent challenged this Biblical command and questioned a notion of reconciliation which does not seem to address in a practical manner the issues of violence and lawlessness in society:

I have difficulty with this obligation in our violent and lawless society. Preaching a gospel of peace and reconciliation is making light of the injustices and corruption. I don't know the answer but something else must happen ahead of peace attempts. I don't know about Pagad's attempts either - some appreciate it - but it

still doesn't bring peace and appreciation of the law. It does require something more creative and effective ... not Pagad and certainly not more prayers and church services. (CV)

To a certain extent I agree. But it does take more than one side to make peace. How can I be reconciled with someone who doesn't admit that they're wrong. Look at the political situation we just came out of. The humiliations and sufferings cannot simply be forgiven and besides, whites have not yet said they are sorry so how can we say there's forgiveness. (BP)

Social aspect of reconciliation

On the question of the social aspect of reconciliation, 11 the respondents saw this as integral to genuine reconciliation. They acknowledged that reconciliation went beyond personal relations and immediate environment and extended also to broader community and national issues:

Reconciliation is also important in society for unity and healing to be extended wherever there is discontent and disharmony. (SE)

If social aspects are not reconciled practically-affects spirituality.
(MD)

It definitely also has strong social implications. How can it be something totally personal and spiritual when you live, work and relate to others constantly in society. (KC)

It definitely includes the social side. It is especially important between the coloured and black population groups. Apartheid caused a tension between the groups which divided them. Prayer alone won't solve the problems - we must make new efforts. (JB)

Justice as a vital part of reconciliation.

76% of respondents saw justice as a vital part of reconciliation and that true reconciliation was only possible when justice had been achieved. They saw justice as an important factor in the endeavour to end retaliation and achieve peace, harmony and reconciliation:

Justice is important for reconciliation- otherwise it is a fraud (MD).

Peace without justice is like dressing a wound without trying to heal it first. When the bandage comes off you end up with a greater wound (RC).

Justice must be done before you can forgive somebody. I feel that a person who does something wrong must admit that he was

All the respondents viewed reconciliation as a sign of greatness. Most emphasised it as a personal attribute, which required humility, courage, trust, hope and risk:

Here we must look at the example of President Mandela. He was jailed for 27 years and he never speaks about it - he doesn't even mention it to anybody - that's a sign of greatness - a sign of real reconciliation. He actually forgave the people and said nothing about it (GW).

Reconciliation is about coming to terms with oneself. It is a strength which invigorates and inspires a person and gives peace. It humbles one because it looks at oneself in conflict situations and demands one to be prepared to make changes if necessary (CV).

It is about swallowing your pride and taking the initiative in conflict - it is a form of cleansing and healing (MM).

8% of respondents qualified their answers by saying that "not everybody can do it."

3% of respondents saw reconciliation as being both a sign of weakness and of greatness:

On the one hand it is a weakness because you are giving up something you fought for. On the other hand, it is a sign of personal greatness because you are forced to take a stand. It needs genuineness on both sides. (BP)

Who do you find it easier to forgive?

87.5% of respondents found it easier to forgive their partner.

0% of respondents found it easier to forgive their boss.

12.5% of respondents found it easier to forgive a stranger from another race group.

The majority of respondents found it easier to forgive their partner/family members.

None of the respondents had any serious confrontations with people of other races. Where there had been situations where there was a need for reconciliation with different races it was in the context of working relationships where the power relationship between the two people was unequal. Because of the segregationist policies and structures of the apartheid government, people were effectively cut off from other race groups so that real race relations were not easy to evaluate. Inter-racial contacts were reduced to superficial contact with other races (eg. working

relations),

8.3. RACIAL PREJUDICE [Questions 15-18,22,23,25,28,30,31]

The segregationist policy of the former government effectively cut races off from each other. In such a situation, it is fair to expect that a measure of racial prejudice, stereotypes, false-assumptions and myths about "the other" is bound to exist. Yet, the distance between the race groups also hides/obscures the living out of these assumptions. These might well surface in situations of conflict between the two groups at a later stage.

This section seeks to discover whether prejudice plays a role, (and to what extent) in the relationship between coloured people and other race groups.

Equality of all people

31% of the respondents felt that everybody was equal:

Yes, everyone is equal. Socially we may look differently but we are all equal (RC).

Yes, without a doubt - it is my philosophy (GH).

50% of the respondents felt that everybody was equal in the Biblical and theological sense but not in reality:

God made us equal. Inequalities are created by society (VO).

In God's eyes only ... not so in ordinary life. Getting ahead means you're better, not equal (TS).

In the eyes of God yes, but in the eyes of humans, no. People are judged on their colour, class, intelligence and skills (BP).

19% of the respondents felt that people were not equal because of differences:

Not everyone is equal. We are all different no one is like me (AF).

No, not everyone accepts and lives the same values and standards (LB).

No, not everyone has the same gifts (BS).

Those respondents who claim that not all are created equal do so from experiences of socio-political realities of inequalities and on physical "disabilities" (looks, values and standards, skills and talents). I felt that

this did not really answer the question that I posed.

Race groups respondents got better on with

50% of respondents stated that they got on better with members of their own group (coloured):

With my own race group ... because I am more acquainted with them. It's just about communication though (GH).

Better with own race group. More in common (AF).

With my own race group, but I don't see others as different ... we were not really exposed to them (MM).

3% of respondents stated that they got on better with whites:

Whites - used to working with them. No real contact with blacks.

Don't socialise with them (KV).

6% of respondents stated that they got on better with blacks:

Better relationship with blacks - humility. Own coloured - without care (AJ).

41% of respondents stated that they had no preference.

I get on with all groups. As a member of the ANC which is non-racial, it is our policy (BP).

I get on well with all people ... sometimes it is only a question of communication or of making someone more comfortable so that they can express themselves (JG).

Get on with any race group. I am an extrovert - used to working with and meeting different people and strange groups (MB).

Entering into business transactions with people of other races.

When respondents were asked whether they would go into business or rent out accommodation to people of other races, the responses were unanimous. All of the respondents were willing to enter into business interactions with, and rent accommodation to, all other race groups.

Coloureds and nation-building

53% of the respondents felt that coloured people are not making a genuine effort towards reconciliation and nation-building. Stating reasons like, coloured people are too self-centred and only interested in what

benefits them; that they are lazy and unmotivated; that the majority of coloured people are not benefitting from democracy. This is a relatively high percentage (together with those who had mixed feelings; 78%) of respondents who feel that coloured people are not playing their part in national interests:

No, I don't think so because they resent the fact that they will be serving a black government and they don't want to support blacks because they fear that blacks would only be interested in helping blacks. So now they are simply complacent and despondent (ED).

No, I think they are only looking at themselves and not looking at nation-building at this time. They are too caught up in their own fears. It is a participating thing and coloured people are still too self-consumed (KC).

No. From the opinions I hear and from the newspaper, the Mitchell's Plain visit of President Mandela shows that the majority of coloured people are still not in tune with the nation's needs and the need for reconciliation. We need to learn tolerance and to change our attitudes and learn how to disagree and still be civil (CV).

No, I don't think so. Coloured people are lazy - they just hang on.

Not motivated (MD).

No. Too preoccupied with getting things for themselves (RC).

28% of respondents felt that coloured people were making a genuine effort at nation-building and reconciliation:

Yes, trying to reach out in social functions and working with political situation (AF).

I think so; many coloured people stood for election in the democratic process election (RP).

Yes, some are sticking their necks out but many don't realise that this is the repairing stage (JG).

19% of respondents had mixed feelings:

To a certain extent, yes. Yet it is only some. It is mainly NP orientated people who are sitting back and waiting for things to happen (AN).

It is very difficult to judge. It is still too early to say (FB).

