

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

KNOWING, BEING AND DOING:  
THE SPIRITUAL LIFE  
DEVELOPMENT OF SALVATION  
ARMY OFFICERS

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A Thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
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ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

**KNOWING, BEING AND DOING: THE SPIRITUAL LIFE DEVELOPMENT  
OF SALVATION ARMY OFFICERS**

By KAREN SHAKESPEARE

September 2011

This research is rooted in my professional practice at the newly established international Centre for Spiritual Life Development (CSLD) of The Salvation Army. It is designed to develop a foundation which can shape and enhance the policy and provision of the CSLD. It seeks to answer two questions: How do Salvation Army officers sustain and develop their personal spiritual life in the context of an activist, missional organisation? In what ways can the Centre for Spiritual life Development facilitate and support this process?

The research methodology is qualitative, bringing responses to a written questionnaire and semi-structured interviews into mutual critical dialogue with the conceptual framework, which is drawn from the theology and history of evangelicalism and evangelical spirituality, and the theory of theological and vocational education. This has generated a rich description of spiritual life development in Salvation Army officers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, leading to new understanding.

The empirical research focused upon a particular constituency, delegates to the International College for Officers, thus facilitating understanding of the difference encountered in an organisation that has both global and local influences. It confirmed an expected diversity of understanding and practice in three major areas; definitions of, and practices leading to, spiritual life development; the means used by officers develop their spiritual lives; and the relationship between practice and the spiritual life.

The work contributes to academic knowledge about The Salvation Army by locating the organisation, and Salvationist spirituality, within the framework of evangelicalism. A proposal to encourage a holistic understanding of spiritual life development using a process of reflection based upon the integration of, and interrelationships between, 'knowing, being and doing', offers a way forward that is applicable in a range of contexts. The evolution of my professional practice during the period of the research demonstrates that the foundations of new policy and practices are taking shape. It therefore contributes to the field of practical theology, as the integration and mutual critique of practice, spirituality and educational theory have led to new understanding and new practice.

*Key words:*

Spiritual life development

The Salvation Army

Evangelical spirituality

Theological education

# **Knowing, being and doing: the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers.**

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## Introduction

The well stocked shelves of the library in William Booth College, London, provide a rich resource for the students, all of whom are training to be Salvation Army officers in the United Kingdom and Europe. Annual investment, careful selection of books and electronic resources, and the services of a full time librarian have enabled it to become a valuable source of information, formation and, sometimes, transformation. In addition many students buy their own books, often purchasing extra bookcases during their time as a student in order to house their growing personal resource collection. At the College for Officer Training in Harare the library is housed on one wall of a classroom and these few books are the sole access to resources for a similar number of students. They are proudly displayed to visitors. There is simply not enough money to purchase an extensive library stock, nor is it feasible for students to buy their own copies. Yet the students at both institutions will become Salvation Army officers; they will be required to teach and lead their people and they need to develop and resource their ministerial practice and spiritual life. As officers the requirements of their ministry may be similar, and in time they may even work alongside one another as colleagues, but their preparation for officership, although grounded in common principles (The Salvation Army (TSA)<sup>1</sup> 2005), will have been very different. Similarly their experiences of subsequent opportunities for spiritual life development will vary immeasurably, yet for each it is foundational to who they are, what they believe and what they do.

The Salvation Army is both global and local, so that similarity and difference, unity and diversity are part of its culture and tradition. It may be encountered as a local church; the community centre where an affordable meal and second hand clothing is available; an NGO working to alleviate the results of a natural disaster or war; the parent body of a school, hospital or care home; or a provider of services for the most marginalised in society. Each of these is accurate in some contexts and all expressions find a common foundation and motivation in the international mission statement.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the thesis there are many references to official Salvation Army publications which, by convention, do not name individual authors or editors. For ease of reading, in-text references will contain the initials TSA to refer to documents listed as authored by The Salvation Army in the reference list.

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by love for God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and meet human needs in his name without discrimination (TSA 2010a: front page).

Although linked to International Headquarters by a common mission and for administrative purposes, the worldwide Salvation Army is marked by considerable diversity. Differing cultural traditions and varying levels of resources ensure wide variety despite common ground. It is primarily a Christian community with an emphasis upon outward movement to the world, particularly to the poor and marginalised. Leadership is provided by Salvation Army officers, ordained full time ministers who are appointed by the organisation to a role.

This research focuses upon the spiritual life of Salvation Army officers and seeks to answer two questions.

*How do Salvation Army officers sustain and develop their personal spiritual life in the context of an activist, missional organisation? In what ways can the Centre for Spiritual Life Development facilitate and support this process?*

### **The research problem and boundaries**

There are two ways of being a member. Soldiers make a commitment to Christian discipleship within The Salvation Army, including foundational beliefs and lifestyle choices. There are also adherent members who having made a profession of faith choose to recognise their association with the denomination in a formal way which does not involve the commitments of soldiership. Many thousands of people attend, but have no recorded membership. Officers are soldiers who have responded to a full time vocation to Christian ministry and, following training at one of the fifty seven training colleges, have been commissioned and ordained within the denomination. As of 31 December 2010, statistics record 1,132,823 soldiers, 176,226 adherents, and 26,329 active and retired officers worldwide (TSA 2011).

The Centre for Spiritual Life Development (CSLD) is a small centre which was established by The Salvation Army in July 2008 at the International College for Officers (ICO) in London. Its primary aim is to broaden the influence of the ICO beyond its primary purpose, which is to provide an eight week opportunity for spiritual renewal, study and reflection for twenty six officers, four times each year.

For many officers this is a welcome retreat in the mid years of ministry, which is seen as a privilege and is highly valued as a unique opportunity for personal growth and professional development.

The CSLD mission statement has a main aim with three clear foci:

The Centre for Spiritual Life Development exists to facilitate the development of the spiritual lives of Salvationists by

- Offering conferences and events that are spiritually enriching and that help form people in Christlikeness;
- Providing resources to cultivate spiritual life development;
- Encouraging implementation of intentional and systematic spiritual growth throughout the international Salvation Army (TSA 2009c, Munn 2009:7).

The Centre was established with only one part-time member of staff, the Secretary for Spiritual Life Development, who is also the Associate Principal of the ICO. My appointment, in August 2009, as Executive Assistant to the Secretary for Spiritual Life Development, is also part of a portfolio. The centre is also limited by budget and the times when the ICO facilities are available for use. Some of the work is administrative - monitoring and giving support to Salvation Army territories - but it is evident that in order to make effective provision to achieve the mission, careful strategic planning is required.

Since 2008, developments have taken place in all areas of the mission statement. An initial, one week, conference for prayer leaders was held in September 2009, a two week holiness seminar for twenty-six young adults preceded a world youth convention in Stockholm in July 2010, and a conference for Territorial Secretaries for Spiritual Life Development took place in September 2010. Resources linked to the CSLD are emerging. These include articles in *The Officer*, a bi-monthly magazine with a world-wide circulation, the publication of two books, *Samuel Logan Brengle: Heart for God* edited by Peter Farthing, and *Other Voices* by Christine Faragher, and the development of a website. A shared electronic file system allows for easy dissemination of resources and information, and a monthly newsletter encourages networking and mutual support. A specific initiative relating to 24/7 prayer on a global scale was launched in January 2011, generating interest throughout the world. The CSLD is responsible for resourcing and encouraging this venture through web-based technology. Each territory and command has been encouraged to appoint a Secretary for Spiritual Life Development in order to monitor

and facilitate focus upon spiritual development issues in the local context. There is also a requirement to present an annual report of the territorial policies and priorities for spiritual life to International Headquarters and the Centre for Spiritual Life Development.

