

Action research study on Racism in  
the Archdiocese of Johannesburg,  
South Africa

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## Executive Summary

“Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another”. *President Nelson Mandela Inauguration speech, 1994*. There have been many momentous steps in South Africa’s journey toward democracy, reconciliation and peace between all races in South Africa, blacks and whites alike. As such, the Church proclaims that human life is sacred and every human is created in the image and likeness of God<sup>1</sup> and redeemed by Jesus Christ, and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family. It is not what you do or what you have that gives you a claim on respect; it is simply being human that establishes your dignity”<sup>2</sup>

This decree as said by the late president Nelson Mandela in his inauguration speech in 1994 as president of South Africa, echoes human life and dignity as one for all its inhabitants on earth. As the country abandoned a regime that denied basic civil and political rights to more than 80 percent of its population, in favour of one of the most open and democratic governments in the world. The problems facing the country today have moved away from granting full access and equal rights of the marginalised population in the country. In the 23 years of democracy our nation has moved ten steps forwards and six steps backwards in the realisation of what human dignity, equality and mutual respect. Not only does South Africa have to deal with pain in the hearts and minds of so many of its people, blacks and whites alike, but it has to rebuild an economy in which both groups can prosper. And it has to do so in a country in which most people are both impoverished and extremely impatient and in which, as one consequence, the crime rate is among the highest in the world. We should hardly be surprised that blacks are lashing out at symbols of continued white power and privilege. Although the research question at hand begs to ask the question: Does racism still exist in South Africa or not? The answer is a long and daunting explanation that can only be answered by the sad faces of many black people that feel their lives have not moved forward in the democratic dispensation. The answer is Yes, however according to the 2015 research article conducted by the Institute of Race Relations, the answer collected from the surveys conducted is No. which means that an open national outlook research needs to be conducted in a similar fashion as the census collection data, to ask each household member in the country whether racism exists or not.

In this desktop research on racism, the document takes a look at what has been written under the guidance of the Catholic Church and if it’s Johannesburg Parishioners. In this research parishioners are asked to evaluate how the church and its day to day running are conducted and how they respond to the question of race in the country. Even though the church has played a significant role in helping to end apartheid and oppression in South Africa but its role has to be more visible in ending racism in the country. In the findings of the desktop the research revealed that the parishioners believe that racism does not exist in the church, these findings concur to that of the institute of race relations. However, the many highlights on the media spaces and the Pretoria Girls High, whereby a student was told that she should wear their hair straight and well kept. In truth, many South Africans believe that there are far much pressing issues that need resolving regarding racial changes in South Africa. Unemployment, crime, housing, service delivery being poor or slow, state corruption, education, water and sanitation, infrastructure, racism and drugs. These have been presented as key issues in the country that make all South Africans worry about their future, of which is true and realistic when placed with aspirations and dreams of people. As a result racism is an issue that South Africans feel can be addressed better when equal opportunity have been made available to all its people in so doing fulfil the mandate in the Constitution.

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis Chapter 1:27

<sup>2</sup> Rerum Novarum, 18 Pope Leo XIII

This research provides a better platform of revisiting the concept of peace and reconciliation in the country as those are components that the church should be vigorously focusing on. The pastoral letter by Archbishop Stephen Brislin, advocates a better standpoint when it says "Dialogue, rational and respectful, is necessary so that we open ourselves to receive God's healing". Our invitation to become part of this dialogue comes from a realisation that the Holy Spirit calls us as a country to be healed; to build and develop relationships of equality, dignity and mutual respect. This means that we can make inroads regarding the issue of race but we have to be willing to firstly understand the concept of equality and dignity within the South African people as a whole. As such the endpoint of this research provides us with an opportunity to continue with a further research on all churches and dominions to bring its parishioners to ground and talk openly about the issue of race from a perspective of inclusivity, love, reconciliation and peace can only then we can commonly come together and address the issues of inequality and social justice.

## **Introduction**

"God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them"<sup>3</sup>. Therefore being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something but someone.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Johannesburg as the religious body through its Justice and Peace department has commissioned a mini research to have a better understanding on racism within the church. The research gathered information from the eight deaneries of Johannesburg, using questionnaires mainly due to time constraints and the sensitivity of the subject matter. While not all parishes felt a need to discuss the issues of racism especially those that are dominated by one nationality it is still important to understand the discrimination that could be characterised as having elements of racism.

In the recent months there has been high incidences of public spats with high racist undertones which has seen some members of the public being taken to court based their racist utterances. The Catholic Archdiocese of Johannesburg has weighed in in the current public debate to inspect its own practices in relation to race. The church has been vocal in fighting all forms of injustices especially apartheid. While progress has been made on the institutionalised racism, it has become evident in past few months that the issues at the community level far from being resolved and consented efforts are necessary to deal with issues as they come up in each parish.

The Second Vatican Council reminds us that "We cannot truly pray to God the Father of all if we treat any people in other than brotherly fashion, for all men are created in the image of God... Therefore, the Church reproves as foreign to the will of Christ, any discrimination against people or any persecution of them on the basis of their race, colour, social condition or religion" (Nostra Aetate, n. 5).