Coloureds' opinion on the term African as inclusive of them

94% of the respondents were of the opinion that coloured people reject the term "African" as including them. They saw the term as having connotations of inferiority and they rejected this. Also coloureds wanted to be distinguished from blacks. Other reasons were that the term "African" implied an immersion or loss of the coloured identity. A small number of respondents expressed racist views. It is important to note that the way the question was phrased led respondents to give their views of what coloured people's impressions were - not necessarily their own opinions:

Yes, African is associated with black which is seen as inferior.

Black has never been seen as good (RC).

African are seen as wanting to immerse coloured identity (BM).

Most of them (coloureds) do, because African is seen as black and they don't know that language or customs, etc. (JG).

Yes, definitely. Africanism was really killed by the PAC. It was perceived as racist and brutal. Coloureds also interpret it as black homeland living standards and conditions - these made Africanism most unattractive and like a death sentence (FB).

Yes, I think they lean more to Afrikanerism than towards African. The African means a black person of a different culture to the coloured. It's more the poorer people of Manenberg and Heideveld who refer to blacks as "kaffirs". "Ek sal nooit stem vir 'n kaffir nie"; "Nou het de Klerk sy vlerke, nou vlieg hy weer" are some of the comments I heard during election time (AN).

6% of the respondents were of the opinion that coloured people did not reject the term "African" as including them:

I don't think so. We are all Africans - just different Africans, but equal (CJ).

Willingness to join a coloured party

59% of the respondents said they would not belong to a coloured party. I find this result to be significant, in that while respondents claim a strong cultural sense, it does not seem to extend to the political arena. This also seems to coincide with the Idasa survey (POS No.8 May 1996:21) which stated that coloured people are the least interested in politics, government and democracy so far. It also indicated that coloured assertiveness may not be indicative of ethnic identity, but rather as a move against cultural and economic marginalization. Those who indicated a willingness to support such a party qualified this by stating

that its purpose must not be separatist or against the interest of nation-building. Rejection of a coloured party is on the basis of the following:

No, it would be divisive in democracy (TS).

Need to come together to discuss needs, but not to separate (SE).

No, that would be an exclusive thing - I am against that. Though we are a diverse, we should learn to live as one nation (AN).

No, I don't want to belong to a party based simply on colour - they would have to have something more (CV).

No, I won't go for that. It would divide the whole country again. I am for unity and equity. Africa is becoming more economically and politically viable to the international community. So to withdraw into our own community would throw the whole process into disarray (FB).

41% of the respondents said they would consider belonging to a coloured party depending on what it stood for; for example, promotion of coloured identity and interests within the framework of nation-building:

It would depend upon their constitution and what they stood for ...

I'm not for racist slander or for insulting other races and cultures
(GW).

Yes, to promote, motivate and educate morality and self-esteem
(MD).

I would belong to one if it worked for all people. For reconciliation
and justice but not as a Bantustan (RB).

It depends on what they offered. We are one nation. I am
interested in equality and upliftment of the community (VO).

*Why coloured people voted overwhelmingly for the NP rather than the
ANC.*

Responses to the question seem to indicate that coloured people saw the
ANC as being synonymous with blacks and feared what would happen
when blacks took over. There was also the fear that a reversal of fortunes
would occur once blacks "took over" and that this would take place at the
expense of coloured people.

They believed the propaganda of the anti-ANC parties. There also
seemed to be the misconception by some that whites had undergone a
conversion and that they NP had changed. That the NP had in fact
provided housing, education and pensions in the past, and could

therefore be trusted:

Blacks are arrogant and untrustworthy (we got that from school history). We felt threatened (MB).

Saw ANC as equal to increased violence and rights with no control (SE).

ANC failed to make us feel at home. Took us for granted (BM).

ANC mentioned only blacks and whites. Coloureds did not feature (MD).

ANC would take care of blacks first. De Klerk set us free, and because whites were also a minority, would stand by us (LB).

It was a question of white is right - they were afraid that blacks would mess up and do them out of jobs, houses and so on (GH).

They were stupid. They were afraid they would be killed when the blacks took revenge and power (TS).

It was plain racism. They fell for the NP joke. It was indoctrination, "swart gevaar, rooi gevaar". Fear also motivated them. They saw themselves as a god-fearing people so they rejected communist-

inspired organisations (CV).

Overlooking the political past

Responses to this question gave various reasons for this. Part of the explanation was that the election result was not a genuine movement of forgiveness for the old regime. Also that this was not a collective perception, and had nothing to do with forgetting at all, but rather it simply suited coloured people to vote that way at the time. Other views put forward were that forgiveness is part of the nature of the coloured people, and that it was necessary to put the past behind in order to move into the future:

In our nature to forgive and forget. We do not question about our suffering (BM).

It was easier to forgive the NP than to accept majority rule (RC).

Forgiving and forgetting is in their blood. It's just part of the character and religion (JG).

Maybe because they didn't suffer as much as blacks did. But still, I doubt the past is forgiven - it was a question of putting it aside to ease into the future (VO).

Coloureds tried to make the best of the situation after enduring so much discrimination in the past - maybe they thought it would be better also for black people. It's something in our nature (CJ).

The sins of the NP have not yet been considered by the coloured people - they had other priorities in terms of their fears at the time, They have not made a judgement in terms of its political and economic value (FB).

The fears of coloureds and their ignorance just overpowered everything the church could have said or done. The church had not been such a great influence during the struggle, anyway (KC).

Rejection of the terms "Black" and "African"

44% of the respondents felt that terms "black" and "african" are rejected by coloured people as including themselves because the term connotes inferiority.

6% of the respondents felt that terms "black" and "african" are rejected by coloured people as including themselves because they are racist.

40% of the respondents felt that the terms "black" and "african" are rejected by coloured people because they have a completely different

identity:

I think there is an element of racism involved for some. Others are merely stating their identity in relation to blacks, i.e. the other oppressed group (VO).

Coloureds resent the stigma attached to blacks by the previous government who classified black as backward, uncivilised and inferior. They have no alternate picture of blacks (GH).

You don't just have blacks and whites in this country you have also coloureds. Before coloureds were in the middle of whites and blacks, now they are another population group, a third one (TS).

I think it is both racism of their status as different and superior: "Ek is nie 'n swart man nie, ek is 'n bruin man." expresses this statement (BP).

8.4. COLOURED IDENTITY [Questions 19,20,21,23,24,27,29,31]

Coloured problems as unique and different

59% of respondents stated that coloured people did have problems which are unique and different to the other population groups in South Africa.

Among the reasons given were the feelings of inferiority, being excluded and not being taken seriously. Unique problems also included negative characteristics which were ascribed to coloured people, like being fickle, materialistic, opportunistic, lazy, and being predisposed to alcohol. There was a feeling of confusion over identity and heritage and division and suspicion on issues of solidarity. In spite of these rather negative characteristics, it is not an overwhelmingly high percentage of people who think coloured people have problems which are unique and different to other race groups:

Yes, always in middle. Always left out (MD).

Yes, more confused about our heritage. We are often called names. We feel lost (RC).

Definitely, coloureds are always stuck in the middle - they think themselves better than blacks and less than whites. Cultural differences also exist among coloureds (MM).

Yes, in the sense that the problems that coloureds seem to have are those of identity - to place themselves socially. Other than that, problems like unemployment, crime, education and the lack of housing are pretty common among all races. In the Western Cape, the identity problem is our primary concern (KC).

34% of respondents felt that coloureds did not have unique problems.

I don't think so - we are all humans and have the same problems (VO).

No, everybody in South Africa has similar problems. There's nothing unique about the problems of coloured people (JP).