In order to respond to the demands of my professional context, this research seeks to generate understanding that will inform the strategic development of the CSLD. It draws upon the self-reported understanding of spiritual development in a particular constituency of Salvation Army officers, delegates to the ICO, in a mutual critical conversation with relevant theoretical and theological perspectives, in order to inform the development of proposals for future policy and practice.

The broad nature of the CSLD mission statement suggests that it could be of significance for all who view themselves as Salvationists. However, the limited budget and scant resources in terms of personnel make this impossible in any direct way. This research is therefore selective in its target group in order to generate knowledge that may have relevance in a wider context. By focusing upon delegates to the ICO it is possible to gain a diverse sample which, although not comprehensive, represents something of the diversity of the Army world.

### **My context**

My commitment to the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers is both professional and personal; it is foundational to who I am, what I believe and understand, and what I do. I grew up as the child of Salvation Army officer parents so am a member of the organisation by nurture as well as by choice. I trained as a teacher, with religious studies as a main subject, and following one year of practice, re-trained as a Salvation Army officer. After eighteen years in corps (church) ministry, and immediately following my experience as a delegate at the ICO, I was appointed as a tutor to William Booth College, the sole provider of initial officer training in the United Kingdom. Various subsequent roles as a module leader (1999), Assistant Training Programme Director (2002), and ultimately Training Programme Director (course leader, 2004) enabled me to gain a firm practical grounding in Salvation Army officer training and an understanding of its relationship to the denomination, theological education and higher education in the United Kingdom. This was complemented by MA studies in Pastoral Theology (2000), and Adult Education with Theological Reflection (2005). The generosity of The Salvation Army in the United Kingdom in funding this Professional Doctorate is evidence of a

growing commitment to the academic and professional development of officers, and an acknowledgement of the contribution that this can offer to the development of knowledge in the denomination.

My work for the first two papers in Stage 1 of the Professional Doctorate was focused upon initial officer training, with particular reference to the introduction, by The Salvation Army in the United Kingdom with the Republic of Ireland, of core competencies for Salvation Army officers.

In Paper 1 (Appendix A:172-203) a critical conversation between the Salvation Army context, theological education and competence based education and training led to an exploration of the relationship between core competencies for Salvation Army officers and models of theological education. The literature reviewed offers important theoretical grounding for this research which, although not rooted in initial ministerial education, has important resonances with it. Similarly my knowledge and understanding of the requirements for, and processes of, initial Salvation Army officer training provide foundational knowledge and a base from which to build.

Historical research for Paper 2 (Appendix B:204-230) identified recurring themes and significant changes in the initial training of officers in the United Kingdom 1978-2008. The importance of the relationship between three foci in training - spiritual formation, knowledge and practical skills - is significant to this research. Priorities for officer training, as expressed by present and former Principals of William Booth College suggest that although there is need for balance between the three elements in the policy and practice of training, spiritual formation remains a constant first priority. A slightly edited version of Paper 2 was published by the Journal of Adult Theological Education (2008 Volume 5:2, pp126-143).

However, the trajectory represented by the first two papers was interrupted and deflected by my appointment in January 2009 to the International Headquarters of The Salvation Army, initially to edit and revise The Salvation Army's handbook of doctrine, *Salvation Story* and its accompanying study guide, combining them into a single volume, *The Handbook of Doctrine* (2010), which was particularly designed for use in officer training. Following this project I was appointed to the CSLD in August 2009. My task is to work with my line manager in establishing the Centre and enabling it to achieve its mission. A significant element in my brief of appointment is that I should be 'engaging in research that will enhance spiritual development and



your own contribution to ministry' (TSA 2009b). The research conducted for this dissertation is therefore both continuous with, and disconnected from, the Stage 1 work. Paper 3 of Stage 1 forms the research proposal for this work (Appendix C: 231-255).

My context and experience have therefore placed me in a unique position which facilitates the examination of the development of spiritual life in Salvation Army officers from a particular perspective. As an officer, a leader in the organisation, I am aware of the potential opportunities and challenges of spiritual life development; as an educator I am able to draw upon my experience and theoretical understanding of adult learning and education; and in revising the *Handbook of Doctrine* I began to explore and explain how understanding, belief and practice are interwoven in both personal experience and the culture of The Salvation Army. This research will therefore draw upon previous knowledge, research and experience in seeking to generate material that will inform and enhance my current practice. One limitation is my personal experience of the international context, which consists of visits to overseas territories as a guest lecturer or conference facilitator; it is therefore inevitable that, despite attempts to gain an international perspective, this work primarily reflects a western, first world, author.

The method is, to some extent, counter-cultural. The Salvation Army is a hierarchical organisation which has often made provision for development in a 'top-down' manner, without reference to those for whom it is intended. The choice of qualitative, empirical research with human subjects offers an inductive, original and unique understanding of how Salvation Army officers sustain and develop their spiritual life which draws upon relevant theory in the fields of theological education and adult learning.

### **Spiritual life development and practical theology**

Whilst acknowledging that the spiritual life is not reducible to what can be known cognitively, I believe that spiritual life development must be viewed in the broader context of ongoing formation for ministry. Paper 3, the research proposal, located the work in the field of practical theology, which is essentially 'triadic, concerned with the interrelationships of faith, practice and social reality' (Whyte 1987:213). Each factor must be allowed to critique and influence the other two in an honest search for

new insight and revised practice, so that the Church is both challenged and enabled to perform the gospel with authenticity.

The notion of the spiritual life as a progressive experience is foundational to the Salvationist psyche, with metaphors of journey and growth common. This lends itself to exploring the development of the spiritual life as a learning experience, which, although rooted in personal encounter, demands reflection in order for real development to take place. The empirical research population, delegates to the ICO, are participating in a specific learning experience. The eight week programme is designed to broaden their international experience, provide knowledge of both administrative and ministry related issues, and give space and opportunity for personal and spiritual renewal (Munn R. 2011:4-5). This is therefore an ideal time for them to reflect upon their ongoing spiritual development. What has sustained and enabled them to 'grow?' What would they value as provision for the future?

The use of qualitative research methodology has enabled understanding to emerge through in a process of critical dialogue between the results of the empirical research, the denominational context and theology, and theories of ministerial and vocational education. As each discipline has critiqued, and been critiqued by, the others in the search for a way forward, resonances and dissonances have led to connections and proposals. This work is therefore integrative, located at the interface between denominational context, spirituality, ministry, ministerial education and personal experience. Insights emerging from the interrelationships between them have led to embryonic new practices for the CSLD.

The research proposal noted the need for both openness and boundaries:

The assumptions upon which disciplines are based, including the understanding of human worth and ultimate purposes, may vary from those of practical theology which is set within the broader tradition of theology that gives it both a foundation and the limits of tolerance. The demands of the task are such that the practical theologian must be both 'committed and open, faithful and critical' (Ballard and Pritchard 1996:30). For example, using the metaphor of conversion Swinton and Mowat (2006:92-94) call for 'critical faithfulness' in which the constructivist autonomy of qualitative research is 'converted' to an epistemology which acknowledges the reality of God, whilst continuing to take seriously the interpreted nature of all human understanding. My choice of a qualitative research methodology is informed and shaped by this concept, which acknowledges the interpretative nature of human experience as well as the 'centuries of tradition and reflection that

have gone into establishing our understandings of divine revelation' (Swinton and Mowat 2006:93). (Appendix C:239)

The development of the spiritual life is foundational to Salvationist self-understanding. Bramwell Booth<sup>2</sup> argued that 'our people will not grow old in holiness unless they are watched over, and taught and led' (Booth B.1903:82). By using the integrative, inductive and interpretive processes of practical theology, this work offers a critically faithful contribution to theological understanding and ongoing authentic practice.