"I come to gather nations of every language; they shall come and see My glory" (Is 66:18). The word of the prophet Isaiah ... makes me think of the important international meeting ... the UN World Conference Against Racial Discrimination. There, once again, the Church will raise a strong voice to safeguard the fundamental rights of man, rooted in his dignity of being created in the image and likeness of God.

The Catholic Church has been in the forefront in South Africa in fighting inequality and injustice within the society. In line with its Social Teaching of the church the Archdiocese of Johannesburg is investigating the extent in which its parishioners experience racism in church or their perceptions in relations to racism in the church.

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<sup>3</sup> Genesis chapter 1:27

The intention is to open up the dialogue Archdiocese of the Catholic church in Johannesburg on how best to deal with issues of racism and how this affect the common humanity as children of God and who share the same Christian values that are fundamental in pursuing our joint calling as disciples of Christ.

“Every upright conscience cannot but decisively condemn any racism, no matter in what heart or place it is found. Unfortunately, it emerges in ever new and unexpected ways, offending and degrading the human family” Pope John Paul II

“In that venue the Church will also vigorously raise her voice to safeguard the fundamental rights of man, rooted in his dignity of being created in the image and likeness of God,” the Bishop of Rome promised.

“In the last decades, characterized by the development of globalization and marked by the worrying resurgence of aggressive nationalism, ethnic violence and widespread phenomena of racial discrimination, human dignity has often been seriously threatened,” the Holy Father added.

To oppose racism we must practice the culture of reciprocal acceptance, recognizing in every man and woman a brother or sister with whom we walk in solidarity and peace

The Constitution of South Africa speaks of both the past and the future. On the one hand, it is a solemn pact in which we, as South Africans, declare to one another that we shall never permit a repetition of our racist, brutal and repressive past. But it is more than that. It is also a charter for the transformation of our country into one which is truly shared by all its people - a country which in the fullest sense belongs to all of us, black and white, women and men."

- **Former President Nelson Mandela.**

The constitutional state that South Africa has become since 1994, is based on the values of 'human dignity', 'the achievement of equality' and 'non-racialism', among others.

The political and legal revolution of the 1990s meant the end of an era in South African society and politics in general, and in South African constitutional law in particular. Constitutional supremacy, judicial review, a justiciable bill of rights, and most importantly, democratic elections in which all adult South Africans were allowed to vote, meant the end of legally-sanctioned racial segregation and racism.

The official end to the sanctioning of racially discriminatory laws and policies did not, however, mean that racism and racial discrimination died a quiet and sudden death. The beliefs and behaviour of many South Africans are still guided by convictions forged in the past and perpetuated in the present.

We confront the issue of "racism" now because of the urgent need to assess where we are as individuals and a church body, herein **the Catholic Church**, committed to putting into practice our Christian faith. As individual Christians we must exercise constant vigilance in the face of persistent and devious efforts of Satan, who seeks to make an agony of our common life in this world and ultimately to separate us from the reconciling love of God.

With utmost seriousness, we hear apostles admonish us: "Put on the whole armour of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11), Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8)

Have we been faithful, we must ask ourselves, as those baptised onto Christ's death and resurrection, in drowning "by daily contrition and repentance "also this wretched work of our old Adam so that the new man may "daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever".

### **Objective of the study**

The action research study will strive to generate a sincere and ongoing conversation amongst the church and its leaders at all levels, parishioners and (staff at all level) "observers" within the church hierarchy, with a focus on the following key issues:

- As the archdiocese, have we made enough efforts over the years to deal with the evil of racism within the parish and the society we live in?
- Does the archdiocese have the necessary capacity (structures and policies) aimed at addressing racism, within and outside the church?
- Has the archdiocese effectively isolated the real causes of racism and applied to them a biblical solution and the social teaching of the church?

### **Scope and focus of the Action Research**

The purpose of the action research is to provide an information base against which to assess the level and occurrences of incidences of racism in the Archdiocese of Johannesburg. by providing useful information, based on perception or real experiences amongst church members, religious, staff or stakeholders on the issue of racism and how to address it. Furthermore the action research will assist the leadership of the church in understanding the extent which parishioners feel racism within the church and how deal with it. The action research provides some recommendation in the development sustainable institutional actions and structural responses to deal effectively with racism and other forms of discrimination as it occurs within the church. The research has also tried to get the voice of the different groups within the church as to allow each voice to every group on the matter.

### **Ethical considerations**

Due to the historical and political nature of the issue of racism, questions and discussions will be asked and facilitated in English to ensure clarity of concepts, however, low literacy levels, the use of local languages, may compromise or enhance the quality of information/data collection. High level research ethics and practise will be observed, including informed consent of respondents, confidentiality of responses and privacy of respondents, who will participate in the action study. This also includes neutrality throughout the interview and also the avoidance of harm. Additional support staff/facilitators will be thoroughly prepared for this daunting professional and participatory research approach. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods (triangulation) will be used to collect data and any other useful information from the sample of Catholics in Johannesburg.