Coloured people being overlooked by government and political parties

69% of respondents were of the opinion that coloured people felt that they were being overlooked and not being taken seriously enough by government and political parties in general:

Yes, from general comments I have heard, it seems that people believe that lots of the budget have not been allocated to the upliftment of coloureds - but is reserved for blacks. Coloureds feel that they are being severely prejudiced. Before now they were oppressed by white people - but at least they had a foot in the door - now they feel hugely prejudiced against (KC).

Yes, affirmative action is seen as favouring black people (BP).

Yes, previously not white enough, now not black enough - people are frustrated and restless (CJ).

31% of the respondents were of the opinion that coloured people did not feel that they are being overlooked:

Not being overlooked but fear-ruled, divided, afraid to form a united front (AF).

Certainly in the past but not at the moment. I think we are getting recognition. A lot of coloured people are in parliament and being recognised by their own (AJ).

It's up to coloured people to stand together so that we get somewhere (VO).

Effect of the 1994 national elections on coloured people's image of themselves

41% respondents felt that the national elections of 1994 had positively affected coloured people's image of themselves. They stated that coloured people seemed more positive and confident about themselves,

felt wanted and freer and felt a sense of pride, and a sense of their own importance:

Coloured people felt good about themselves because they could actually do something about their society (AJ).

It was a big boost for the image of coloured people - it has prompted lots of debate and expression of opinions (MM).

They feel more positive, less fearful and more dignified (CJ).

More hopeful now that the future will be better for them (RC).

28% respondents felt that the national elections of 1994 had negatively affected coloured people's image of themselves. They stated that the the elections divided the community and that the positive feelings experienced as a result of the elections were superficial. They also felt that coloured people were still rejected by the other groups.:

It has definitely divided the community. There is a split since the political vote (GH).

I think it affected them negatively - they saw the majority of black people as threatening to overwhelm them and that they were lost

in the non-identity of non-racialism. The new black government in power scared them. With whites they knew where they stood - now they had to negotiate a new position in the system. This didn't happen in a vacuum - it must be seen in the light of how the NP managed this fear through its political campaign (KC).

It shattered the self-image of coloured people. They feel they've become irrelevant. In the past not white enough; now not black enough (BM).

6% respondents felt that there was no change in coloured people's image of themselves:

Coloured still feel that they are nothing and that nothing has changed (JG).

Just the same. Those who got somewhere are those who crawled (MB).

9% respondents felt that people had mixed feelings about this issue:

Coloureds feel a little more confident. But still feel more disadvantaged than other groups (TS).

Coloureds felt free and passionate. They couldn't forget or put aside their fears, though (AN).

16% had no responses.

Coloured homeland/separate state

All of the respondents felt that coloured people would not be better off forming a separate state/province with its own land, language and government. The reasons for this seem to be based on two different approaches: one based on a poor identity of the coloured people and the other based on a positive image of coloured people within the broader SA scenario:

No, it would lead to more conflict among ourselves and with others (AF).

No, because there are too many divisions among coloured people already (GH).

No, I don't think so - we'll have exploitation as usual by the better off coloureds. There's too much greed among coloureds (BP).

No, it would cutting ourselves off; reconciliation would be

impossible and freedom of movement would be restricted (MM).

We belong together. We are one nation (VO).

We are all South Africans - we have no reason to separate (RC).

No, otherwise we'll be going back to the bantustan era - we are one nation, one people (AN).

Willingness to be called coloured

47% of the respondents were comfortable with being called coloured:

Coloured - I'm proud of my race. Comfortable with coloured.
Always have been (KV).

Yes, I am known that way. Don't know who else I am (RP).

I don't have a problem with it because I found my identity within it
(MM).

Being coloured is okay - it makes no difference in a democracy
(CJ).

41% of the respondents preferred the term "South African":

I don't agree with the labels coloured, African and white - we are all South Africans and we are all equal (TS).

I always considered myself a South African. Coloured is what the white man wanted me to be. To show my dissatisfaction I accepted being called South African (FB).

I am a South African. The other labels limit me (AN).

6% of the respondents preferred either South African or African:

I am comfortable with African or South African - the others are too restrictive. We are one country and colour shouldn't matter (RB).

6% of the respondents preferred the term African.

I would prefer to be called African because I was born on this continent. When they call me coloured I feel excluded. They say we should forget about apartheid categories of black, white and coloured - that we are all South Africans - but what about being African (GW).

Significance in change in coloured identity since political changes

69% of the respondents indicated that something positively significant had happened to the identity of coloured people through the political changes in the country. There seemed to be a more positive identity emerging within the broader framework of the new South Africa:

A prouder people, feel more human, better opportunities (SE).

More outspoken and visible and willing to fight for what we want (MD).

Yes, there's lots of upliftment. They feel they can move where they like, swim where they like; they feel better and are more positive (JG).

Coloured are asserting themselves more. Just before and during the elections coloureds began identifying themselves as a group and asserting themselves more (KC).

9% of the respondents indicated that something negatively significant had happened to the identity of coloured people since the political changes in our country:

Coloureds are afraid of blacks - that they will take over everything that coloureds possessed. Coloured are seen as having sided with whites (KV).

22% of the respondents felt that there was no change:

No - things remained the same (MB).

Not yet - still conscious of race. Our children will probably be the ones to benefit (RC).

Coloured people thinking more positively about themselves now

66% of the respondents felt that coloured people thought more positively about themselves now. Reasons for this were that coloureds were becoming more confident; that there were new opportunities and new hope, and that they were being challenged. Another reason was that there were free elections now:

Yes, more confident. We have something unique (BM).

Yes, they are much more positive and outgoing because they are more accepted now than before (MM).

Yes, definitely more confident. There is more openness and a feeling of their equality. They are now in the picture (TS).

16% of the respondents did not think that coloured people thought more positively of themselves now than before:

I don't think so. Coloureds now see what the struggle was about. They are now going through that struggle - they see what blacks endured... (CV).

9% of the respondents had mixed feelings about this:

I don't think so - or maybe just a little better - but not much different as before (VO).

9% had no response to this question.

8.5. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: [Questions 32-34]

Catholic Church's role in teaching about reconciliation and apartheid in the past

All the respondents indicated that the church had not done enough to teach about reconciliation and how it applied to the apartheid situation.

53% of respondents stated that the church had been silent during the time of apartheid, leaving Catholics without guidance:

No, I never heard either the priest or people of the church talking about it. Even now I don't hear about it in church (JP).

No, I think the church committed a very big crime when they distanced themselves from the struggle of ordinary people. That is why in the Western Cape religion didn't have a big impact in the people's choices and decisions or prejudices. One can only guess why the church decided not to take a stand (KC).

No, I say that emphatically - because during the struggle the church did not once stand up and take a position. We are proud of our faith yet the church was so laidback and quiet when the majority of people who suffered were black - its main membership. It was left to ordinary people in the congregation to find its own way. This was terrible ...it was sad (AN).

No, I don't think so. It never came out with a voice. We had to fight to convince the nuns at school to show our solidarity with others during the struggle. Simply because it was not happening to us, we turned a blind eye, until it struck our community. Up until then life just went on as usual - they accepted things as they were. The

Catholic Church was silent and without leadership at that time.
The church seemed to have separated itself from the political life
(CV).

34% of respondents stated that the church had spoken out and taught
that apartheid was evil, but that it had not done this effectively:

There were sermons about apartheid, that it was not to be
accepted. I appreciated it. It was helpful but not enough, not
practical (MB).

It has been done, but not meaningfully (WP).

It did, but not appropriately (JG).

13% of respondents felt that what the church had taught about
reconciliation and the apartheid situation had been helpful but that
people chose not to respond:

Church has done enough, but its up to us to practice it (LB).

Church taught, but it didn't filter down, Some chose to ignore it
(BS).

