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# A NEW LEADERSHIP FOR A NEW ECCLESIOLOGY

## ABSTRACT

While many berate the poor level of leadership in the Church, it is noticeable that the same complaint is made about leadership in the corporate world. It is the authors' contention that the new ecclesiology that has been spoken and written about during the past decades cannot be implemented until there is a change in the understanding and practice of Church leadership. Much could be learned from the changes taking place in corporate management. This paper considers a number of leadership models developed over recent years and shows how these could bring renewal to the Christian Church if applied in ecclesial circles.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is over forty years since the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), whose 16 documents contained seeds of a new way of being Church. From seeing the Church as a hierarchical power structure, the overall model became that of a sacrament of Jesus Christ on a mission in the world (Kasper 1989:112). This predominantly organic model of the Church requires a changed leadership style. Sporadic efforts have been made in various parts of the world to implement this mission-oriented ecclesiology, but on the whole, it does not exist. We wish to view a number of leadership studies from the corporate world to see if the world of commerce and industry can contribute to the Church, for we will never have a renewed sacramental, mission-oriented ecclesiology until we implement a new kind of leadership whose seeds we discover in the Vatican II documents.

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## 2. WHERE IS LEADERSHIP TODAY?

Many recognise that there is a lack of leadership in the churches at a number of levels. Although the terms “leaders” and “leadership” are commonly used, in most cases they refer to what Burns calls “executive leadership” that is based on bureaucracy (see below). Hornsby-Smith (1989:190) offers many examples of how many pastors have used coercive forms of what he calls “veto-power” to suppress the intrusion and dissemination of views. In our experience, it is rare to come across a church leader who has a clear vision for the ecclesiastical region under his/her authority. It seems obvious to some (for example Burns 1978:460) that the least a leader should do is work on immediate, short-term and easily definable goals. Reflection on these can lead to intermediate and long-term planning. These are presumed steps for those institutions — both companies and churches — that are well organised, efficient and successful.

Among some efforts in this direction, a particularly effective contribution is being made ecumenically within the Southern African church by the professional services of *Community Consulting Services* and *Sophia Consulting Services*, both of which are run by Dominican Sisters from Johannesburg. The South African-based Lumko Institute has been perhaps the best example of an organisation that has a clear vision of a community church-in-mission at parochial level. It has produced publications that offer a participatory methodology to bring this vision about. It has been pointed out in detail elsewhere (Prior 1993) how many church leaders use the publications of this institute to motivate laity to shoulder more parish activities without, however, changing their own style of leadership.

Poor quality of leadership is not confined to the Church (see, for example, Coleman 1992:241). Despite the progress being made by many companies and a plethora of books written on the subject of leadership, the majority of businesses still seem to suffer from a lack of good leadership. Many writers on leadership theory bemoan the fact that there is such a dearth of leadership in the business world. Burns writes of a craving for compelling and creative leadership and believes that the leadership crisis today comes from “mediocrity or lack of responsibility of so many of the men and women in power” (Burns 1978:1). The call for good leadership, he says, “is one of the keynotes of our time” (1978:451). Others see the problem in the followers who are looking for a parental figure to call all the shots (Gardner 1990:xi-xiii). One of the major assertions of Greenleaf’s theory is that society suffers from a widespread alienation because of so many low-serving institutions. He believes that churches have failed to fulfil their crucial role in societal and institutional renewal (Greenleaf 1996:179). Jaworski believes that the static, hierarchical model of leadership is stultifying unused potential. In order to harness this wasted and hidden talent, a new “open, flexible and participatory kind of leadership is necessary” (Jaworski 1996:6-3.65).

### 3. STUDIES ON LEADERSHIP

A vast amount of material has been published on leaders and leadership over the past fifty years. Bass, who studied Stogdill's work (1974), analysed 4,725 works in his 1981 study (quoted by Rost 1991:4). Rost studied a further 550 books, chapters and journal articles from the 1980s (1991:9). Publications in this field seem to be appearing at an ever-accelerating rate. Unfortunately, much of this material is full of platitudes and is often centred on an endless list of qualities required by leaders. Not only is this expecting the impossible if the question is asked if all leaders must possess all these dozens of qualities, but such lists also beg the question as to whether a leader should be the only one "in leadership". Is everyone else merely a passive follower?