### **A gap in knowledge?**

The spiritual life is foundational to Salvationist life and practice, and is traditionally expressed in terms of individual personal experience and relationship with God. Despite this emphasis there is no international curriculum for spiritual formation in initial officer training, despite protracted discussion over a number of years about the feasibility and viability of its introduction. A potential secondary benefit of this work is that new understanding will contribute to the debate by signalling the value of a training philosophy that takes a holistic view of officer life and ministry.

Similarly, although it is assumed that officers will continue to grow in spiritual understanding as well as professionally, there is no common framework of understanding, or practice for, development. I am convinced that, if the CSLD is to be effective in its provision, it is necessary to gain some understanding of officers' own understanding of their spiritual life development, and to bring this lived experience into a mutual critical dialogue with the norms of the denomination and the wider Church. Practical theology values interaction with a secular conversation partner as a means to challenge, enhance and develop the discussion. Thus theoretical perspectives from theological and vocational education, chosen for their resonance with both the purposes of the CSLD, and my professional and academic background, will add to the conversation. Insights which emerge from the interaction between the self-reported experience of individuals and theological and theoretical perspectives, will enable me to develop a foundation which will shape and enhance the policy and provision of the CSLD. Therefore the primary purpose of the research is to generate understanding that will enable me to develop my professional practice in appropriate ways.

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<sup>2</sup> The eldest son of William Booth and his successor, in 1912, as world leader of The Salvation Army

Before this can be achieved it is necessary to examine Salvation Army spirituality and to locate it academically within the framework of the Church, noting resonance and dissonance with other traditions. A corollary of the activist ethos of the organisation is that academic research is not common, and in this embryonic area there is no established body of work on which to draw. Most Salvationist writing is devotional, or the provision of resources for congregational use. Thus the initial chapters of this thesis which locate The Salvation Army, and consequently Salvationist spirituality, within evangelical foundations are themselves syntheses which both contribute to knowledge and provide a foundation for the rest of the work.

The research is unique for The Salvation Army in two respects. Firstly it is an academic exploration of the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers, and secondly it seeks to hold in tension a perceived need for a global spirituality with evident diversity of practice and resources, and to identify a way forward that allows for both.

This work is therefore designed to generate new understanding relating to the ongoing spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers in an activist, missional organisation, in order that the work of the CSLD can be facilitated. Its contribution is both academic and related to my professional practice in the institution. As I bring the data into dialogue with theological and theoretical text based research, it is also expected that new understanding of the nature of Salvation Army officership will be generated, particularly in relation to the interrelationship between theory, practice, and being. In so doing it will fulfil the primary aim of the Professional Doctorate 'to examine values, practices and performances in order to yield better performance' (Bennett Z. 2009:338).

### **A Professional Doctorate**

This thesis is presented for the award of a Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology. As such, it is part of a portfolio, in which the three Stage 1 papers, which have already been examined, are bound with the final dissertation (Appendices A - C:172-255). The necessity of a radical shift in perspective, occasioned by my change of appointment within the organisation, means that it is not appropriate to combine these as chapters in the final thesis despite their contribution to the overall direction of the research. Some quotations and references will demonstrate continuity.

This work originated with a research problem drawn from my professional practice, the need for a policy and practices for the CSLD, and will turn to perspectives from theology and theory in interaction with empirical research in order to seek a solution. Chapters 1-3 will build a foundation for understanding The Salvation Army and Salvationist spirituality in relation to evangelicalism. In Chapter 1 a brief discussion of the history and ethos of the movement will lead to an explanation of the immediate antecedents of the research and an outline of current provision for spiritual formation. Chapter 2 seeks to place The Salvation Army in the wider tradition of Christian evangelicalism, and Chapter 3 develops this association further by relating Salvationist spiritual life and practices to those of evangelical spirituality. Chapter 4 introduces the theoretical conversation partner, bringing the educational philosophy and practices of The Salvation Army into dialogue with some themes of theological and vocational education: the notion of *habitus*, a vocational emphasis upon theory, practice and formation in learning, and concepts of reflective learning. Chapters 5-9 explore the methodology, design, challenges and results of the empirical research. Research findings in three major areas are significant: definitions of, and practices leading to, 'spiritual life development'; the means used by officers develop their spiritual lives; and the relationship between practice and the spiritual life. Finally Chapter 10 offers a proposal for a way forward for the policy and practices of the CSLD, based upon the interaction and interrelationship of knowing, being and doing as a description of a holistic spiritual life.

# **Chapter 1**

## **The Salvation Army context.**

The spirituality of The Salvation Army necessarily reflects the specific circumstances of the time and place of its origin and the theological emphases of its founders. These, in turn, were embedded in the Church context of nineteenth century Britain. Thus in order to facilitate spiritual life development within The Salvation Army through the CSLD it is necessary to understand the history and ethos of the tradition. But the tradition is not static, it has been shaped by the changing social climate of the societies in which The Salvation Army operates and by the people whose lives have both reflected and refined the received wisdom. One aim of this work is to make a contribution to a critically faithful recapitulation of that tradition in the twenty-first century.

An outline of the processes that led to the establishment of the CSLD, and the current provision for spiritual formation within The Salvation Army, will demonstrate the place of the research within the denomination. This chapter will be complemented by the next two chapters which will locate The Salvation Army and the Salvationist understanding of spiritual life in the wider context of the Church.

### **History and governance**

Founded in 1865 by William and Catherine Booth, The Salvation Army has evolved from its origins in a tent mission in the East End of London into an international organisation with a presence in one hundred and twenty one countries (as at 1 January 2010). Its initial primary focus was the conversion to Christianity of the poor of the East End (Sandall 1947:42). William Booth, was deeply influenced by the revivalism of the mid-nineteenth century. Fuelled by a passion for preaching in order to secure a change of heart in his hearers, Booth's commitment to evangelism is unquestioned; it defines him. Writing in January 1889, forty-four years after his own conversion, Booth (1889:3) stated 'I will consecrate my life to persuade them to apply to Him for the deliverance that He came to bring'. This single-mindedness shaped the fledgling movement and moulded its character. The mission was eventually renamed - The *Salvation Army* (italics mine).

Booth's practices and theology drew on Methodism, American revivalism and the holiness movement, and were also deeply influenced by the urban culture and social

relations of his age (Begbie 1920a:87, Murdoch 1994:21; Walker 2001:23, 45, Green 2005:21-36). His style was revivalist and dramatic, punctuated with warnings of God's wrath and assurance of pardon, with a strong emphasis upon personal experience and the life of holiness (Walker 2001:45). He was essentially a pragmatist who used the social and cultural life of his hearers as a starting point to gain their attention.

In an age of Empire building and military power, Booth and his followers responded with their own version of conquest which would be understood by the people that they were attempting to reach. Using known and accepted social structures as models, they interpreted theological ideas in an accessible way. Seaman writes

The not particularly original concept of an army of the saved at war with the devil was made pictorially visible by the Army's distinctive martial uniform and although it relied greatly on the verbalism so traditional in evangelical religion it brought to its aid a colourful ritual and a music-hall type of music more immediately comprehensible and less initially intimidating to the unconverted than the liturgical splendors either of Rome or the Anglo-Catholics, comparatively active though both now were in their attempts to reach the poor.....It was in the best sense of the word, a brilliant form of religious vulgarisation;.. (Seaman 1973:309-310)

The members were unconventional in their approach to evangelism. This creativity eventually led to the distinctive military metaphor which is not only part of the name, but pervades the practices and theology of the movement (Walker 2001:2; Begbie 1920a:364). Within a short time many extensions of the military metaphor evolved, both in language and practice, including the use of 'battle songs' in worship, Orders and Regulations for Christian living (Sandall 1950:31-37) and military ranks.