Importance of the Church preaching about the nation's need for forgiveness and reconciliation

The majority of the respondents felt it was imperative that the church preach about the nation's need for forgiveness and reconciliation. They emphasised the lack of church guidance in the past, and the fact that people in the struggle had not felt supported by the hierarchical church. Yet they maintained that the opportunity still existed for the church to do something:

Yes, definitely, because the church must tell the people where it stands. It is what the people are seeking (JG).

Yes, it is crucial. Many were hurt by apartheid and are impatient for peace and reconciliation. The church must help people realise their wrongs and help those who hurt, to forgive (VO).

Yes, the church should be involved in society's concerns. Coloured people have a strong sense of religion and look to the church for guidance so the church has a responsibility to guide and challenge them. In other words the church must use its power to educate and challenge the adoring coloured congregation (CV).

I don't think our church people nor the priests really understand

the coloured people. Priests live in our townships but they live like white people so they don't know our plight or the plight of the nation. They are not part of the community, in fact (ED).

Difference between the church's preaching on reconciliation and people's interpretation of it

87.5% of respondents felt that there was a difference between the church's preaching on reconciliation and people's actual interpretation of this on the Cape Flats:

Definitely, when he (the parish priest) talks about it, its always about the sacrament of confession and about peace and forgiveness in the heart. He never talks about peace and reconciliation in the country (VO).

Yes, there is a difference because we often choose incorrectly. Sometimes the church is not saying it strongly enough. Cape Flats people sometimes use their anger to justify their actions (CJ).

The church doesn't go into reconciliation deeply enough. People are left to work out their own thing and often it just concerns their own positions (TS).

Coloured people do have their own understanding of reconciliation. The church's teaching is much broader based. It is aimed at a broader understanding of nation-building. Coloureds have a narrower view in relation to blacks. Coloureds are typically selfish in their interpretation of reconciliation: it's all about us and ourselves, what we can get in exchange for subservience and status. I think that this selfishness should be challenged by the church (KC).

Yes the church has not really given real guidance - not done a proper analysis of the nation's need for reconciliation. And because the church hasn't gone through the reconciliation process herself, or sees itself as needing reconciliation, or embracing its use, it can never really understand the people's need to hear whites ask for reconciliation (CV).

Yes, there is a difference. Reconciliation is a church word which has been coming on for centuries. But the people interpret it differently, they think of affirmative action, violence and their future and will accept reconciliation from whites but not from blacks. They think it's below them (GW).

12.5% of respondents felt that there was no difference between the church's preaching on reconciliation and people's actual interpretation of

this on the Cape Flats:

The coloured person thinks of reconciliation as the church does, from a foreign, white perspective (ED).

8.6. GENERAL COMMENTS: [Question 35]

The following are a few general comments on reconciliation given by respondents:

The church should talk more about why reconciliation is necessary and how important it is to forgive, about the importance of the TRC and the need to listen to its findings with sympathy and understanding. It must talk about nation-building as our christian duty and tell those responsible for injustice and oppression to admit their wrongs, The church should be in the forefront of reconciliation, not the politicians. It must build up people's morals. The church seems to have taken a back seat now but liberation is not yet over. It must get involved in this stage of liberation. It is not yet too late (BP).

The bishops must set the church right as to which road it must choose in reconciliation. They should write more letters to white churches who are not involved in reconciliation and to ordinary

people and business people who are not involved in it. I would like our Archbishop to be more like Tutu, I would like him to be a leader not only in biblical and spiritual things. I don't think we are getting enough guidance from him (GH).

The bishop must be urged to talk. We need to know how to build a country and to overturn the past (VO).

How long must we wait till reconciliation is over? Can't we begin by telling white people straight that they mustn't sit back and wait for the country to come right. They must think they have done nothing. They must not be the ones who receive reconciliation - it is us people who need to receive it, not them (JG).

8.7. SUMMARY

Responses indicate that people have a fairly good understanding of forgiveness and reconciliation. Although the terms forgiveness and reconciliation have been used interchangeably by the respondents, justice is seen to be the determining factor for forgiveness and is seen as 'making right', or an attempt to restore the original harmony. The argument of some that justice is to be left to God does not negate its importance or centrality to their understanding of reconciliation. Rather, it indicates a difference in opinion about with whom the ultimate authority

of justice lies.

However, this notion of justice seems to be limited to the personal realm and does not appear to have socio-political applications. On the social level, reconciliation seems to be relegated to the confines of family, partner and immediate neighbour. Inter-racial contact, severely curtailed by the policies and structures of apartheid, made the social interaction between race groups rather superficial and ineffective. The lack of the application of the social aspect of reconciliation, therefore, does not necessarily imply an anti-black or anti-white bias.

Racial prejudice

When considering the notion of reconciliation in any South African situation, one is immediately confronted with the issue of racial segregation, which was the foundation stone of the apartheid government. Racial segregation very effectively separated people into politically, culturally and geographically distinct groups and tried to instill in them a false sense of the hierarchy of races.

The responses in this section of the questionnaire reveal a split in the way people consider issues of race and equality. When confronted with the issues from a Christian Biblical perspective, that all people are created equal, one would expect that the questionnaire response would

be consistent with the teaching of the Church. Yet 50% of the sample responded to this question out of two separate perspectives: from a theological one, which said that all people are equal only in the eyes of God, and a socio-cultural one based on the experiences of living in an apartheid society, which said that all people are, in fact, not equal.

On a personal and formal level of relationship between different races, for example, in business and working relationships, there does not seem to be any difficulty in interacting with people from other groups. Regulated experiences seem to offer a measure of equality, a levelling out of relationships. This indicates a good measure of openness towards inter-racial relations.

On the level of inter-group relations, however, there seems to be a strong indication of resistance to integration or being seen as one group with blacks. A large proportion of the survey indicated that coloured people reject being called "African". The reasons for this differ, yet are basically based on an apartheid perspective of "African" being synonymous with "black", and "black" being viewed as inferior. Their rejection of this term is also based on the fear that, as a group, their distinct needs, demands and rights would be submerged under the weight of Black demands. These fears and prejudices are also revealed in the responses to the question about why coloured people voted for the NP rather than the ANC.

Yet, although securing group interests seem to be important, political interest and involvement in securing these needs and rights remain obscured. All the respondents either reject the idea of joining a specifically coloured political party or have certain preconditions or qualifications about this. This seems to indicate that while there is little interest from this group in the issue of political power itself, the issue of securing a better economic and social future is a main priority in the new South Africa.

This also seems to be the reason for rejecting the ANC, which is perceived as having the interests of blacks as their main priority, and accepting the NP who had previously 'favoured' coloured needs and demands for housing, education and welfare for example, above the needs of blacks.

So while coloured Catholics accept the Biblical principle of all people being equal, it is evident that they do not necessarily act out of this principle. Lack of genuine efforts in working towards nation-building, which is in itself an attempt at reconciling the different groups divided by apartheid, is testimony to the inconsistency in the beliefs and practices of the coloured people. Yet it also seems that the reasons for this are based on the perceived need for the survival of this group on economic, social and cultural levels and its need to find its place in the new social order emerging in SA, rather than from inherent racist tendencies.

Coloured Identity

Identity is a human right, given and affirmed by society. Generations of misrecognition by apartheid, have caused coloured people to feel ambiguous about the label "coloured".

Various opinions and divisions exist within the coloured community on this issue. Some are of the opinion that coloured people have a distinct culture and identity, as well as a shared heritage with that of blacks and whites. This view also sees coloureds being integrally part of the new South Africa. Others opt for assimilation into the new non-racial society without any distinction between race groups and unique cultures but rather developing a new culture with new symbols. A third group exists which claims that coloureds are an exclusively distinct ethnic group with aspirations for its own language, culture and land.