### **Limitations of the action – research study**

The issues of racism and discrimination are still regarded as taboo in religious communities and traditional communities. This has affect the results of the action study as less were not interested in participating and those who participated did not think racism affected them directly. Those who participated extended racism to other forms of discrimination such as xenophobia, tribalism and social and economic status of people in the church as the reason why they think the church has not dealt with racism in the church. The sampling was made difficult by lack of interest by some of the deaneries and priest to participate in the research. A number of initiatives were made to facilitate deanery focus groups and those did not happened due to communication problems from the Justicnd Peace office.

The cultural stereotypes, racism, tribalism, class, sexism, foreign national and political perceptions about the origins of the human race, related religious and scientific ideologies, and other forms of ignorance and human behaviour was seen as some of the contributing factors on that makes it difficult for some of the parishioners to participate in the research. The time frame and budget also affected the extensiveness and comprehensiveness of the study.

## **Methodology**

The research was based on desk top review and questionnaires to gather information from the participants. The questionnaires were self-administered to allow people to respond to as many as possible of the questions as well to create anonymity on the responses. A mixed processes approach using a variety of techniques was adopted for the study. It was also participatory and reflective; applying both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. Targeted data collection tools were enhancing data reliability and processing were used to ensure that the results could be generalised based on the sample of the collected data.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **“Action research study on racism and the church in the Archdiocese of Johannesburg, South Africa”**

#### **Overview**

Humanity in its purest form as God had intended is beautiful, thriving, peaceful and loving in all of its diverse nations. At the centre of God’s plan about man is to love one another in the same manner God loves us. Over the 2 thousand billion years of humanity existence, life has endured more pain, despair, poverty, war and displacement in its quest of finding love as a people. South Africa, has not escaped the calamity of human despair that was institutionalised as that of the apartheid regime. Johannesburg, in particular recognised as a place of work, prosperity and development is one city that experienced its coil of apartheid during its time and has played a significant role in dismantling the arms of apartheid. Today, this city is the capital of the African continent and houses much development, wealth and freedom like never before. However, as a city housing different communities, Johannesburg holds a war far greater than that of apartheid that is racism.

This review will attempt to engage the research question, on racism and the church with much emphasis to the archdiocese of Johannesburg, South Africa. The review will employ writings from the church taken from the Pope John Paul II and various essays theorising racism within the church. Additionally, take into consideration the impact of globalisation to South Africa particularly in Johannesburg. The review will position its hypothesis around the church, the Christian family and the sanctity of human beings and humanity as a whole. Fundamentally, to build a case against racism through the oneness of humanity and how the church can play a central role in bringing religion, culture, and nationality.

#### **What is Racism**

There are many views of racism often contested wording and description but, at the core of the definition it has been classified as the active separation and exclusion of people based on their colour. It involves how the people relate to another, means of production, classification of wealth and most recently prejudicial nationality and cultural

differences. According to the Race Relation and the Catholic Church in South Africa, A decade after Apartheid of 2005, describes racism as the South African context the excluded and powerless group of black people. The Merriam Webster dictionary defined racism as the “belief that race is the primary determination of human traits and capacities and that racial difference produce an inherent superiority of a particular race. The Catholic Church refers to a single, visible communion separate from others; it also refers to the kingdom of Christ shown in farming, shepherding or building. It can be described as the House of God is made Holy through the scarifies of Christ. In recent writing of the New Testament, according to Ephesians, the church is Body of Christ, the Home, and the Bride has been made holy with eternal gifts. <sup>4</sup>

### **Racism within the Catholic church in the Archdiocese of Johannesburg**

The church has always maintained a belief system that rejects any form of racism, segregation, discrimination and more recently xenophobia.<sup>5</sup> The doctrine of the church is that it reflects to all its people and congregation the gospel as called for by God on how humanity relates to one another.<sup>6</sup> In South Africa history dictates that white churches must serve fulfil its mission for whites only and blacks must secondary handle its mission for blacks only. To date, post apartheid South Africa, the church has come together as intended by the mandate of the Gospel of God and as scripted in the Holy Bible. The question of racism has been within the Southern African borders for many decades, before the institutional legislation of apartheid. As the church mission expanded in the country through missionaries all over unreformed areas of the homelands, different forms of racism already existed through ethnic and tribal conflicts among black societies. Today South Africa, has inherited many forms of social discrimination, racial conflict and racial culture.

It can be equated to the dislike of other human beings by humans. The rejection of immigrants within the country is a direct link to the end results of the apartheid regime. Its scars will be felt for many decades to come even after the complete dissolution of racial discrimination. In understanding the manner in the Catholic Church was instructed to operate during apartheid to firstly look after its white parishes first and only consider the native population, this brought about the foundation in which the church was built upon<sup>7</sup>. As a result the church, had the lowest number of Black members which had no resources to operate as they were the mission of the church, instead the Catholic Church made its White parishes centre<sup>8</sup>. Segregation was apparent within the churches across the country even with a strong stance of opposing apartheid; it was easier to operate within the given parameters of separate development.

Post 1994, the attempt to bring about peace through many communal engagements that constructed a temporary rainbow nation that was eager to make the change to better live together as a society and come together as one nation in the body of Christ and embraces the constitution, bill of rights values of equality, human dignity and unity. However, failed to truly engage with its people because of the nature of racism in the country, its foundation is rooted within church missionaries for the blacks and whites through separate development. The church had no escape but to inherit racism and internalize all its underlying social ills along with apartheid. As argued before that it is however,

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<sup>4</sup> This is the Church, A Grail Simplified Council Document, 1984, pg 17.