Another problem with many of these studies is that they do not have a careful definition of leader and leadership from which they work out their theory. Shaw (1981) describes how everyone knows what a leader is until one is asked for a definition. He then offers five definitions himself, beginning with a person "who leads the group toward its goals" and ending with "a person who engages in leadership behaviours" (Shaw 1981:318). While the latter is too vague to be useful, the former is a limitation of what is regarded by many as the three areas of group influence: goals, relationships and personal fulfilment. [See, for example, Benson 1987:63-73, D'Souza 1989:69-71 and Parker nd:17-18.]

A further difficulty arises from confusion over the terms *leader* and *manager*. Many authors use the words leader and manager interchangeably. For example, the Browns (Brown & Brown 1994:13), in an otherwise excellent study of empowerment in organisations, speak of managers, empowered persons and leadership without defining any of these terms. Bridges (1995:7) deals only with managers, though their task is not only to manage transitions in an organisation but also to exercise leadership. Other authors also use the term manager only, although they are describing what many would call leaders (for example Stewart 1994; Henry 1991; and Weaver & Farrell 1997). It will be important to define terms, particularly as we are concerned with leadership and its effect on the missionary nature of the church at congregational level. We will need to know who can be called a leader and how that leadership can be exercised to lead a community into a mission.

### 4. TRENDS IN LEADERSHIP THEORY

We shall now describe what we regard as the main themes that need discussing under the title "leadership", including comments on the influence these could have on a congregation attempting to become a church-in-mission. We shall then conclude with a summary description of leadership. While

developing this, we shall keep in mind the overall purpose, which is to seek for a leadership style that could be implemented appropriately by a local church that is focused on a missionary ecclesiology.

#### 4.1 Visionary and charismatic leadership

One group of theorists emphasises the necessity for a leader to offer vision to one's followers. Robert Greenleaf stands out as a unique and inspiring scholar and practitioner in this area of leadership (Rost 1991:35). Greenleaf does not have a tight definition of leadership because he works from a visionary stance through which he sees the world becoming a better place. He believes that leadership has a spiritual dimension, for to lead is

to go out *ahead to show the way*.<sup>1</sup> To me, *lead* stands in sharp contrast to *guide, direct, manage* or *administer* because these words imply either *maintenance* or *coercion* or *manipulation*. As I use the word *lead* it involves creative venture and risk (Greenleaf 1996:54).

The religious leader brings a value dimension to his/her leadership. For this reason, Greenleaf sees the vital role that the church could play. Religious leaders need to nurture this spirituality in others and act as role models. Religious leading is a new frontier (Greenleaf 1995:55; 1996:36.55) and thus has a missionary dimension. It is the essential factor by which a more caring society can be developed.

Greenleaf's vision lifts his leadership theory out of a primary concern for the success of an institution and its financial profit and puts people first.

If a better society is to be built, one more just and more loving and providing opportunity for people to grow, the most open way is to raise the performance as servant of as many institutions as possible by voluntary regenerative actions initiated within them by committed individuals: servants (Greenleaf 1998:179).

This concern for the welfare of others echoes Scripture. In the letter to the Philippians, we read Paul's appeal to Christians to give preference to others (Phil 2:3). It is the essence of the Church as the people of God where everyone should feel at home in the parish. The very purpose of the charisms given to the baptised is that they be used for others. Greenleaf's theory, which he summarises as servant leadership, parallels the renewed mission ecclesiology of Vatican II and needs to be present as a motivating force in every parish that strives to become a church-in-mission.

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1 All words in italics in quotations are those of the original author.

## 4.2 Executive leadership

Many regard James MacGregor Burns as the father of contemporary thinking on leadership, and all serious writers in this genre refer to him (see Couto 2007). One of Burns' original contributions was to distinguish between transactional and transforming leadership. The former he regards as the most common; the latter he would like to see in all institutions. Before investigating these, though, there is another authority style that he describes as institutional leadership (or bureaucratic leadership, according to Owens 1991:125), although he is reluctant to grace it with the title "leadership" because it is based on bureaucratic behaviour that is antithetical to leadership (Burns 1978:296). These three styles of leadership form a continuum: executive — transactional — transforming.