The fact that 46% of respondents preferred being referred to as coloured could well be an indication of the new shift in the way in which coloured people see their own distinct identity. There seems to be a move towards a positive reclaiming of identity which was misrepresented by the apartheid years.

Only 6% of respondents preferred the term "African" as describing

themselves. According to my survey findings, the terms "Black" and "African" were seen as connotating a sense of inferiority or social backwardness and of not being South African. This was reinforced by the fact that blacks were perceived as fighting against what was previously seen as South African. They were therefore viewed as unpatriotic, as evidenced in the number strikes, boycotts, and violence in the country. The political sloganeering and policies of PAC also contributed to a negative perception of the concept of Africanism by coloureds. Whites, on the other hand were seen as representing what was good about South Africa.

It is significant that 66% of respondents believed that since the 1994 national elections coloured people felt more positive about themselves. Yet 59% felt either negative, saw no change or had mixed feelings about their political future in the new democracy.

It appears that although coloured people were happier with the newfound freedom to express themselves, they were not yet secure about their ability, as a group, to influence the political future in which they must compete with other oppressed groups.

The fact that coloureds felt more positive about themselves can also be related to the strengthening self-consciousness among coloureds that they are now fully South African (40%), a privilege previously reserved

for whites. The acceptance of this newly acquired status was confirmed in the unanimous rejection of respondents of a separate state or homeland for coloured people.

The Catholic Church

It should be noted that all the respondents identified the church as the official, hierarchical church and were emphatic that it had a definite role to play in society.

They also unanimously agreed that the church did not succeed in teaching people about their role as reconcilers during the apartheid era. Many claimed that the church was "too silent", "leaving the community without guidance", that it was "guilty of complicity". All of this meant that the church had little or no influence in people's socio-political decisions and choices. Even when the church did say something, it was not effective or said with any conviction.

Some respondents argued that the reason for the church's lack of influence was that the church was too white, and lived on the periphery of the lives its congregants. Also that it did not realise its own need for confession, forgiveness and reconciliation. Others claimed that its pastors were too white and foreign and spoke of reconciliation mainly in sacramental terms, without including the inter-racial and national

implications or reconciliation in the South African context.

All in all, respondents recognised the church as having had a crucial role to play in a society, but felt that the church had not been as effective as it could have been. The overriding reason for this was that it had not been prepared to challenge its white congregants and the apartheid government policy. Its message thus came across garbled and ambiguous when it needed be forthright and clear.

From these responses, what can be said in regard to our current historical situation? Strong leadership is called for, it is not too late for the church to assist in the process of reconciliation. There is also the challenge for Catholic leadership to practically engage in strategies to lead white church members to see their need for conversion and repentance and to co-operate with and support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and government in bringing about peace and reconciliation in the land. These challenges to the church can in no way be considered peripheral, but are of the very nature of the church's mission. The church has a commitment to the world. The Incarnation is forever the symbol of the church's mission in the world.

PART THREE

CHAPTER NINE: MAJOR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1. INTRODUCTION: Reconciliation as central to the Christian message

Reconciliation is an essential element in the Christian church's message of salvation. Salvation is interpreted in the Bible as something more than being simply spiritual, but also includes the transformation of all creation (Nolan 1988:108-109). Reconciliation, being an essential aspect of Christian salvation, has strong social implications. When Jesus spoke of salvation he spoke of it in terms of the coming kingdom or the reign of God [Mk 1:15] when the world would be transformed and all powers opposed to God would be subdued [Col 2:15] and the world would become a new creation [Lk 24:49, Rom 8:18f].

Due to apartheid segregation, many Christians were deliberately cut off from each other. The policy of racial separation fostered a false sense of hierarchy between the various races. Out of these false assumptions certain myths, racial stereotypes, attitudes and prejudices grew which became the tough and unyielding sinews of the South African psyche. It has therefore become an important part of the post-apartheid

government's political goal and programme to establish peace, stability and national unity through a process of reconciliation.

This is the link for the Church in South Africa. It is into this scenario that the transforming power of the Christian gospel must be heard. It is into this situation that the Christian understanding of justice and reconciliation unto peace must make sense. The question facing the church at this time is: How does it make the nation enthusiastic about reconciliation ?

For the church to fulfil its task of being reconciler, it must itself be reconciled. This means that it must first acknowledge its own sin and complicity, confess and reorientate itself in the light of the conversion process. I believe that part of its confession must include its failure to recognise and address the specific historic-cultural heritage of the coloured people it sought to serve on the Cape Flats. Because coloured people were not addressed from within their cultural inheritance, they were left to fend for themselves theologically and spiritually. This has led me to my hypothesis; that a disparity exists between the cultural understanding of coloured people on the notion of reconciliation and the traditional theological understanding of it.

How can this difference be explained ?

9.2. THE FAILURE OF THE CHURCH TO INCULTURATE

Contextualisation and Inculturation: vital to the church's mission

Vatican II went further than any Catholic church council in seeing the importance and influence of culture on the human person. It also acknowledged that culture is the vehicle through which God's revelation to the human person is realised. Documents like Lumen Gentium (13,23-26); Gaudium et Spes (58), Evangelii Nuntiandi (20,64), and several papal encyclicals by Pope's Paul VI (Africae Terrarum), and John Paul II (in Shorter 1988:206-237), not only accept the Church's diversity and cultural plurality, but emphasise the need for the Christian gospel to be contextualised and inculturated.

Inculturation is not new to the church, of course. It has been an integral feature of the Christian faith from the very beginning. Bosch reminds us that through the process of inculturation, the church is not merely expanded, but is also being born anew in each new context and culture. By doing so, the church recognises the two main players in the process of inculturation, i.e. the Holy Spirit and the local church, especially the laity. Evangelii Nuntiandi makes this point when it calls for the Christian message to be rethought, reformulated and lived anew in each human culture and this must be done in a vital way, in depth and right to the culture's roots (EN 20, in Bosch 1991:448-457).

9.3. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS A HISTORY OF NON-INCULTURATION

An imposition of the West.

Despite its impressive teaching and conciliar and post-conciliar documentation on culture and inculturation, there has also been, on the one hand, an obvious assumption that western theology was supra cultural and universally valid. On the other hand, heavy emphasis is laid on "the church's cultural patrimony and on monocultural structures of universal communion which appear incompatible with the ideal of a multicultural church" (Shorter 1988:241). This cultural imposition is especially experienced in Africa and other Third World countries.

Western culture was implicitly regarded as Christian and so became part and parcel of the missionary out-reach. Missionary activity came to mean a movement from the civilised to "savages" and from a superior culture to "inferior" cultures, a process in which the latter came to be subdued, if not eradicated (Bosch 1991:448). Missionaries assumed their white, Western middle-class ideals and values were the same as the tenets of Christianity. In the case of catholic missionaries, they by and large "endorsed the principle that a "missionary church" must reflect in every detail the Roman custom of the moment (Bosch 1991:294).

Missionary and church activity in South Africa are intimately linked to

colonialism. As colonialism developed to include racist, discriminatory and separatist attitudes and practices into societal structures, so too was this association internalised within the attitudes and practices of the church. In doing so, foreign missionaries to South Africa went much further than imposing their customs and values.

The Catholic church on the Cape Flats is still to a large extent a foreign mission church with nearly 60% of the clergy being expatriate and white [Catholic Directory 1995].

9.4. THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Apartheid divided the Catholic community

Culture has been the subject of much abuse by the former apartheid South African regime. It has been used to heighten the differences between peoples for the sake of establishing among the various races and traditions a hierarchy of privilege and political domination. Colonialism, then the apartheid regime, exploited and manipulated the cultural diversity and differences between people over a long period of time so that people themselves came to despise their own cultural heritage. By fragmenting the various black communities into different cultural minorities, the apartheid regime could preside over them as a more powerful minority. Further, these cultural minorities were caricatured as primitive and inferior to the dominant white culture which

imposed values on certain things and devalued others.