<sup>5</sup> The church and racism, Towards a more fraternal society, 2001, pg. 27.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, pg 29.

<sup>7</sup> Race relations and the Catholic Church in Southern Africa, A decade after Apartheid, 2005, SABC Justice and Peace, pg 9

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pg 9.



the church mission to change this phenomenon, racism existed in two levels in South Africa, its interaction within the society at large, and the manner in which racial conflict played itself out within the body of Christ<sup>9</sup>.

However, racism is still very much present within the society and also in the church. In the archdiocese of Johannesburg, racism is ought to be addressed and its parishes engaged with its faith and the vision that it brings, from life and public affairs.<sup>10</sup> John Pope Paul II believed that the church can no longer afford to live in isolation detached from the world, because that would not be the Body of Christ. Archbishop D Hurley of Durban writes that the church cannot sit in the sideline whilst millions of people are enslaved by poverty, disease, illiteracy and racial discrimination<sup>11</sup>. The Catholic Church must encourage working together with other parishes within the city of Johannesburg. The church must work towards changing racist attitudes of Christians through the appeal of moral and religious sense of its people.<sup>12</sup> Her mission is to give soul to human fraternity to change the hearts of believers' within the church. The church must give no room to any form of segregation, racial discrimination and xenophobia. She understands that these forms of injustice are human embedded emotions thus, very critical to bring in the human element in changing the tide against these ill social problems to man.

### **Human dignity and the role of education**

Pope John Paul argues that the open human heart and conversion to others through fraternity and solidarity emphasis that humans particularly Christians have a responsibility to offer a teaching that stresses the dignity and equality of every human being and unity of the human race. The teachings of the church must take into cognisance that humanity's lack of respect; tolerance and inclusivity are at the core of racism, discrimination and prejudice. That racism is a sin against humanity and a violation against human rights. The writings argue that faulty education is partly to blame for the injustice.<sup>13</sup> It further argues that to counteract racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance associated with it there must be specific effort to present certain values such as the '*unity*' of the human race. The text marks the dignity of every human being paramount to changing the face of racism. It further puts emphasis on the commonality of the human nature that is Godly designed to be loving, kind and peaceful which is embedded within education that is rooted in respect of human rights.

In order for humanity to face racism head on, the text suggests that the education must never be taught in isolation to the teaching of the church and the parable of the Holy Gospel. That education in the classroom must include teachings regarding what it means to be human? <sup>14</sup>The text recommends that education must teach how to be even more human, embracing all the truth and beauty about humanity to be with others but even more so, to be there for others. As a result education is of fundamental importance of the inter-personal and social reactions. "The greatest weapon in the hand of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed", Steve Biko. This assertion, validates the role of

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, pg 9.

<sup>10</sup> The Social Teaching of the Church, Marist Brothers for Poverty and Justice, 1984, pg 7.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, pg 8.

<sup>12</sup> The Church and Racism, Towards a more Fraternal Society, 1989, pg 33.

<sup>13</sup> Race relations and the Catholic Church in Southern Africa, A decade after Apartheid, 2005, SABC Justice and Peace, pg 12.

<sup>14</sup> The church and racism, Towards a more fraternal society, 2001, pg 43.

education and how it can play a crucial role in teaching love not only from a religious perspective but from a human element that is key to all our existence and demystify colour as a benchmark for love.

According to the text of "The Year of Consecrated Life, 2015, begs the question of reflection and oneness within the Body of Christ that is to look past with gratitude, to live present with passion, to embrace the future with hope. The Archdiocese of Johannesburg invites everyone not only its parishes but all religions to reflect deeply with understanding the life of spreading the Gospel through religious growth in the Life that Christ has called for, of inspiring one another through the joy of a Consecrated Life. The writing in the book, calls all parishes to deepen their relation with Christ and each other more intensely in these years as it will culminate in a pilgrimage. The reflection of the text suggests that the simplified life less of all the luxury, bling can bring about a better understanding of the brotherhood and ultimately solidarity among its people.<sup>15</sup> The writing brings close the concept of Ubuntu as it lives within the African context of caring for one another. That is why the devotion of divine love that liberates individuals towards the greater love where one discovers that it is possible to love all. This is the love that community engagement can be brought about and more especially be given to the public as a whole regardless of the religious affiliate. That is the support that can be given through ministry of the church, school and community at large.

The consecrated life is living in the community and it involves adaptability, and striving to live cooperatively for others<sup>16</sup>. The life exudes a strong love for family and community<sup>17</sup>. At its centre is the deepened understanding and acknowledgement of all people as children of God. That is, the intent of the consecrated life can be a tool to demolishing racism out of the church and ultimately around the community as a whole. The text suggests that the missionaries as carriers of the Gospel are to teach discover, a treasure of God's people to look, to listen to discern and to collaborate with what God is already doing with his people in the larger community<sup>18</sup>. The Archdiocese of Johannesburg, bring home the issue of education throughout life in the journey of a parishes. It is important to recognise that all of humanity is on a quest of learning thus education is not limited to schooling only. Instead education has to transcend itself to be more open to true learning and to engaging on dialogue with all people of God, within the church and with a true acceptance of humanity as it is disregarding race, class, and wealth.