"At the root of bureaucracy lies some kind of struggle for power and prestige" (Burns 1978:299). This kind of behaviour acts on its own and not in service of others. It works within a world of procedures, rules and givens that must be unquestionably accepted by the followers. It holds to a society of superiors and subordinates, the former holding power over the latter in virtue of their position in the system. Instead of helping people stretch towards their potential, it consciously or otherwise preserves the status quo and keeps people in conformity. It is an institution braced against change (Burns 1978:295-300). Executive leaders often lack the support of their followers because they have been appointed or imposed. They possess a bureaucratic authority by which they may demand compliance from their followers. The latter, meanwhile, often possess a predisposition to obey rather than make use of a conscious decision (Burns 1978:371-373). As Burns develops his transactional and transforming styles of leadership, it becomes clear why he will not allow bureaucracy or executive leadership to be included. It is included here, though, because it does exist in church circles and in the corporate world and is, indeed, described as Jesus' model for the Catholic Church in which inspiration and strategic guidance always seem to come from above. This is defended in Catholic systematic theology, for example by Kasper who writes that "the episcopal office has had a pre-eminent place from earliest times, and that the bishops *share their ministry* with priests and deacons" (Kasper 2003:134; italics added). It is a "trickle-down" theology of leadership (power) — and note that the laity does not get a look in!

## 4.3 Transactional Leadership

For Burns, transactional leadership is what happens in the market place: "Leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another: jobs for votes, subsidies for campaign contributions" (1978:4). It is where quick agreements are made and solutions found to please those who support you as leader. The agreements are marked by reciprocity (both leader and

followers get something out of it) and flexibility (what we agree to today may not suit us tomorrow). Relationships are characterised by volatility, and this requires continuing adaptability (1978:258). "Transactional leaders will, as much as possible, offer their followers what they want in exchange for support, cooperation and compliance" (Owens 1991:126). Followers can be categorised as attentive, semi-active and latent (Burns 1978:263-264).

This theory of Burns has implications for the Church. The semi-active and latent do not present much challenge to leaders. However, the parish pastor may enter into transactional agreements with the attentive, for they, too, have their own agenda. Congregants may be willing to settle for what they want, or at least part of what they want, provided they leave their pastor to get on with what he/she wants. This leaves the pastor in charge, with no challenge to the system, and most of those who know what they want are satisfied with the compromise. In reality such pastors are satisfied with the status quo and do not want any lay person rocking the comfortable boat of which they are in charge. Their power status is preserved; meanwhile, they offer the services usually acceptable in a parish: regular services of the Eucharist, celebration of the sacraments, the general care of those in need, etc. Burns (1978:265) makes it clear that this is not a simplistic arrangement whereby one remains in charge and the rest are passive followers. The attentive members of the parish have taken a leadership role in making their own demands, and in that sense, the pastor has become an active follower to them. Leadership is shared to a certain extent and it is based on a transaction between the various members of the parish, the authoritative leader and followers.

This system gives rise to much conflict, as the parties concerned are all keen to see that their own constituency is satisfied. How this is solved will depend on the skills of the leader and how much he/she is willing to give in order to satisfy the demands being made. Greenleaf regards conflict as necessary for growth. Sometimes the leader might even see his/her role as one of sowing confusion and thus creating a challenge that could open the members to change. "Struggle is of the very essence; it is life-giving" (Greenleaf 1977:233). Confusion can also arise when the institution has not yet caught up with the leader's personal vision. Greenleaf cites Pope John XXIII as an example of this. His personality shone through the stultifying structures of an ancient institution, and the resultant "lift of spirit" affected large numbers throughout the world. Pope John's positive reassurance of so much good in the world enlarged and liberated the human spirit. Yet, he had to wait a long time, until he was seventy-seven, for his opportunity. "And with his spirit, vision and astute leadership, he lifted the spirits of many millions and left an irreversible imprint on the Catholic Church" (Greenleaf 1977:234-237; 1996:143, 158).