Psychologically, a sense of self-hate and inferiority developed which was reflected in the way the oppressed, for many years accepted as logical, if not fair, that white people and white culture were superior and that black peoples had to aspire to white standards, values and to approximate white lifestyles.

With this negative and destructive attitude to cultural diversity, people tended generally to develop suspicion and even hatred towards culture. Apartheid ideology turned culture into something backward and ugly, a cause for division and shame. It still remains a very uncomfortable subject in the coloured community where the claim for a distinct cultural heritage is virtually impossible to trace, or when voiced leaves one open to the possibility of ridicule and insult.

Despite being an international church which accepts the inherent equality of all people, the Catholic church in South Africa failed to prevent apartheid's segregationist policies from affecting its own internal attitude and practice.

Partly because of the strong anti-Catholic sentiments and its wanting to avoid confrontation and partly because of its large foreign make-up and its consequences, the Catholic church hardly ever challenged the

apartheid regime head-on. Opposition was always mild and conciliatory. Racist legislation and state intervention affected every aspect of the church's life: Catholic ministry and deployment of clergy, parish boundaries, schooling, membership, welfare activity and social life. Though it consistently criticised the National Party government since 1950 in official statements which re-iterated Catholic doctrine on human dignity and human rights, the Bishops admitted that their teachings were often at variance with the practice within the church, even though the practice of racial segregation was officially not recognised in Catholic churches (Prior 1982:51).

The fact that the church could muster no effective opposition to the state meant that it found itself working around the government's segregationist policies, as opposed to willfully co-operating with it. Nevertheless, despite its noble intentions, in the final analysis, the outcome was the same, the church was forced to comply with the apartheid laws and constructs of the time.

9.5. THE GAP BETWEEN BELIEF AND PRACTICE

Religion as personal, spiritual, of the soul and its consequence.

The understanding of salvation as eschatological and referring primarily to soul-saving, to the hereafter, and to final and eternal salvation rather than to any form of salvation or liberation here on earth, seems to be the

dominant perception of those surveyed.

Although Vatican II also defines salvation as primarily eschatological, it strongly acknowledges a direct relationship between salvation and this world. The church, like Christ, is sent *to* the world and *for* the world. As a Servant church, its option is emphatically for the weak, the poor and the dispossessed (Lumen Gentium:8; Gaudium et Spes:39).The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, one of the foundational conciliar documents on the church, itself indicates the church's historical and social character.

In its criticism of the Church in South Africa, the Kairos Document pointed to the gap which existed between the church's belief and its actions. It declared that the Christian church operated out of a "theology" which protected a position of fence-sitting and fears of involving itself in the struggles and sufferings of people in the townships. The Kairos theologians saw this neutrality as a betrayal of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and of the suffering people because it enabled an oppressive system to continue. The church had built up a spirituality and a theology to protect its inaction. It had a position which divided the church and caused the church to no longer be seen as a sign of hope to those who were oppressed and endured intolerable suffering. That this was done in the name of Christianity was especially repugnant.

The fact that the Kairos Document had to challenge the churches to side with the struggle for liberation in South Africa is a sign of the Christian churches' failure to contextualise and inculturate the Gospel. In doing so, it in turn failed to be itself evangelised, increasing the gap that had in fact developed between the church's belief and its actions.

The failure of the church to inculturate the Gospel to the people on the Cape Flats resulted in coloured people having to make their own response out of their cultural understanding. This cultural understanding of reconciliation proved to be deficient because it was unable to see the social implications of this notion and to link it to nation-building. Finally, the failure of the church to contextualise and inculturate the Gospel also resulted in the creation of the disparity to which I allude in this paper.

9.6. THE NEW KAIROS FOR THE CHURCH ON THE CAPE FLATS:

The Crux of its mission

Central to the church's role as Sacrament of Salvation is its duty to reflect on the social dimension of salvation. Our unity in Christ is at the heart of the salvific message. Salvation, after all, is not simply a private but is also a social reality as indicated by our incorporation into the divine society known as the Trinity. It is precisely this social dimension, i.e. the visible expression of our unity in Christ, that is being threatened by the church's negligence to properly contextualise the gospel and develop the local

church on the Cape Flats.

Secondly, Christianity proclaims our unity in Christ and the elimination of barriers between Jew, Greek, male, female. Therefore, whatever smacks of racism, alienation and dislocation must be condemned as abhorrent, blasphemous and sinful.

Thirdly, the church is meant to be a Sacrament of Unity, a sacrament of our oneness in Christ. The church is therefore challenged to acknowledge cultural diversity within its ranks as a sign of God's splendour. Equally, cultural racism, whether individual or institutional, is to be condemned as both sinful and idolatrous.

9.7. CONCLUSION

9.7.1. Need for a contemporary theological response

In order for the church to offer a meaningful theological response to the situation in the Western Cape, it is important that it attempts to examine the situation of Catholic coloured people and how they understand and live out the basic principles of their faith.

In my understanding there are three factors which influence the understanding and interpretation of reconciliation by coloured people.

Firstly, their place in history; secondly, their current socio-economic status; and thirdly the political policy of Africanism which excludes them.

This, I believe, forms the cultural milieu of Catholic coloured people on the Cape Flats. It is an unconscious frame of reference for them. Even before 1948, coloured people were fighting for an equal place in the country and the recognition of this from other groups. Catholic coloureds do not have an opinion on reconciliation which is different from other coloureds. They are motivated by the same factors.

Theologically Catholic coloureds have a limited understanding of the social implications of reconciliation for the nation. There is a tendency to limit the religious concept/understanding of reconciliation to forgiveness. This has resulted in the perception that the apparent forgiveness of whites by coloured people is superficial, and based on self-interest.

On a cultural level the understanding of reconciliation by coloured people seems to have a deeper and more holistic meaning. Throughout history coloured people have fought for the same thing: to be recognised. This has formed an essential part of their expectations of reconciliation. The coloured struggle has always been for the recognition of human dignity and for the human right to fight for that dignity. The aim of reconciliation for coloured people has therefore been towards liberation. The goal of liberation was the end of all conflict and the resolution of conflict in

harmony, expressed in the mutual respect of human beings for each other. For them reconciliation has its fruits in the restoration of the coloured people. Reconciliation has to do with material liberation and is strongly psycho-cultural rather than being purely religious. They strive for a reconciliation which includes a liberation, a situation and a future. This liberation includes freedom from the negativity and the misrepresentation of coloured people in history. It also includes being situated into the African collage and the economic prosperity of the country. It has a future where coloured existence is recognised. All these things together provide coloured people with an opportunity to participate fully in the development of the country and its people, where they can be recognised as full South Africans, full citizens. Their model of full citizenship has been the white South Africa, and their striving towards the goal of full citizenship has often been misinterpreted as a sign of misidentity, or the aspiration to approximate white, and as being racist towards blacks.

The church's aim of reconciliation, on the other hand, is towards salvation, involving conversion, forgiveness and restitution. Its focus is on the spiritual and moral aspects of reconciliation.

9.7.2. Recommendations:

The way forward to developing an effective response would include:

1. Recognition by the church of the reality of the situation of coloured people. The church (bishops, priests, religious and parishioners) should undergo a social analysis of this situation.

In order to play an effective role in the Western Cape, Catholic church leadership needs to recognise that there is a disparity between its own understanding of the notion of reconciliation and that of the coloured community which it seeks to serve.