Access to resources such as education will go a long way in providing a sense of equality and restoring dignity of parishioners. In the responses lack access to economic opportunity due to lack of education has created resentment by some of the people with in the parishes. There is some perception that those with education and wealth seem to be given a hearing and seen as more important within the church. In some of the deaneries such as the central deanery where most of the people are from outside South Africa or Johannesburg this seem to be a dominating view amongst parishioners.

The recent school hair uprising in most of the previously white schools was one proof of how much work still needs to be done within the country. The Catholic Church contributes into the education system through its schools and it will have been important to review some of the school's code of conduct to determine integration and of everyone within the schooling system. In future this kind of study needs to be extended to formations of the church as create a better picture. This allows the church to understand to what extent does racism exist in the church and how does it manifest itself. It further allows the church to develop systematically intervention and internal process that will deal with racism

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<sup>15</sup> Archdiocese of Johannesburg, The year of a Consecrated Life, 2015, pg 4

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, pg 5.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, pg 5.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, pg 5.

within the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church in Johannesburg has to deal with this issue urgently and try to facilitate the social cohesion programme in order to promote harmony within the church.

The Pope believes that an educational system that is based on moral values is the only way to change the attitudes against racism. He argues that the construction of peace is fragile and can only be attained with every human right and human dignity of every single member of society. He further, urges the media to educate the public within the communities it broadcasts in.

The Catholic Church has a number of media platform that are accessible to its members such as Radio Verities, ADnews that could be used as good platforms to create a platform for discussions within the church. The church has not been proactive in promoting its social teaching which then explains why programmes such as Justice and Peace will always have few members from the congregation interested in dealing with social and justice issues that affect the church.

While using public media because of its reach could pursued focus should not be placed to in rather internal Catholic media should be more vocal in raising issues that could be interpreted as racist within the church. The general media fraternity has a duty to extend its work to gathering voices of people in public spaces and foster open dialogue among members of the different churches in order to recognise the power of shared information. The church also has a duty to make dialogue possible among its congregation the public its primary objective to eradicating racism.<sup>19</sup>This will show that at the core of its teaching religious beliefs inspire peace, encourage solidarity promotes justice and upholds liberty. As a result mutual openness between followers can greatly serve the cause of peace and the common good of the human family. Therefore, reaching out to people through various forms of media puts the church at the heart of the message to drive racism out that it may not have a place to hide within its congregation. And ultimately unite the hearts of people to no longer hate instead to look at racial discrimination as a form of past oppression that has been overcome. This will help drive the church central message which believes in “the salvation of all souls and respect for all human dignity”.

## **Research Findings**

Institutionalised racism has been outlawed in South Africa for over two decades, and we become the miracle nation” The Rainbow Nation”. The questions is did we move racism and its roots in all forms within the society. The answer is simple is no, we have not even come close to dealing with racism because the white people believe that racism does not exist it’s only that back people are over sensitive. In one of the workshops in preparing the volunteers who were going to administer the questionnaires one of the participants felt strongly that some of the questions should be asked because they were not necessary since most people are not racist.

The analysis of collected data through the questionnaires will follow a Domain Research Methodology, by putting together the information gathered.<sup>20</sup> The questionnaires were self-administered in order to ascertain the extent of racism within the church and how the parishioners feel about the issue of racism in their place of worship. The rationale behind the use of domain research analysis is to give the parishioners privacy and anonymity in responding to the issues and get objective views and responses. Furthermore, to describe the social situation and the cultural patterns within the church and the semantic relationships of the parishioners. The results to be yielded from this methodology will also emphasize the social the meaning of socialisation as a component in changing mindset and behaviour towards the different races in the church. The questioners will also attempt to use the 54 samples collected as statements of the people studied within the focus group. In conclusion it will give a list of five (5) domains used to

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<sup>19</sup> The church and racism, towards a more fraternal society, 2001, pg 43.

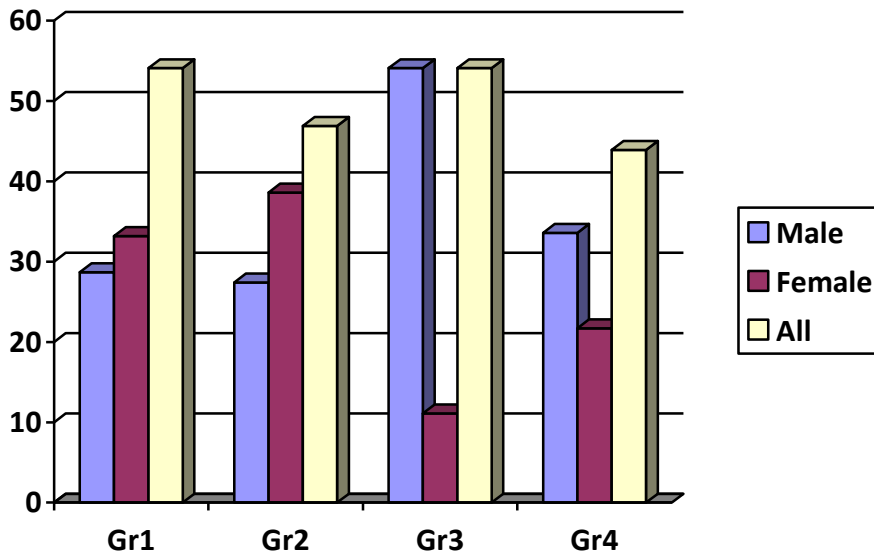
<sup>20</sup> Ratcliff, D. 15 methods of Data Analysis in Qualitative Research, 2008, pg. 3