Crucial to transactional leadership are goals. The task of leadership is to enter into agreements that will satisfy the goals wanted, whether these are shared or not with one's constituents.

The object is not a joint effort for persons with common aims acting for the collective interests of followers, but a bargain to aid the individual interests of persons or groups going their separate ways (Burns 1978:425).

This does not rule out any ethical considerations. On the contrary, transactional leadership would not work unless it was based on "honesty, responsibility, fairness and the honouring of commitments" (1978:426). The examples given above point to the insufficiency of such a leadership style for a contemporary church situation. While it may be the only way politicians can try to satisfy as many constituents as possible, it does not reflect the servant attitude that we find in Jesus' teaching and practising in the gospels. Nor can it be an effective means by which to bring about a church-in-mission, in which all — both pastor and parishioners — are moved by a commonly held belief in the Gospels to serve each other and the world about them.

#### 4.4 Transforming Leadership

Burns regards his model of transforming leadership as true leadership. He says, "Leaders can shape and alter and elevate the motives and values and goals of followers through the vital *teaching* role of leadership. This is 'transforming leadership'" (Burns 1978:425). This kind of leader is working at a higher level, not only concerned with settling agreements with followers, but also lifting them to a higher consciousness of themselves and a deeper commitment to the world about them. The transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents (1978:4).

Burns is dealing here with values, not mere strategy. It is not a matter of keeping as many people as possible satisfied, but of consciously working for fundamental human values. The leader takes a moral stand and urges the followers to rise to it.

Burns makes an important distinction between wants and needs. Wants are subjective, he says; they are "direct, conscious, internal, physiological and to a degree indiscriminating" (Burns 1978:64). This helps us see why it is that the pastor has to be on guard lest parishioners seek to satisfy their wants by making use of a structure, for example a parish group, to obtain their own objectives, although that structure was originally set up because of the needs

of others. Needs are more fundamental; they are concerned with what is humanly important for oneself, as well as for others. They come not only from within the person but from one's environmental situation. Thus, while persons may want to be comforted, to be served and to be given, their deeper needs are for acceptance (including self-acceptance), community and to be at the service of others. Leadership is at work where people's wants are being transformed into needs (Burns 1978:68).

In the parish, this means the pastor does not do all he can to satisfy whatever people say they want (transactional leadership), but helps parishioners to recognise the deeper human needs of themselves and others. Thus, they may be led to see the need for their own further formation, the need for basic human services of those in informal settlements, the need for a holistic AIDS policy, the need to educate men about the dignity of women, and so on. The leader is dealing with human values that

indicate desirable or preferred end-states or collective goals or explicit purposes. Values are standards in terms of which specific criteria may be established and choices made among alternatives (Burns 1978:74).

There is an ethical core to the task of leadership. Leaders work to "lift" their followers from their present wants to deeper human needs, or values. To be a leader is to be a moral person. It is to "move followers up through the levels of need and the stages of moral development" (Burns 1978:428). Burns longs to see a new kind of leader who will infuse followers with enlightened motivations, purpose and missionary spirit (Burns 1978:437). In turn, the followers, acting on "raised consciousness", will arouse motivation for growth within others. Later, Burns (2003) admitted that the connection between transactional and transformative leadership is stronger than he had led readers to believe. The majority of leaders, says Burns, "work on both sides of that spectrum and combine" the two forms in practice (2007:viii).

#### 4.5 Leadership in a Post-Industrial Paradigm

Rost (1991) presents his own theory, which he claims is needed for a post-industrial paradigm for the twenty-first century. Acknowledging his debt to MacGregor Burns, he still regards his mentor's study of leadership as insufficient for the contemporary age. Rost's own definition is that "leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (1991:102).

There are four main elements in this definition, and all must be present for a relationship to be called leadership.



First, the leadership relationship is multi-directional in that anyone can lead and follow. As well as the leaders, followers influence both leaders and fellow followers. Leaders and followers may change places in the relationship. If “influence” makes the relationship work, then it is leadership. All influence is non-coercive, so if there is any use of power, authority or coercion (all of which are condemned because they make use of force) leadership is not present (Rost 1991:105-107).