Expansion to other countries resulted both from the grassroots as Salvationists emigrated in search of employment and began their own congregations (e.g. USA 1879, Australia 1880), and from central initiative (e.g. France 1881, India 1882). It has been argued there has never been a Salvation Army missionary society, rather there are expressions of The Salvation Army in various countries which have sought to be relevant to the local culture (Sandall 1950:225), so that the interaction between context and the tradition of the movement leads to adaptations of Salvationism that are 'culturally relative and culturally produced' (Percy 2006:12). But, despite this high ideal, the Salvation Army is not completely immune from the charge of missionary colonialism which can be levied at many nineteenth century missions (Bosch 1991:304), as the practices of the 'sending' territories were imprinted upon

the fledgling Salvationist expression (see pp. 97-98). There is the constant danger that a focus upon unity in the movement will lead to uniformity, so that The Salvation Army becomes 'monochrome - the church a gathering of the like-minded' (Percy 2006:129).

The distinctive form of governance, based on a quasi-military command structure which was adopted in 1878 when the name was changed from The Christian Mission to The Salvation Army, also contributes to this tension. By 1880, the mission stations, which became known as corps, were placed in divisions under the control of a Major to whom the mission leaders, now entitled Field Officers were responsible. They in turn reported to Headquarters and ultimately to The General, Booth himself. This, with subsequent refinements and modifications, became the basis for a centralized structure which allowed swift and flexible deployment of personnel in the interests of the organisation. As The Salvation Army expanded internationally the centralized government was maintained with the establishment of an International Headquarters (IHQ) in London.

The Salvation Army Year Book (2010a:38) states that the purpose of IHQ is to support The General in leading The Salvation Army to accomplish its mission. This is to be achieved in a number of ways, two of which hold particular relevance for this research. The first makes spiritual life development a priority for both the General, as the world leader of The Salvation Army, and for IHQ; 'to give spiritual leadership, promote the development of spiritual life within the Army, and emphasize the Army's reliance on God for the achievement of its mission.' The second is concerned with promoting 'the development and international sharing of knowledge, expertise and experience'. The development of knowledge will form an important part of this research as personal spiritual life development is explored in the context of the international Salvation Army.

The Salvation Army is divided into five zones for administrative purposes: Africa, the Americas and Caribbean, Europe, South Asia, and South Pacific and East Asia. Zonal departments at IHQ provide the main links with territories and commands, which are areas in which Salvation Army work is organized under the leadership of a Territorial Commander or Officer Commanding. Although these have considerable autonomy, they are ultimately responsible to International Headquarters. Many territories are divided into divisions which oversight the corps and centres that constitute The Salvation Army in that area. For the purposes of the research, the



zonal boundaries will form one category in the selection of interviewees and analysis of responses. Although there is great diversity in terms of culture, resources and Salvation Army expression in each zone, it is anticipated that there may also be similarities which emerge in terms of spiritual development and expectations.

This hierarchical, centralised form of governance has a significant impact upon the ethos of the movement. Although allowing for a clear chain of command, organised accountability and clarity of direction (Satterlee 2004:21-22), it also can be inflexible and static, discouraging innovation and relevance to the local or contemporary situation (Needham 1987:73) with policies imposed from IHQ in a 'top down' manner. Barbara Robinson (2006:38-45), whilst acknowledging the 'efficient, if utilitarian structure' advises thoughtful caution in handling the metaphor particularly in relation to the spiritual matters. In terms of spiritual life development, the tendency to look for a 'one size fits all' formula which can be disseminated through the existing structures to the local setting, without reference to context, may limit effective growth.

### **Women in ministry**

A distinctive feature of the demographics of Salvation Army ministry is the proportion of women Salvation Army officers. Catherine Booth (1859) had, from the 1850's, been convinced that, theologically, female ministry is justifiable. After some years writing from a theoretical perspective, she began her own preaching ministry in 1860. Working independently from William Booth, she did not preach at a mission service until January 1870 but from that time became fully involved, taking command of the work on various occasions when Booth was ill, sometimes for several months.

It is no doubt due to Catherine's influence that the first Constitution (1870) allowed women full participation in both the work and the government of the Mission. The importance of women's ministry to The Salvation Army remains to the present date. However it is significant that despite the early adoption of equal opportunity, comparatively few women have risen to high rank and responsibility (Eason 2003:157; TSA 2006b), and it was only in 1995 that married women officers were granted their rank in their own right. At the time of writing official records show that 53.4% of the officer population is female (TSA 2011). Although the preferred overall gender balance for ICO delegates is equal numbers of men and women, there is a tendency by some territories to nominate male delegates who, from a cultural

perspective, are viewed as having greater leadership potential. This is monitored and, where possible, addressed.

### **A missional focus**

The Salvation Army has retained the ethos of its origins. Booth's early commitment to the spiritual salvation of the urban poor (Begbie 1920a:357; Murdoch 1994; Green 2005:166) was eventually supplemented by acceptance of the need to address 'temporal misery (Booth 1890a: preface), in order to facilitate spiritual salvation. Viewed by some commentators as a pragmatic decision (Begbie 1920b:83; Murdoch 1994:169) and others as a corollary to Booth's theology of redemption (Green 2005:179), it has nevertheless led to a practice and policy of holistic mission which continues to shape the development of the organisation (Ferguson 2006:7; Morgan 2006:12). In most contexts, a wide definition of salvation, which encompasses aspects of healing, pardon, reconciliation and new creation, would be applied. 'The Salvation Army's mission is the mission of a Trinitarian God, whose own love seeks to include others... The Salvation Army is called to embody God's immense salvation in a wounded world' (Harris 2003:11). Whilst not unique to the organisation, this conviction, which has been expressed in activism, has nevertheless shaped its life, and contributed to its self-identity.

### **Activism**

For The Salvation Army the practices of the inner life only make sense when they are counterbalanced by a commitment to activism and mission.

In mission we express in word and deed and through the totality of our lives the compassion of God for the lost. Our identification with God in this outward movement of love for the world requires a corresponding inward movement from ourselves towards God.... (Street, 2008: 7).

This is further illustrated in the 'calls' of the International Spiritual Life Commission<sup>3</sup> which encompass life in the world as well as the inner life of the individual and community. Understanding this interrelationship is fundamental to understanding The Salvation Army, and Salvation Army officers. For The Salvation Army, the inner life and practice cannot be separated without doing violence to the whole; our spirituality (and our theology) is embodied in practice. Although this evangelical commitment to activism is not unique to The Salvation Army (see pp.29-31), it is certainly a defining characteristic which is a witness to the Church and to society.

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<sup>3</sup> A commission designed to explore the spiritual practices of the movement. See pp. 17-18

‘Throughout its history, The Salvation Army has focused on the practical side of evangelism, the call to the life of holiness and the summons to meet social needs’ (Burke 2005:41). It demonstrates that faith is fundamentally a missionary enterprise which requires attention to the spiritual life *and* active involvement in seeking to bring about transformation for individuals, groups and the structures of society. A critical appraisal of the way in which this interdependence is understood is necessary to this work (see pp. 122-129,137-139).

Similarly, the requirement for officers who are able to ‘sustain and advance the purposes of The Salvation Army’ (TSA 2005:1:1) locates officer development within the mission of the movement to ‘save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity’ (Gowans 1999:3). The ultimate goal is therefore missiological, officers must be equipped for faithful participation in the work of God as expressed by The Salvation Army.