gather information on the position of parishioners within the Johannesburg, Catholic Church. The overarching objective is that education on believers and the Christ like behaviour of unity, love and inclusivity is paramount within the church teaching on a daily basis.

The Domain Analysis list of the questionnaire:

1. Race
2. Gender
3. Age
4. Nationality
5. Baptised within the Catholic Church or not

From the 54 questionnaire samples collected, a graph analysis will be used to give analysis based on race of the percentage of questionnaire that believe that racism is still an issue within the church. This will follow with a chart based on gender of the number of people that have some understanding of the issue of race in the Johannesburg, Catholic Church.




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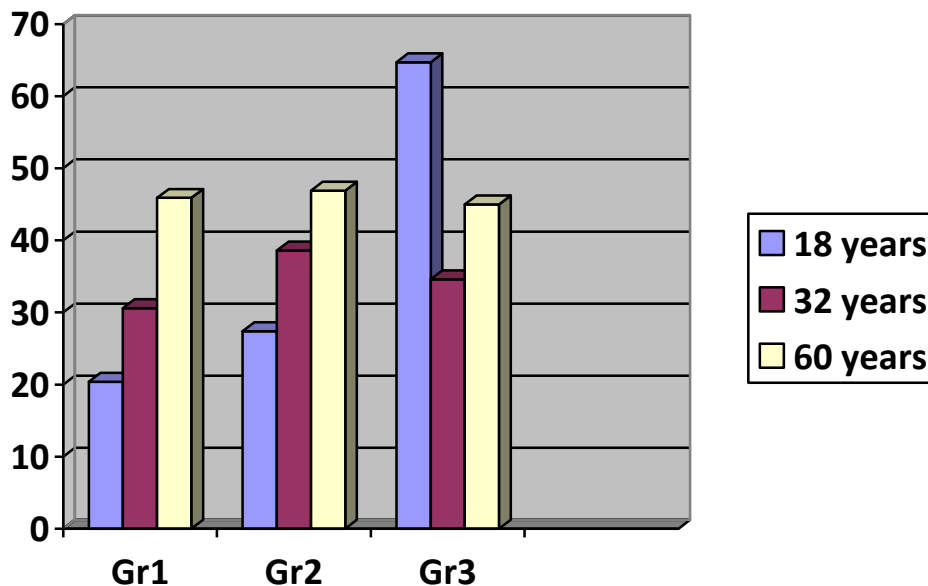
#### 54 Analysis based on gender in the Catholic Church

In this analysis, according to gender the male component believe that the difference in language, negatively impacts on the race relations that are built in the church and at times impact on the unity among the parishes in the church. The male component also view that sexism is another form of discrimination that exist within the church. All parishes, believe that within the church there, is tolerance based on the incidences of race discrimination however, the male figures in the church would like to see more inclusion of the leadership in the church making more initiative to bring the congregation together. The male component also believe that discrimination based on class is prevalent within the church and they see the dynamic getting worse and impacting on the race relations within the church. There is

also a perception that racism needs to be on an open platform for dialogue in the country as a whole to engage with other believers from other Faiths to find a common ground of acceptance among South Africans. This is due to the fact in question 18, of the research questionnaire, Affirmative Action is also a factor in building good race relations in the country, as it can drive a drift between South African in terms of how people are employed. This can have widespread negative impact on all races if it is not mitigated properly and have the Catholic Church leading the discussions around the country. Much proactive leadership is needed in church, according to the analysis made from the questionnaire to know its people and also to encourage it's congregation to meet outside of the church in order to bring about unity in the country.

**Analysis using age from 18 – 60 years**

In the next analysis the use of age will be considered as a measurement to give clarity of which age group within church believe that race issues need to be identified properly in the Catholic Church. Over the collected questionnaire the various age groups that form part of the focus groups interview range from the youngest being 18 – 60 years of age. As a result the analysis will provide multiple view points on the role of the church in curbing race and racial discrimination among its parishioners