Second, the practice of managers directing submissive, passive subordinates is something of the past. In the post-industrial paradigm, anyone can be leader or follower. As we live in multiple relationships today, a person will be a leader in some systems and a follower in others. Even in one relationship, leaders and followers can exchange positions. All followers are active, even if not fully so all the time, and this means that followers and leaders together practise leadership. They “develop a relationship wherein they influence one another as well as the organisation and society. This is leadership” (Rost 1991:108). Rather than thinking of one leader with numerous followers, Rost would have us think of leadership as a “communal relationship” or a “community of believers” (1991:111). Later, he was to exchange the word “followers” for “collaborators” because, he says, “the concept fits the language and values of the post-industrial paradigm” (Rost 1993:109).

Third, we see in Rost’s theory the interchangeability of leadership and followership. Greenleaf had already opened the way for such an understanding of mutuality. Admitting his indebtedness to group dynamics theory (Greenleaf 1996:96-97), he lists the many roles of leaders. However, how can a single leader fulfil so many roles? Greenleaf responds by distinguishing between leadership and the leader. The many roles of leadership are necessary and equal in importance. These roles are taken by anyone who can fulfil them appropriately (1996:98). All the members share in the leadership of the group, each in his/her own way. This is why the appointed / elected chairperson or chief may be merely a titular head. This is a necessary role but, “if all the other roles are well cared for, the titular head may be a quite nominal role”. It is a situation in which “all lead and all follow” (Greenleaf 1996:97-98).

Fourthly, this distinction between leadership and the leader opens the way for all members of a group, institution or church to be actively involved in its life. In their distributed-actions theory of leadership, the Johnsons come to the same conclusion from the task-maintenance perspective. They define leadership as “the performance of acts that help the group to complete its task and to maintain effective working relationships among its members” (Johnson & Johnson, 1987:55). Any member of the group who performs such an act shares in the leadership of the group at that moment.

Burns, too, sees a distinction between leaders and leadership. The latter is shared with followers who influence the leaders by their response to their leaders' stimulation. The leaders, in turn, modify their behaviour so that there is "a ceaseless process of flow and counter-flow" (Burns 1978:440). The idea of a leader being apart from and above the followers must be de-mystified. On the contrary, a real test of good leadership is "if top leaders can make their followers into leaders" (1978:442).

## 5. COMMUNITY BUILDING AND TEAMWORK

If community is so high on the agenda for leaders, it is necessary that in the Church they work with their pastoral assistants in teams. Working together is a key element in institutional renewal. Greenleaf sees this issue as "the overshadowing challenge of our times". Churches and schools, in particular, need to work at the full participation of all their members in all their roles. Working together is not merely a strategy for the transformation of an institution. It is necessary for the fulfilment of the individual's human potential (Greenleaf 1977:238-239). The power of a team is that it "wields a growth-building influence on its members". It is a circular process in which "the person builds the team and the team builds the person" (Greenleaf 1996:90). The inhibiting condition that keeps people from working together and thus building each other up needs to be seen as an illness. The servant-leader, then, will never work alone. He/she does not feel threatened by the contributions and challenges of other members, but rather invites them. The group or team comes first, and the leader is a servant of that entity, just as the Church comes first and the team is the servant of all its members (see Greenleaf 1996:91-92).

Directly connected to the issue of teamwork is the method by which members come to decisions. Learning from his experience as a Quaker, Greenleaf firmly believes in consensus, which requires "a critical quality of faith" in each other. Although it often requires "painstaking effort and patient waiting", the process is worthwhile (Greenleaf 1996:77, 85). Here, Greenleaf is highlighting a principle that could make far-reaching changes in a congregation if it were to be put into practice. One could envisage a parish being led by a pastoral team whose members all share in leadership in their individual ways. In such a team, consensus is the only meaningful method of decision making, else the members work out of an executive or transactional model.

While consensus decision making can be time consuming, it does reflect the equality of the team's members and the seriousness by which each is expected to contribute to the team and the parish at large. Consensus requires maturity on the part of all, as each has to be listened to and every opinion needs to be weighed before a final decision is made. For this reason, forming

a pastoral team is not to be seen as merely bringing a group of well-meaning parishioners together, but must include a programme of personal formation and a deepening of the members' prayer life. In this way, a team can fulfil its double purpose of creating a community among themselves by making decisions of value and leading the parish as a whole in its missionary calling as a community serving the world.