### **Education**

The early leaders’ suspicion of academic theology is well documented. In 1877 George Scott Railton wrote to William Booth, noting the need to train evangelists, but also adamant that there should be ‘no college, no book but the Bible, nothing but living teaching’ (quoted in Sandall 1947:224). This feeling was later reinforced by Booth’s concern that ministerial education would lead to loss of zeal, (Murdoch 1994:21; Hill 2006:88) writing that ‘in the training of cadets the spiritual effect is above all considered, we do not profess to give education’ (TSA 1882:165). In fact these opinions are not simply anti-intellectualism but an expression of a particular concern that educated clergy would lead to loss of contact with the urban poor who were the focus of The Salvation Army’s mission and ministry. Booth had discovered early that his most effective evangelists were people who shared the culture and education of the hearers. He did not want to jeopardise the fledgling work, and so chose to train officers in the practicalities of mission, only offering the necessities of education. However, the long term effect of this strategy was to create a suspicion of academic theology within the movement. Officer training has been viewed as a practical preparation rather than an educational process, and ongoing academic education for officers seen as the exception rather than the norm.

In fact, by 1903, William Booth’s perspective had shifted considerably, as is evidenced in the publication of his vision for a ‘*World University for the Cultivation of the Science of Humanity in Connection with the Salvation Army*’. Based upon the

premise that more efficient expansion would be facilitated by more capable officers, Booth proposed the development of a global institution with parent bodies in England and the United States which would be linked to affiliated institutions around the world. It would have three main aims: teaching on practical godliness; detailed instruction in some form of Salvation Army work; and practical training in the given field. Primarily designed for the development of officers, it would also be open to other students. It would be staffed by 'the most intelligent, devoted and experienced Officers in the entire Army' (Booth W. 1903:8).

Booth's unrealised dream seems more realistic in the twenty first century than in the nineteenth. In 1982, the creation of 'The William and Catherine Booth Bible College' in Winnipeg, Canada, marked a step towards fulfilment. Now renamed Booth University College it offers web-based courses throughout the world, thus moving towards the fulfilment of the vision in ways that Booth could not anticipate. A gradual shift towards the appreciation of academic theology is gaining momentum. John Larsson (2005:5) writing for an edition of *Word and Deed*, a journal dedicated to Salvationist academic theology, strongly endorsed the connection between education and practice.

It is time to discard forever the false presupposition that has dogged us as an Army that higher education and action are opposites. It is wrong to think that you have to choose between the two, that you cannot have both... As a Salvation Army we need leaders who are both scholars and dynamos: informed men and women of action.

Thus education must take its place in Salvationist culture as a partner with spiritual formation and with practice. Often viewed as the least important of the three, education is typically approached pragmatically: it informs the learner, but also has the potential to contribute to their practice, and as a result of this may lead to transformation, not only of the individual, but also of the structures with which they interact.

### **The International Spiritual Life Commission**

This research is directly related to the work and outcome of the International Spiritual Life Commission. Subsequent to discussions at the International Conference of Leaders in 1994, General Paul Rader convened an International Spiritual Life Commission which would 'review the ways in which The Salvation Army cultivates and sustains the spiritual life of its people' (Street 2008:ix). The

Commission would seek to clarify and re-affirm those practices which are integral to the spiritual life of the Army and which contribute to its unity and unique character. Noting that The Salvation Army is a place where more than two million people experience connectedness with the body of Christ, Rader said 'simply put, it is time for us to take more seriously issues related to our inner life. We owe it to our people. It is essential to maintaining the engine of commitment and passion. Our mission is energised by our spirituality' (Street 2008:x). Also citing the proliferation of new religious expression in contemporary society and the complexity of moral and social issues, Rader suggested that Salvationists must have a clear grasp of their faith and the ability to relate it to life. During 1996 and 1997 the Spiritual Life Commission met five times, each time for five days. Membership began at fifteen but was increased to eighteen, with some involvement in meetings by some of the ten corresponding members.

The report (Appendix D:256-268), which had been endorsed by the International Leaders' Conference in Melbourne (March 1998), was first published in *The Officer* and in pamphlet form in June 1998, followed by a series of practical recommendations in October 1998. Entitled *Called to be God's People*, it notes a perceived necessary relationship between the spiritual life and Christian practice.

the vitality of our spiritual life as a movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in evangelism and service, but the springs of our spiritual life are to be found in our turning to God in worship, in the disciplines of life in the Spirit and in the study of God's word (TSA 1998:1).

It was composed of twelve 'calls' to Salvationists, each accompanied by an affirmation, which were designed to guard, encourage and sustain aspects of the spiritual life. These encompass worship, the inner life, life in the Salvationist community, and mission. Whilst not lacking in depth of understanding, the report is a reflection of the work of the Commission which did not have an academic focus, but was an exploration of the practice and norms of Salvationist spirituality. The calls and affirmations were expanded by the Chair of the International Spiritual Life Commission, Robert Street, in a book, also entitled *Called to be God's People* (1999, 2008), which has been translated into a number of languages. From the beginning it was expected that every territory and command would 'promote the calls in the way which best suits their culture and situation' (Street 1998:29). In addition, since 1999, the international focus upon spiritual life has led to two major developments. A Secretary for Spiritual Life Development was appointed to monitor

the progress of the recommendations and promote teaching related to the twelve calls. This was initially a travelling brief, combined with other responsibilities, and consisted mainly of teaching and speaking engagements, however in 2008 as the Centre for Spiritual Life Development (CSLD) was opened, the appointment changed to reflect the new responsibilities.

### **The Centre for Spiritual Life Development**

An initial proposal to establish a Centre for Spiritual Life Development (undated but written after 2006) reads ‘...let us consider what The Salvation Army offers, on an international level, to its officers, to assure and maintain personal spiritual growth and unity of vision and purpose....’ (TSA nd:1). Noting the emergence of leadership training programmes around the world, which are often focused upon youth but do not necessarily reflect traditional Salvation Army patterns or structures, the writer suggests that there is an unmet need within The Salvation Army for spiritual life development. Furthermore, this is seen to be a direct result of a loss of nerve and loss of individuality. ‘The signs are that we have lost the courage to set the example, to dare to be different. The Salvation Army seems, in many cultures to be losing something of its unique personality and identity in the Church’ (TSA nd:1).

It is significant that both the rationale for the Spiritual Life Commission and this proposal seem to suggest that the development of spiritual life in The Salvation Army should be in some way distinctive and linked to Salvationist identity. There is an assumption that there is a *Salvationist* spirituality which must be safeguarded and which is in some way linked to the future of the denomination as a unique part of the universal Church. As this research investigates the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers it will draw upon the wider tradition of the Church, and particularly of evangelicalism, whilst also considering the extent to which Salvation Army spirituality may be described as unique or distinctive. It will also explore the extent to which this assumption of a single spiritual identity reflects the reality experienced by the research subjects.

### **For such a time as this.....**

The spiritual life has always been central to Salvation Army officership. In 1895, William Booth (1895:2) wrote that, when it became evident that converts were not moving on to existing churches, he was ‘driven to select men and women, who I knew to be lovers of souls and to be living holy lives, for the purpose of caring for the new converts’. A few years later when the pattern of officership was established,

advice to a young officer, entitled. '*On keeping first things first*', and dated February 1914, states 'foremost among the first is the welfare of your own soul. As is the state of fire to the steam engine, so is the condition of your soul to your work. A neglected fire means less steam, and after a bit, failure to move the train. A neglected soul means less strength, and after a bit, a fainting under the burden of the day' (Booth 1921:6).