This must lead the church to realise that it is vital to the church's ministry in the Western Cape that it recognise and highlight the coloured question as an unavoidable part of its local and national agenda. It has to accept that up to now coloured people were perceived to be an accident of South African history rather than as part of the genesis of the South African identity. Part of the Christian gospel's liberative message must therefore be to assist the coloured community to come to terms with the reality of a changing country and to play their part in the transformation of the South African society after apartheid.

Part of its inculturation programme must begin with the recognition that

coloured people generally have a poorly developed sense of their place in the process of history. Without this memory, coloured people will always remain subjects, as opposed to being agents of history. The process of conscientising coloured people and helping them gain a sense of their self-worth is central to the Christs' message to this generation. Indeed it is an expression of Christian love and an imitation of Christ who totally identified with the suffering poor.

The Rev Michael Weeder is not necessarily addressing the church when he makes the following practical suggestions, but it certainly is well within the scope of the church to participate in the movement he envisages. He calls for the establishment of centres of memory and healing, places of history, where people would be exposed to and imbue a sense of pride in themselves and their community. He sees this movement as one which embraces all stake-holders in the community which would have a research and lobbying capacity and where documents, both written and oral traditions would relate evidence of the coloured struggle. He sees it also as possessing the ability to reassess and inform government policy in relation to the Western Cape on matters which directly affect coloured people, for example, affirmative action. He further suggests that it could develop contact with people in similar positions around the world.

Sponsoring and participating in movements such as mentioned above

might lead to the church's own evangelisation and development of its charism in the Western Cape. But above all, it would enable the church to be better placed to understand the cultural dimension from which coloured people obtain their meaning.

In the light of this, the crux of church's mission in the Western Cape must involve overcoming the trauma of the apartheid past, developing a sense of its own history and culture and assisting coloured people in finding its location in the African collage.

2. The church acknowledging that coloured people are not a homogenous group though they do share common experiences.

The church has to note that its own definition and perspective of coloured people is problematic, and that this understanding is still apartheid related. The Church has simply adopted the apartheid notion of coloured people and in so doing the church is perceived as one of the forces controlling coloured identity.

Because the church works out of the framework that coloured people are a homogeneous group and that its problems are consequently no different to that of any other group in the country, it again fails to recognise coloured people and fails to truly listen, learn and allow itself to be evangelised by its largest constituency on the Cape Flats, i.e. the coloured people.

3. The indigenisation and contextualisation of the local church at every level: theology, catechesis, liturgy and sacraments, ministry, training and placement of personnel.

Despite clear and helpful official documents from Vatican II [Lumen Gentium, Gaudium et Spes, Ad Gentes] and post-conciliar writings [Evangelii Nuntiandi], Catholic church personnel on the Cape Flats are still largely white in number and outlook. It remains very much a foreign missionary church. Indigenous clergy make up less than 30% of the priest population - of which there are still only 9 coloured parish priests.

4. The emphasis on the universality and unity of the church in South Africa also militates against a genuine expression of the charism of the local church on the Cape Flats. Lumen Gentium 26 states that the church finds its true existence in the local churches, that these, and not the universal church, are the pristine expression of church. It recognises that this was the primary understanding of the church in the New Testament and also the way in which, during the early centuries of our era, the church was perceived. This understanding of local church does not deny the essential relatedness between the universal church and local church.[Bosch 1991:380].

This would include, on a practical level the following:

The empowerment of local church personnel and leaders at all levels of the hierarchical church. The active involvement as church in nation-building.

Guiding its members to an understanding and praxis of reconciliation within the context of the need for healing and building community in the country and region.

Need to show coloured people the limitation of their understanding and definition.

Need to show the local church the importance of the cultural understanding of reconciliation for salvation.

All of which links up with what Vatican II says about salvation and inculturation.

9.7.3. REVISITING MY HYPOTHESIS:

My understanding of coloured identity as it relates to the notion of reconciliation.

What sets coloured people apart from other population/ethnic groups in South Africa and forms the bonds of identity, is the common historical experience they share. It is a history and an experience of slavery which

no other ethnic group in South Africa shares, "a path uniquely ours" [Weeder, Cape Times October 1996]. It is an experience which unites and identifies coloured people and gives them their unique character and personality as coloured Africans. It is a struggle which ties them to an original struggle which stretches back to before the policy of apartheid and National Party rule, to the desire to be equally part of the whole of South Africa and recognised in their own right as being very much part of South Africa.

If Christian reconciliation means the process of bringing all creation into the harmony of God's plan, then the common historical struggle, so deep in the human spirit of the coloured people, must be related to this divine transformation. This desire for cultural reconciliation as explained above, however, exists in the pre-consciousness or sub-conscious of coloured people. That is, they are not necessarily aware of this drive or desire motivating them. However, because it does exist and seeks realisation, it might seek expression in a variety of ways. Examples of how it reveals itself in coloured communities include: struggles for a share in the material resources of the land, ethnic chauvinism, approximation of white people and their values, and racism. This desire for reconciliation, it seems to me, resides deep in the psyche of the coloured people and seeks salvation from historical alienation and dislocation.

However, on another level to the above mentioned , coloured people

seem to operate out of the same general theological notion of reconciliation as espoused by Catholic church leadership in South Africa. That is, coloured people seem to operate out of two levels of understanding all the time. One seems to coincide with that of the church's understanding, and the other seems to relate to a deeper need from within.

During the long struggle for liberation, coloured identification with the church and its teachings became a matter of survival. Associating with a successful identity such as the church was something worth aspiring towards when one's own identity was being denied. Nevertheless, this church identification, though necessary, was a temporary one. With the end of apartheid, the need for coloured people to assert and express the deeper dimension of their identity and their desire to be equally part of the South African whole has become crucial.

My research has shown that on another level there seems to be no real difference in the coloured people's understanding of the notion of reconciliation and the church's teaching of this notion to people living in the townships. People seem to have adopted the same sacramental understanding of reconciliation as that of the church. That is, it operates out of what the Kairos Document called a pietistic, or other-worldly understanding of reconciliation. In this way it reduces reconciliation to mean being in the right disposition to receive the Sacrament in general

and the Eucharist in particular. This in turn demands that one be at peace with one's family, friends and neighbours. On the surface of things, coloured people also operate on this level especially in relation to the church.

Another interesting fact which emerged from my research was what seemed to a disparity which exists within the theological stance of church itself. In the context of the struggle for social change, which included the fights against structural injustice and racism, the church's amorphous definition failed to inspire and challenge Christians appropriately. The church failed to speak in a relevant way about the socio-political implication of the notion of reconciliation and of the need to work for social change in the country. The church adopted this stance in spite of the widely known and supported theologies of liberation which emerged from the Latin American Catholic churches, from Vatican II and post-Conciliar presentation of the church's new self-understanding and strong support for inculturation of the Christian gospel.

My hypothesis: that a disparity exists between the traditional theological teaching of the church on the notion of reconciliation and the cultural understanding of it by coloured people living on the Cape Flats, is proven. My research shows that a disparity does indeed exist and that coloured people do in fact work out of a cultural understanding of reconciliation to which the church at this stage is not relating. Moreover,

it seems to me that a further disparity exists between the local hierarchical Catholic church and official Catholic church policy and teaching as espoused by Vatican II and contemporary Catholic thinking on the question of the role of the church in society and on matters of inculturation. Besides its failure to interpret and apply official Catholic policy, it seems that the local hierarchical church also failed to heed the theological criticism of the notion of reconciliation by prophetic leaders both within its own ranks, and outside the Catholic church circles during the struggle. This discrepancy remain to this day.