The consequences of Greenleaf's enabling type of leadership, Rost's interchangeability of leadership and followership and Burns' flow and counter-flow between group members, is found in the growth potential of the group members. The following is a test for a leader:

Do those served grow as persons; do they, *while being served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more likely themselves to become servants? And what is the effect on the least privileged of society; will he or she benefit, or at least not be further deprived? (Greenleaf 1996:121-122).

This stirring challenge to pastoral leaders could lead to a changed face for the Church in which the appointed pastor would have as his/her main focus the enabling of other follower-leaders. Together, they would form a pastoral team stretching their energies ever outwards to touch others and empower them. No one is called to become a mere passive follower, but is invited to participate in parish life, perhaps first as a learner, and soon as a participant in a community life of mutual support and missionary outreach. These "new" leadership ideas, stretching from the late 1970s until the present time, and at the same time scientifically presented by leadership theorists, offer a vision and a practical possibility of how to bring to full growth the seeds of a new ecclesiology found in the documents of Vatican II and thus turn church parishes into missionary communities, sacraments of the Living Christ.

## 6. LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE

In churches in which authority in the pyramidal style is so heavily stressed, and where parochial leaders are usually appointed from outside the community, the emphasis on leadership being close to the ground could sound astonishing as well as challenging. The Johnsons (Johnson & Johnson 1987:49) have pointed out that leaders not only need followers, but that followers have influence over them. One of Burn's insights was to bring the roles of leaders and followers together conceptually (Burns 1978:4). He says, "Leadership is inseparable from followers' needs and goals" (1978:19). In fact, their needs can turn into demands, and here they have become leaders themselves (Burns 2007:vii). D'Souza (1989:30) believes the needs of the group determine who to have as leader, and so "new situations change the requirements of leadership". For the Browns (Brown & Brown 1994:115), the essence of a liberated organisation is empowering as many

people as possible so that they can become self-directed and committed. While considering the organisation from the leader's perspective, this opinion confirms the view that leaders are for the others and not for themselves.

The contribution by Ruth is important here, for his emphasis is on the psychological growth of the leader. Maturing as an individual, the leader achieves personal liberation, which in turn can be passed on to others. In this model of

liberation leadership, we move from an image of leadership as a hierarchical pyramid with the leader on the top deciding everything to something more like an inverted pyramid where the leaders are underneath supporting their collaborators to achieve their ends (Ruth 2006:17).

Coming from what she regards as a scientific background, Wheatley would agree with the efforts of Ruth, but totally denies the accent on psychological growth. She says she is not concerned about questions of leadership, but only

about issues of how people are effective, how people can be supported to be effective, and how they come together to be supported together. This is my particular bias. So, I do not want to know about psyche (Wheatley 2007:105-106; see also Kellerman 2007:12).

Greenleaf's sociological angle on leadership as service is paralleled theologically by the concept of equality among the members of the people of God. There is a fundamental equality between all the baptised (Rost 1991:145-146). The Church is the people of God which builds itself up through the indispensable role and responsibility of every member in the body of Christ (Manjaly 2001:347). Without the organizational contribution of leadership, the members cannot know or fulfil their task. The leader's role is to serve. Both Vatican II and present Vatican practice could accept neither Greenleaf's nor Manjaly's locus for leadership in the community, yet both sociologically and theologically it is correct to say a person without followers is no leader. A person may be ordained into or appointed to an authoritative position in a congregation, but that does not make that person a leader.

To bring about a renewed ecclesiology at congregational level, people need to be fired with a vision, and this comes from a prophetic figure, a person with foresight. The high demands that we put on a leader are similar to the role Jesus played. While being part of Jewish life, he could see it with a "third eye", from a deeper perspective. His high moral stance led people to notice an authority in him that was not possessed by their religious leaders (Mark 1:27; Mat 23:1-7). To move into what Rost calls the "post-industrial paradigm", the Church needs imaginative leaders who can persuade their followers to risk change. Such leaders are likely to be stronger, more self-assured and more successful than most (Greenleaf 1998:114) and they will have the ability of drawing others along with them.