The analogy of health and welfare remains current. In 2002, *Servants Together*, (TSA 2002:117) called The Salvation Army to 'provide resources for the spiritual development of its leaders' and 'a means of accountability for spiritual progress and remedy for spiritual lapse'. Shaw Clifton (2009:2) in his keynote address to the 2009 International Conference of Leaders noted 'it is vital that spiritual leaders stay spiritually healthy', and following a consultation with the leaders of the South Pacific and East Asia zone Robert Street (2010:25) highlighted the connection of officers' spiritual health and welfare to the spiritual well-being, and the effectiveness, of the organisation.

Similarly, from the beginning, the primary focus of officer training was seen to be spiritual development. This has remained a constant priority, colleges are required to produce officers who 'know God, know themselves and know their mission' (TSA 2005:1:3). Thus, throughout the history of Salvation Army officership, the importance of personal spiritual experience is evidenced both as a qualification for ministry and as a necessity to effective work.

It could therefore be asked why the CSLD has been established at this time. A major factor is the perception that the historical focus is being given new impetus and there is a movement towards spiritual renewal in parts of the Army world. Janet Munn (2011), the director of the CSLD writes 'The Salvation Army is in a time of spiritual renewal, of re-awakening to the fire of God on the inside of people that fuels all the outward activity and service'. Eva Burrows (in Faragher 2010:vii) describes this development in the Australian context;

Indications of this renewal have seen the resurgence of prayer in corps life, the establishment of Bible study home groups to delve more deeply and devotionally into God's Word, and united fellowship gatherings to strengthen the spiritual life of Salvationists – leading to a more intimate relationship with God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Involvement with the 24/7 prayer movement began in the United Kingdom in 2001 but is now international. Prayer has become interactive in many settings, it is 'done' rather than listened to, or read. At the same time, Salvationists have begun to explore how, despite a proud heritage of activism, The Salvation Army also has a contemplative tradition (Shepherd 2003:13; Farager 2010:4). Some areas of the world, including New Zealand, Australia and Canada, have begun to facilitate spiritual direction, both in initial officer training and during ministry (Sampson 2010, Ivany 2010, Farager 2010:162-163). The establishment of the CSLD has provided a central reference point as these developments progress.

It might be suggested that this climate of renewal is symptomatic of a recognition of, and response to, the life cycle of the religious organisation. In 1985 Bramwell H. Tillesley (1985:361) wrote of the movement which is marked by intensity, zeal and enthusiasm; the institution, where organisation, strategic plans and regimentation are evident; and the museum, which looks back to former glories but has lost all life. He wondered if the Army had 'regressed from a movement to an institution'. By 1993 (1993:341) he spoke of his 'heart-longing' for revival which would prevent the completion of the pattern. Terry Camsay (2008:21) suggests that Tillesley was an optimist and that many believe that The Army is now a 'museum' in need of revitalisation, experiencing 'doubt about relevance, inability to adapt, loss of purpose and vision, nostalgia for the "good old days" and increasing ineffectiveness as the old methods are applied with increasing vigour'. He calls for the beginning of a new cycle in the lifecycle of The Salvation Army, a response to contemporary needs which builds on the past but does not attempt to replicate it. But there is also a call for caution in response to new innovation and the adoption of spiritual practices from other parts of the Church (Street 2007:9). Evaluation and critique may be a future function of the CLSD.

Furthermore these changes mirror the rising evangelical interest in spirituality that, over the past two decades, has become 'one of the most notable features of a growing, world-wide movement better known for its doctrinal disputes, evangelistic fervour, and activist temperament' (George 2003:1). A factor in the changing mood of western society is the displacement of secular humanism by a new sense of spirituality (Webber 2002:44; Houston 2003:29), which is in turn reflected in the Church (Boa 2001:19). The Salvation Army's decision to establish a Centre for Spiritual Life Development may be, in part, a response to this change.



### **Current provision for officer spiritual life development in The Salvation Army.**

If the Centre for Spiritual Life Development is to be effective in providing and shaping a way forward it is important to gain some clarity about current provision within The Salvation Army, both in terms of initial officer training and officer development. This section will draw upon entries from my professional journal between October 2009 and May 2011, and denominational resources.

#### *Spiritual formation in initial officer training.*

The requirements for spiritual formation as described in *Orders and Regulations for the Training of Salvation Army Officers* (2005:3.1) are universal, however their outworking varies according to culture, resources available and the ethos of the college. The 'traditional' formulation of daily private devotions, monthly weekday 'spiritual days' and college 'in-Sundays' providing corporate worship and teaching, supplemented by a personal interview programme remains the basic pattern for spiritual development, but is interpreted with considerable flexibility.

Three broad approaches are evident in the policies of training colleges. Firstly, an instrumental approach to assessing spiritual life development relies upon successful demonstration of communication and ministry skills as evidence of growth towards spiritual maturity. So the perception of spiritual development is closely bound up with a view of officer training in which an adequate skills base is key to a spiritually mature officer ministry (Kenya, India Eastern). Secondly, an academic focus adds teaching on spiritual disciplines and the history of spirituality as a framework for understanding development (Zimbabwe, United Kingdom, Canada), and a third range of practices are concerned with the holistic development of the individual through mentoring (Switzerland, Finland, Norway), peer feedback (Switzerland), small groups (United Kingdom) and psychological testing (Finland). One territory, Canada, has endeavoured to foster the integration of spiritual formation, field training (practical skills) and academic learning 'under one umbrella' so that the whole training experience is formational of the whole person. Cathie Harris, formerly head of the spiritual formation team, commented that 'it is very difficult to do in practice, but theological reflection helps' (Harris 2010). Two academic studies give some indication of the desire to ensure accountability in the spiritual formation programme during initial officer training. Julie Slous (MA, Canada:2003) developed a blueprint for spiritual mentoring as a nurturing and accountability structure, and Mavis Humphreys (BTh, Zimbabwe:2005) evaluated the use of competence-based assessment in spiritual formation.

Thus there is no single starting point for spiritual development within officership. It will vary with territory, years of service and each individual. Consequently the provision of the CSLD must respond to this diversity and difference by offering a multi-faceted and flexible approach to spiritual life development which will be accessible to all its constituents.

#### *Post commissioning spiritual formation*

Approximately four times a year the General's Consultative Council meets for three or four days to consider issues relevant to the life and mission of The Salvation Army. The group consists of senior leaders from International Headquarters and a small percentage of Territorial Leaders on a rota basis. It is significant that the main theme of the meeting held in January 2009 was *'The spiritual formation and development of officers'*. This represents another strand in the strategic focus upon spiritual life in The Salvation Army begun by the establishment of the International Spiritual Life Commission and illustrates the perceived significance of the subject in the early years of the twenty first century. A questionnaire, devised at IHQ, relating to policy, practice and provision in territories and commands resulted in a brief report which was prepared specifically for the event. An overall impression is of diversity in all three areas, with the little common ground except the provision of conferences and events. Specific responses from this report will be brought into conversation with the empirical research results in Chapter 8.

The Annual Spiritual Life report to IHQ has been instigated since the inception of the CSLD. It is submitted by territories and commands at the beginning of each calendar year, requiring a summary of policies and activities relevant to the three areas of the CSLD mission; conferences and events; provision of resources and policy and planning. Although not exclusively devoted to officer spiritual life, some questions are directly or indirectly relevant (Appendix E:269). Following some pilot reports in 2009 followed by substantial revision of the guidelines, 2011 is the first year of submission (relating to activities and processes in 2010). Although this adds another layer to the annual territorial reporting process, the intentional and systematic reflection upon the profile of spiritual life development in a territory is a valuable exercise at the local level. It gives opportunity to celebrate what is being achieved, to identify any gaps, to commit to new initiatives and to plan for the long term. Perhaps its most significant benefit is that the reporting process requires that the notion of spiritual life development is given attention, and is not assumed to be

something that will 'happen naturally' through the normal activities of the territory. Again the responses proved to be diverse, with a similar focus upon the provision of events and conferences as a means of developing spiritual life.