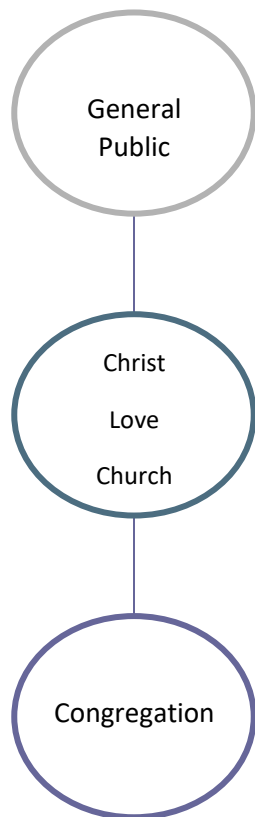


**Graph based on age group perception on race activities in the Church**

According to the parishioners on the three Johannesburg archdiocese, from Yeoville, Maryclave and St Charles the age group was distributed equally among the respondents of the questionnaire. In the first group most youth feel that not much activities around racial mixing are introduced in the church and this makes it difficult to intermix with other racial and ethnic groups. Whilst the aged between 50 and 60's group have a constant outlook and response when it comes to the church activities and the interracial mixing. This means it does not affect them as much and the analysis is that they are old but can still influence the way in which the church and its parishioners interact and relate with one another. In the last group many 18 year olds believe that interracial relationships should be encouraged and

this means that young people are slowly opening up to non-racialism and this can only mean that the church must follow and encourage mixing among the parishioners.

Race is a natural phenomenon when it is viewed on natural differences like skin colour and physical structures. That is a fixed and constant view of race. The perception of race as a natural phenomenon changed. Race was later perceived as a social phenomenon. It means that the social status which determined the economic status to racial belonging. The modern idea of race started in the Roman Catholic Church as a way of sharing the word of God with the people of colour as such receive salvation of their entrance into God's kingdom could ensure the purity of their race, of which is not the case because the bible teaching have always equated purity to love of all people. Ironically the early missionaries have introduced and divided African people with their nativity in Southern Africa. The institutionalising of apartheid with policies of separate development have made the issue of race difficult to change from mindset to behaviour among believers of all different faiths.



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### **Analysis based on Race and Nationality**

The analysis based on race and nationality subjects that the respondents from the questionnaire be built around contextual understanding of the different nations that are part of the Johannesburg, Catholic Church. This will also take into account the non South African nationalities that congregate in the Johannesburg church as part and parcel of parishioners of the Catholic Church. Even though, no specific nationality was presented in the questionnaire but some respondents made note that it is not a good thing when incidences extent to other nationalities and raise xenophobic terms. Discrimination is discrimination regardless of how it's done and whom it's done to. When some respondents share that there are many foreign nationals in the church and that can insinuate prejudicial acts that are masked with religious activities. Hence, it is important to guard against such and develop a culture of tolerance among parishioners. Of the 54 questionnaires 8 were from non-South African respondents, and they argued that

sometimes when doing activities with other church members and they don't understand the language and it seems as though why are they even part of the group because they don't share the same language and understanding as South Africans, essentially discrimination that imposed on them due to nationality.

The analysis based on the separation of church services the respondents of the questionnaire suggest that church is church and all congregation must be together and worship together. Within the Catholic Church different church services are instrumental to the sharing of the Gospel of the bible to its parishes. The aim of mixed church services is to integrate the parishioners and provide necessary spiritual, emotional and psychological counselling. This also helps to advocate for togetherness of the congregation the leadership as one body in Christ. In the questionnaire, 13 of the white's respondents did not see the need to have separate church services for people from different cultural backgrounds. On the contrary the 19 respondents of black parishes suggested that it will be easier for the service especially during the singing of hymns in the church as the differences of cultures is more apparent when singing church songs. What this phenomenon translates is that parishes among themselves do not believe that racism within the church still exists, however, in a country where the issue has not been fully dealt with, perhaps the country as a whole is still holding on to the ideology of separate development.

Other forms of discrimination in the country can be seen through the different social aspects of society and how we relate to one another. The other forms of discrimination that were identified from the questionnaire were gender discrimination, class and nationality. The two most prevalent discrimination being gender and nationality based on how treatment in the identified sector have the most violations than class discrimination. Above the racial values in society persistent racial inequality in employment, housing, and a wide range of other social domains has renewed interest in the possible role of discrimination. Unlike in the pre-democracy era when racial prejudice and discrimination were overt and widespread, today discrimination is less readily identifiable, posing problems for social scientific conceptualization and measurement. Today discrimination is subtle and rarely raises questions unless if comments are made publicly like in the Penny Sparrow saga where she proclaimed that "Blacks bring huge dirt and trouble and discomfort to others and she will from now on address the Blacks in South Africa as monkeys". As angering as the comments were Penny was probably referring to the way in which we treat each other in the townships and informal settlements, in her defence it was never meant in racist terms or apartheid minded thinking that the media made it out to be.

However, the comment what it says as a nation is that, we are not accepting of our challenges and that we judge ourselves based on the flaws we have as the human race. In the article raised by Advocate Mushwana, it argues that we have still not accomplished the objective of a "Non-racist and non-sexist society". This begs to respond to the question of whether racism still exists and the answer is No, racism still exists in South Africa. The basic understanding to the issue of race according to Whites is that Blacks people need learn to love themselves as a society and appreciate their struggle as a people. On the other hand, according to Blacks, White people need to start learning the different cultures and languages within the country and understand the history of oppression towards black people. That is why the majority of the respondents argued that racism is still the same in South Africa. And a few believed that it has gotten worse, however those respondents are the ones that felt that the church is a place of worship any other issue should be left to the government and individuals as long as it does not harm others in the church.