It seems that they are still not on the agenda of the local hierarchical church or the Archdiocesan pastoral council. The local church leadership continues to see things in black and white, largely ignoring the specific psycho-cultural needs of its biggest church constituency, the coloured people. It is in this sense that I speak of the church as being one of the forces still controlling coloured identity. Conversely, by engaging in a thorough social and historical analysis, by listening to the stories of the coloured people's long struggle to be part of South Africa and by working together to properly inculturate the gospel, would not only lead to the church having a stronger sense of its own mission here on the Cape Flats, but will also assist coloured people in what they long for most: an end to the alienation and dislocation from their historical and political heritage. Herein, I believe, lies the seeds of genuine reconciliation for the coloured people.

APPENDICES

A. RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

What am I wanting to research?

What understanding of reconciliation coloured people work out of and how this relates to coloured identity.

What are my hunches:

- that political recognition of the coloured people in the new South Africa is linked in some way to their perception of the notion of reconciliation.
- that there is a discrepancy between the cultural understanding of reconciliation by the coloured people and the traditional / prophetic theological understanding of it by the church. That is, that something bigger than the tradition of Catholicism operates here, something called survival.
- that because the church unconsciously controls coloured identity by its failure to acknowledge the movement within the coloured community towards self-assertion within the context of a united South Africa.

- that prejudice is a necessary part of my research. Prejudice opposes any attempt at genuine forgiveness, tolerance and is an obstacle to nation-building and reconciliation.
- that the traditional definition of reconciliation which implies the redressing of imbalances, the bridging over of alienations [Macquarrie 1970:246], the movement from fracturedness to wholeness, etc. includes Salvation/reward and forgiveness,
- that in addition to the traditional understanding, I hypothesise that psycho-cultural identity is also part of the concept reconciliation.

DEFINITIONS:

Racial prejudice:

Ethnic prejudice is an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalisation. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed towards a group as a whole, or towards an individual because he is a member of that group [Gordon W Allport 1958:10].

Forgiveness:

To forgive is to pardon an offence or an obstacle which fractures a friendship between persons. It is an important stage prior to reconciliation.

The important role of the Church:

The churches are of key importance not only because of their prophetic role at a national level, but perhaps more importantly because of their potential to create participatory communities at grass-roots. ...What is more important now is to focus on the role of the churches in enabling the process of democratic transition to move forward towards democratic transformation.[De Gruchy 1995:220-221]

Identity:

My identity is reflected to me by others. It is how I perceive myself from significant others. Being recognised and affirmed by others, I in turn receive my self worth.

Tolerance:

A willingness to put up with political opponents and to extend to them significant political rights such as association, protest, participation and speech.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Marital status:
married divorced widowed single

2. Age group:
18-24 25-35 36-45 46-56 57 plus

3. Gender:
male female

4. Mass attendance:
every Sunday once per month twice p.m.
less than once a month

5. Household income:
one income two incomes more than two incomes
no steady income

6. Work Status:
employed full-time employed part-time unemployed student
housewife retired

7. Level of education?

THE THEORY OF RECONCILIATION AND ITS APPLICATION

"It was God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the work of handing on this reconciliation... [2 Cor.5:18f; Mt 5:9].

8.. According to the Bible Christians are obliged to exercise a ministry of peace and reconciliation at all times.

How do you understand this?

9. Do you think that reconciliation is something simply spiritual and personal or does it also have social implications?

Please explain what you mean?

10. What is your opinion of those who claim that forgiveness and reconciliation without justice is impossible? How do you understand the importance of justice in this regard?

11. How do you actually see reconciliation: is it a sign of weakness; is it about giving up an opinion; or is it genuinely a sign of greatness. Please explain what you actually believe?

The Bible commands Christians to "forgive seventy times seven" [Mt 18:21-22].

12. Whom do you find it easier to forgive: your husband / wife who hurts you; your boss; a stranger from another race group?
13. Do you have a personal experience of forgiving someone from another race group? Would you please explain what happened, mentioning the race group.
14. Do you have a personal experience of being forgiven by a person of another race group? Would you please tell me what happened?

RACIAL PREJUDICE

The Bible says "God, created human beings in the likeness of God, in the image of God the human person was created, male and female, God created them" [Gen. 1:26].

15. Do you really think that everybody is equal? Explain what you mean?
16. Is there any particular race group that you get on with better than others? Why is this so?
17. Would you start a business together with someone from another race group? Justify this to me.

18. If you were able to rent out a room or separate entrance, would you object to renting it out to certain race groups? Which one would you give preference to?

COLOURED IDENTITY

19. Do coloured people have problems which are unique and different to other population groups in South Africa? Why?
20. Do coloured people feel that they are being overlooked and not being taken seriously enough by government and political parties in general? Can you explain this?
21. How do you think the national elections of 1994 affected coloured people's image of themselves? Please explain.
22. Do you think coloured people are making a genuine effort towards reconciliation and nation-building in our country? How ?
23. Do you think coloured people reject the term African as including them? Why do you think this is so?
24. Do you think people on the Cape Flats would be better off forming a separate state / province, with its own land, language and government?

What is your thinking on this?

25. Would you belong to a coloured party if there were one?

Why / why not?

26. Are you comfortable being labelled "coloured"?

Would you prefer to be called Black / African?

27. Do you think anything significant has happened to the identity of coloured people since the political changes in our country?

Could you justify this for me please?

28. Why do you think people on the Cape Flats voted for the National Party rather than the ANC?

29. Do you think coloured people think more positively of themselves now than before? What do you think is the reason for this?

30. How do you explain coloured people's willingness to overlook the political past? Does it really coincide with the church's teaching on the need for conversion, confession and justice as the most important elements in any genuine attempt at reconciliation, or was there another reason for "forgetting the political past"?

31. For which of the following reasons do you think the term Black and African is rejected by coloured people as including themselves: because the term connotes inferiority; because it is racist; because coloured people have a completely different identity?

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

32. Has the church done enough to teach us about reconciliation and about how it applied to the apartheid situation? What should it have emphasised?
33. Is it important to you that the Catholic Church preaches about the nation's need for forgiveness and reconciliation? Why is this so?
34. Do you think there is a difference between the church's preaching on reconciliation and people's actual interpretation of this on the Cape Flats?

GENERAL

35. Is there any other comment on reconciliation which you would like to make?

B. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION (Tables 1[a],1[b],1[c])

Questions Nos. 1-7

MARITAL STATUS, AGE, GENDER, MASS ATTENDANCE, HOUSEHOLD
INCOME, WORK STATUS, LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Table 1[a]

MARITAL STATUS				
Married	Divorced	Widowed	Single	
22	-	6	4	
68.7%	-	18.7%	12.5%	
AGE				
18-24	25-35	36-45	46-56	57+
1	8	6	5	12
3.1%	25%	18.7%	16%	37.5%
GENDER				
Female		Male		
17		15		
53%		47%		

Table 1[b]

MASS ATTENDANCE		HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
Weekly	Once Per Month	One Income	Two Incomes	More Than Two Incomes	No Steady Income
30	2	10	14	3	5
93.7%	6.2%	31.2%	43.7%	9%	16%
WORK STATUS					
Full-Time Emp.	Part-Time Emp.	Unemp.	Student	H/wife	Retired
18	6	2	2	2	2
56.2%	19%	6.2%	6.2%	6.2%	6.2%

Table 1[c]

LEVEL OF EDUCATION			
Up to Std 5	Std 6 to Std 10	Tertiary Study	Other
5	14	13	
16%	44%	40%	

- * 40% of respondents have tertiary education which reveals a higher than average level of education for this population group. Further, more than 80% have attained a senior secondary school level of education.

* The research data shows that the sample is fairly representative of all age groups between 25-57+, and therefore representative of the Catholic community.

The fact that 3% of the responses come from the 18-24 age-group could well indicate the general level of participation of this age group on Catholic Parish Councils and leadership positions.

C.

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