It is significant that both *The spiritual formation and development of officers* and the Annual Spiritual Life report are examples of the bureaucratic process of The Salvation Army and, as such, will give a picture of reality from a particular perspective. In effect they are representations of the self-perception of territories to the hierarchy, formal processes that will not necessarily reflect the experience of individuals in the Territory. Some may be perfunctory; others give an 'official' version of policy with little reference to real situations. They are therefore of limited value in disclosing actual practice relating to spiritual life development in The Salvation Army. Thus it was important to supplement these institutional responses with a more immediate and lived experience of spiritual life development, drawn from the experience of individuals, and separate from the bureaucratic processes.

So it can be seen although there is a recognisable pattern for spiritual formation in initial training, for commissioned officers there is no reliable data to suggest a common pattern of spiritual life development. It is therefore inevitable that the CSLD will need to make judgements between those strategies and resources that may be transferable, and those that will need to be culturally specific, or individually tailored.

This chapter has explored the history, ethos and current practice of The Salvation Army, in order that spiritual life development can be understood in context. It is now important to place the denominational theology and spirituality within the broad spectrum of the Christian Church in order that the wider perspective may lend insight and challenge.

## Chapter 2

### The Salvation Army and evangelicalism

The mandate of the International Spiritual Life Commission, which was ‘convened to examine and identify aspects of the Army’s life which are essential or integral to the spiritual growth of individual Salvationists and the Movement itself (Street 2008:1), illustrates the tendency to assume that there is a uniquely Salvationist spirituality. Similarly the initial proposal for the Centre for Spiritual Life Development indicates a need to ‘revive, refocus and reinforce the God-given personality of The Salvation Army’ (TSA nd:1-2).

A task of this research is to investigate and identify this ‘personality’ and its relationship to the Christian Church. Beginning from the self-understanding of the movement ‘as an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church’ (TSA 2010a: front page), this chapter will explore the relationship of The Salvation Army to evangelicalism. A dialogue between the markers of evangelicalism and Salvation Army belief and practice will establish its place as an evangelical movement. In the next chapter the ‘calls’ of the International Spiritual Life Commission will provide a framework in which the contours of Salvationist spirituality can be examined in relation to evangelical spirituality, which in turn reflects or is distinct from the spirituality of the wider Church.

As there is little Salvation Army academic writing in this field, throughout the course of the work I propose to draw upon short articles, particularly those published in *The Officer*, books written for congregational use and the Salvation Army heritage of song writing to illustrate and substantiate my argument. This use of popular sources seems appropriate in order to locate The Salvation Army, and Salvationist spirituality, in the wider context of evangelicalism which has been described as a spirituality of ordinary people rather than of scholars (Gillett 1993:18; Randall 2005: 15) that is most often expressed in song (Gillett 1993:19; Tidball 1994:197; Randall 2005:76).

Cameron *et al* (2010:54), in seeking to articulate the theology embedded in practice, offer a ‘working tool’ of four, distinct but overlapping and interrelated ‘voices’ of theology which can provide a framework for understanding. The four voices, operant, espoused, normative and formal, represent the theology embedded in

actual practice, the group's articulation of its beliefs, the sources of theological authority, and the theology of theologians and dialogue with other disciplines. A slightly adapted model will be used in this research in order to integrate the conceptual framework with the empirical research through a theological lens. The research data will reveal the operant spirituality of the subjects through patterns of practice and articulated opinion. A second strand of operant spirituality will be provided by material gleaned in my professional practice; informal conversations, meetings and opportunities to teach at seminars. These can then be brought into mutual critical dialogue with the espoused spirituality of the Salvation Army as found in the writings of Salvationists, and the normative understanding of spirituality which is articulated in official documents including the *Handbook of Doctrine* (2010), *Orders and Regulations*, and the *Report of the International Spiritual Life Commission*, in order to disclose similarity and difference. Formal voices from the Christian tradition and academic theology will provide a benchmark for authenticity and legitimation for practice as a valid expression of Christian spirituality. And formal voices from academic educational theory will provide perspective, challenge assumptions and enable the articulation of a tentative way forward which is informed by, but not dependent upon, the results of the empirical research.

### **The marks of evangelicalism**

Describing evangelicalism as 'a significant movement within the history of the Church, which transcends national and denominational differences,' Derek Tidball (1994:1) nevertheless acknowledges the difficulties in achieving a precise definition which is acceptable to all. Evangelicalism is a constantly evolving, diverse and dynamic movement but nevertheless he suggests that, although John Stott's concise description of 'Bible people' and 'gospel people' (Stott 1977:6,10) provides the starting point for more detailed and nuanced understanding, David Bebbington's four distinguishing marks of evangelicalism provide 'as near to a consensus as we might ever expect to reach' (Tidball 1994:14). Similarly, Ian Randall (2005:20) notes that studies of evangelicalism since Bebbington have generally followed his argument. Based on historical research in the United Kingdom context (1730s to 1980s), Bebbington (1989:4) concludes that 'conversionism, activism, biblicism and crucicentrism form the defining attributes of evangelical religion'.

Salvationist authors, whilst constantly affirming the claim to be 'an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church' have tended to assume that the word evangelical is self-explanatory, or that The Salvation Army's place in evangelicalism is a 'given'

(e.g. Burke 2005:41). Two writers call on Bebbington's criteria, albeit briefly. Clifton (1999:35-49) following an analysis of evangelical history as rooted in pietism and the eighteenth century revivals, argues that the most significant concern for evangelicalism is 'the essential nature of the personal and experiential dimension of the Christian faith' (1999:37), as a response to the rationalism of the Enlightenment. He then draws on the influence of Francis Shaeffer to highlight the importance of the practical outworking of belief, finally concluding that evangelicalism is ultimately united by the 'grand concepts of Biblicism, conversionism, activism and crucicentrism' and that 'these four pillars characterize and sustain Salvationist evangelicalism as we enter the twenty-first century' (1999:45). Christine Faragher (2010:12), in her exploration of the contemplative stream in Salvationist spirituality, lists Bebbington's criteria and states succinctly 'that is us'. This is true both historically and at the present time. The origins of the Salvation Army are rooted directly in the period of Bebbington's research and each of the four marks still has relevance for Salvationist identity.

### *Biblicism*

The first of Bebbington's (1989:12) key marks is the evangelical emphasis upon the priority of the Bible as inspired by God and as the primary foundation for Christian belief and practice, although the precise understanding of inspiration and way of outworking the belief has always varied. David Gillett (1993:137-138) writing of evangelical spirituality notes that the Bible is viewed as foundational to faith, an agent for change in the individual and the Christian community, a means of formation and a primary reference point for guidance. But at times this prominence has sometimes become dominance, so that the Bible itself has become the focus rather than the means by which God is made known, a source of divine encounter. Nevertheless, as Tidball (1994:79-97) and Randall (2005:58) have demonstrated, the claim that the Bible is trustworthy and true does not necessarily lead to a claim for inerrancy or infallibility, and does not preclude engagement with critical Biblical scholarship.