## 7. THE GROWING EDGE CHURCH

The role of the churches “could be so pivotal in the regeneration of what many regard as a sick society” (Greenleaf 1977:80). The greatest service the churches could offer would be to work for a society that is more just and loving. This is what Greenleaf calls the “growing edge”. The churches could become “the chief nurturing force, conceptualiser of opportunity, value shaper and morale sustainer of leadership everywhere” (1977:81). They could take on this role if they fulfilled two tasks. The first is for the pastor to function as *primus inter pares* among those lay people who share in the leadership of the parish. The second task is to build up and support, by means of leadership formation, those who work in other institutions (1977:81-82). The pastor would then be acting as a servant, and the lay people would be encouraged to use their gifts for all in a partnership. There is a basic equality among people, and no one should enjoy any advantage over others “whether of wealth, or education, or position, whatever it may be — except as he/she uses it to further the interests of the common good” (1977:281). The responsibility of the churches to lead in the transformation of society is of such great importance that to settle for a level of mediocrity would be substantially less in quality than what is reasonable and possible with their available human and material resources (Greenleaf 1977:247).

## 8. TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF MISSION LEADERSHIP

The many studies on leadership, while at times seeming bewildering in their number and scope of interest, do point to a felt need in business. Innovations are taking place and more needs to be done to re-structure what was heavily pyramidal in structure. Learning from these studies, we come now to describe a form of pastoral leadership that could take shape within the Catholic Church today. It will need to lean on the corporate learning mentioned above and find its own ecclesial expression. This would then offer a vision and strategy for a parish becoming a sacramental church-in-mission.

Leadership is a *process* that occurs between a group of people responsible for others. While there is usually an appointed or elected leader, leadership itself is shared by all the members of the group. Leadership, then, is an *influence relationship* by means of which each member of the group has an effect on all the others through interaction and dialogue. The leader should be *more knowledgeable* than the other members of the group in general pastoral matters, but acknowledges the need to learn from the others at all times and be influenced by them. Pastoral leadership is an inherently moral phenomenon that is manifested in two ways. First, it always keeps the *mission of the Church* in mind so that all decisions are in some way geared towards implanting the Gospel in the lives of the Christian community and beyond its

boundaries. Rivers bemoans the fact that the Catholic Church in general has not yet geared itself to embrace the challenge of evangelization presented in the Vatican II documents (Rivers 2005:28-42). He says mission is a sense of prophecy and vision (2005:232-237).

Second, the method by which decisions are made within the leadership group and implemented in the Christian community is always by way of *ministry* or service. This excludes anything concerning power wielding, coercion or bureaucracy. Thus, there is an ethical dimension. Leadership does not belong to the leader but to the community, just as the leader is there because there are others needing to be led. Leadership, then, is about what ought to be done with regard to others (Gini 1997:68). When the two concepts of mission and ministry are put together, we have the true meaning of church and of servant leadership (Kraemer 1958:143). The *teaching role* of pastoral leadership is a core element. As the members of the leadership team engage in continuing education and personal formation, they never tire of stretching the members of the community to grow beyond the status quo and into a richer and more human future, even though this includes risk.

Finally, pastoral leaders must be strong persons, convinced of their role as servants of the Church-in-mission and energetic in enabling others to share in the leadership of the parish. The challenge of so many social scientists today concerning the necessity of a new style of leadership in the corporate world could be a stimulus for the leaders of the Catholic Church. With fears within this church of turning back the clock to pre-Vatican II days, its leadership needs to wake up and, indeed, be provoked by the above-mentioned theoreticians to seek for a leadership style more in tune with the modern world in which we are to incarnate the Gospel. "Leadership or the lack thereof matters" (Kellerman 2007:11). Kellerman continues by urging us to look forward. We are in a "post-modern, post-industrial, post Cold War and ...a post-*Leadership*" world (2007:16). We must look ahead and discover for the Church a style of leadership that has been described in so many ways in this article and make it an effective strategy for a sacramental Church-in-mission.

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