Analysis based on the number respondents based on incidences of discrimination that they have experienced is that respondents did not want to reveal the real incidences because the pertinent question is how does that behaviour relate to me or treat me as a person. The respondents were question the incidences that occurred to them and assessing if they were discrimination or not. Which means that not every act of prejudice is an act of discrimination and how the issue was dealt with in the church, it was not reported and that means parishioners themselves are

questioning how we measure discrimination in the church amongst worshipers. This means that the incidences of discrimination need to give an open space in the church to talk about them and say what discriminatory behaviour is and what is not within the church. Questionnaires from the black respondents believe that Affirmative Action is necessary because it is to create the balance so that marginalised numbers within the black society are only seeking an equal opportunity, recognition and acknowledgement of blacks as capable human beings. The white respondents argued that affirmative action has its place in society however, it must have a limited time period so as to not abuse the system. The biggest challenge within the South African race context it needs to be extended to other churches so that all worshipers within the country start having a conversation around racism and not only the Catholic Church only.

## Conclusion

In this research, the Johannesburg archdiocese has a responsibility to all its parishioners to begin indoctrinating the Gospel of Christ as it is embraced and laid out in the Bible. All three congregations need to engage different cultures, races, ethnicity and gender roles in line with the teaching of Christ. The teaching makes love the central message of the congregation for example: in the New Testament, John 13:34-35 "A new command I give you, Love one another. As I have loved you. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. (New International Version) which means the notion is not limited to parishioners only, instead it is the duty of the church to share this message and exercise on a day to day basis, in and outside of the church. To embrace one another irrespective of race, tribe and/or social stature. In truth the church, teaching will be of no value if the word of God has no actionable plans that can be followed by the church and its congregation. This would also apply to the way of life of the church members throughout their lives.

The church cannot really take pride in doctrinal and theological purity if we allow tribalism and racism to dim the light of the Gospel. The world can only be convinced that the church is a better alternative when the church constantly revisits and evaluates itself on the basis of Love and what it means in totality. "The law of love doesn't do away with the differences between cultures. It needs to do away with judging the value of culture because they are different".<sup>21</sup> We live in the postmodern era. The 21<sup>st</sup> century generation is very sceptical and cynical about organized religion.<sup>22</sup> The church's silence on many social issue of sexual abuse, tribalism, racism, and other forms of discrimination have left postmodern society with distrust towards the church searching for things that are real, authentic, and coherent.

In some of the parish's racism manifest itself through mass times, areas such as the Northern and Central Deaneries. This demonstrated by the number of people attending the mass and the fact that those masses dominated by one particular group. The main mass on Sunday hardly have other races in them and in the Yeoville parish for instance the evening masses have a significant number of non-African attending but they majority are white which then raises the question if only ten to fifteen people attend the mass is worth the time and resource put during that particular mass. Some of the general views are that mass is used to separate people through race nationality and culture. This is more pronounced in the central deanery where there nationality groups and masses which seem to promote separation rather than unity. The South African parishioners within the central deanery feel that nationalities such as Zimbabweans and Ethiopians are given more support within the church because they have a mass once month in

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<sup>21</sup> Boubakar, S. Ethnicity, Tribalism and Racism: A Global challenge for the Christian Church and its Mission, The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership. 2015, pg. 101

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, pg. 101



their language with the priest from their country. In some parishes the local languages are only used for hymns no reading or homily is given through local language

In view of the above argument one may argue that racism was rooted on sensory knowledge. People particularly Whites saw physical differences with Africans and inculcated theories of separate development, racism and inequality. As such the Catholic Church needs to work on how it imparts knowledge among its congregation. Foster a place of worship, spiritual growth and emotionally mature parishioners. The church must assign value to the physical differences and allow for true biblical knowledge and interpretation of the gospel as treatment against past attitudes to be buried. Additionally, the discrimination of other social groups based on political, educational and economical attainment are subject to societal norms that need to be removed from the church as a whole. To conclude, the research question on racism has only scratched the surface of the issue. There is more that is needed to be addressed within the Catholic Church itself. Overall, the research must extent its scope to gathering the thoughts of leadership within the church. As well as open the conversation around racism be truly meaningful to the church, its parishioners and the general congregation.

### **Recommendation**

- The church need to open the dialogue through its different social formation within the church to promote cultural diversity and social cohesion
- The Church needs to develop education materials on race relation to be used by catechist during catechism formation, especially during the confirmation formation.
- The church while acknowledging the different nationalities with the different parishes it should try to use grouping that unite rather than separate the church.
- The church, should find out what parishes are doing to promote social cohesion and documents these activities.
- The church need to invest in social cohesion initiatives that will promote understanding of the cultural differences especially amongst young people.
- Socio and economic issues that affect people's dignity need to be address to foster harmony amongst different nationalities in Johannesburg to promote one church
- The church need to pronounce more on the social teaching of the church so as to create awareness amongst the parishioners and how social teaching are part of their Christian life.
- The Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Johannesburg need to try and get more resources to do further study in understanding the issue of racism in the church using the exiting information and reported cases

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