The Salvation Army's theology is summarised in eleven articles of faith (Appendix F:270-271), which rely heavily upon the Methodist New Connexion Doctrines of 1838. The evangelical emphasis upon the Bible is clearly outlined in the first doctrine: 'We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God and that they only constitute the divine rule of Christian faith and practice' (TSA 2010b:xv). The Salvation Army regards the Bible as a record of

the self-revelation of God and, although reason, experience and tradition are not discounted, scripture is counted as having unique authority in authenticating spiritual truth, thus clearly echoing the evangelical pattern. Understanding is achieved through study and interpretation in dialogue with the contemporary context and personal faith, so that 'true authority emerges from learning to understand scripture in the light of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the ongoing tradition of the Church' (TSA 2010b:22). But The Salvation Army is not entirely exempt from the criticism that evangelicalism, although firmly committed to the Bible 'often does not listen to it with adequate care, read it without prejudice or obey it in sufficient measure' (Tidball 1994:97). Despite the ideal, varied standards of, and approaches to, Biblical understanding and interpretation pervade the movement.

### *Crucicentrism*

The second of Bebbington's markers, crucicentrism, or the centrality of the cross of Jesus to evangelical belief and preaching, derives from evangelical understanding of the Biblical story. The cross is the symbol of reconciliation between humanity and God, and the locus of the demonstration of divine love in the face of evil.

This belief is evidenced in Salvationist thought and practice. Salvation Army doctrine six reads 'We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, has by his suffering and death, made an atonement for the whole world, so that whosoever will may be saved' (TSA 2010b:xv). Central in number as sixth of eleven, this doctrine also holds central place in the story of Salvation Army belief. Beliefs about the importance of the Bible, the nature of God and the nature of humanity lead to this point, that 'God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ' (2 Corinthians 5:19), and from this flows the need for human response, growth in holiness and the significance of last things. The *Handbook of Doctrine* states 'the cross of Jesus Christ stands at the very heart of the Christian faith... Once and for all, Jesus' death and resurrection opened the way for humanity to be reconciled to a loving God' (TSA 2010b:127). Salvationist theology and hymnody demonstrates a clear commitment to crucicentrism.

Deep were the scarlet stains of sin,  
Strong were the bonds of fault within;  
But now I stand both pure and free  
The blood of Jesus cleanses me. (Holbrook in TSA 1986:176)

That through atoning blood outpoured  
Our broken peace might be restored! (Orsborn in TSA 1986:135)

### *Conversionism*

Thirdly, the experience and theology of conversion is fundamental to evangelicalism. This is the notion that turning away from sin or rebellion, and turning towards God, expressing commitment and faith, is accompanied by God's work in the believer, which is known as regeneration, or the giving of new life. Interpretations of how this takes place vary, with some stressing a gradual process and others a decisive instantaneous change, but the result must be faith, a 'whole-hearted commitment and total personal trust in Jesus' (Tidball 1994:118).

The call for a decisive decision for Christ is embedded deeply in the roots of the Salvation Army. Writing soon after the change of name from The Christian Mission to The Salvation Army, William Booth (1890b:2) stated 'We are a salvation people - this is our speciality - getting saved and keeping saved and getting somebody else saved and then getting ourselves saved more and more...'. This priority is implied in the final phrase of Salvation Army doctrine 6 which states that 'whosoever will may be saved' (TSA 2010b:xv). This shows clearly the Arminian roots of Salvationist theology, conversion is for all who will respond. Derek Tidball (1994:19), a Baptist, gives a summary of evangelical convictions:

It is the firm evangelical belief that the thief, the sexual pervert, the alcoholic, the materialist, the busy-body and the terrorist, to name but a few, can be transformed by conversion and, through the consequent reception of new God-given abilities to overcome sin, they can adopt new standards, values and attitudes in life and live in an entirely new way, with a desire to be godly; in other words, become a new person.

This exactly reflects Salvationist belief. Conversionism is not only inherent in the name, it is embedded in its purposes, motivation and understanding of faith.

I believe in transformation,  
God can change the hearts of men, (*sic*)  
And refine the evil nature  
Till it glows with grace again. (Gowans in TSA 1986:324)

### *Activism*

The fourth key characteristic of evangelicalism, activism, flows from its commitment to crucicentrism and conversionism. The centrality of the redeeming work of Christ on the cross, and the call to individuals to respond, leads to activism which is a 'proper and deeply spiritual response to the grace of God' (Stanley, 2002:81). The impetus to share the gospel, or good news, with others who have not yet heard,



understood or responded is a natural consequence of the other beliefs. It is the corollary to understanding God as missional, active in the world, and involved in its ongoing life (Gillett 1993:158). This has been evident during waves of revivalism, although it is also a constant feature of evangelical teaching and church life (Bebbington 1989:117; Tidball 1994:125).

Glen Scorgie (2007:144) argues that the activist mindset has led to diminishing attention to the relational and transformational aspects of faith.

In any given situation, it feels natural for us to ask first, "What does God want me to be doing? Just tell me what to do and I'll do it." But it is not so easy for us to remember to ask other questions, such as: "What is God trying to say to me right now?" or "How does God want to craft and shape me through this experience?" Not just one, but all three questions need to be asked and answered.

Activism pervades The Salvation Army, and can be seen in attitudes to personal belief, worship, church life and, significantly for the purposes of this thesis, Salvation Army officership. Salvationist congregational life is inconceivable without a missional focus; a corps (church) that does not include some form of evangelistic focus would be deemed to be ineffective. The methods have changed - many of the missional activities in the twenty first century rely upon building personal relationships and offering services rather than the traditional aggressive evangelism of an earlier time - but the motivation remains. The Salvation Army soldiers' (members) covenant states that the individual will 'be faithful to the purposes for which God raised up The Salvation Army, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, endeavouring to win others for him, and in his name caring for the needy and disadvantaged' (TSA 2010b:321). This is echoed and expanded in the Officers' Covenant (TSA 2010b:322) which is signed by all officers upon ordination and commissioning.

Called by God to proclaim the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as an officer of The Salvation Army, I bind myself to him in this solemn covenant: to love and serve him supremely all my days, to live to win souls and make their salvation the first purpose of my life, to care for the poor, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, love the unlovable, and befriend those who have no friends, to maintain the doctrines and principles of The Salvation Army, and by God's grace, to prove myself a worthy officer.

This document has a momentum which fosters an activist mindset. Ministry is rooted in activity. 'Called to proclaim' issues in related actions in which 'being' is in danger of being obscured by 'doing'. Tidball (1994:167) argues that it is logical that a

missional focus will result in functional forms of leadership, whilst Gillett (1993:61) suggests a temptation to seek acceptance by God in frenetic activity. Historically, Salvation Army officership has been defined in terms of function (examples include Boardman 1972:516; Clifton 1974:410; Yuill 1985:62; see pp 182-183) although Guy (1986:18) notes difficulties in discerning exact functions. Conversely, Harold Hill (2006:79, 191) argues that a functional understanding of officership now has the status of cultural mythology but that 'current reality has drifted from that ideal' in favour of a *de facto* claim to clerical status. This necessarily creates a tension in officer self-understanding. An aspect of this thesis will be to question the balance of popular Salvationist spiritual understanding, particularly in relation to the activist mindset of the movement.

Thus Bebbington's key markers of historical evangelicalism provide a normative tool which allows The Salvation Army to be located firmly as an evangelical movement. Although the outworking is somewhat different from the Victorian origins, the essential characteristics remain. Salvationist thought and life finds its origins in the Bible, and its activist ethos is motivated by a focus upon the cross which demands a personal response.

### **Contemporary criticisms of evangelicalism in relation to The Salvation Army**

Writing in the North American context, Roger Green (2003:59) argues that both in theology and practice The Salvation Army is rooted in the evangelical tradition and suggests that 'clarity about that relationship will serve to strengthen both the Army and evangelicalism'. Locating The Salvation Army historically in the Wesleyan holiness tradition, Green lists the six 'controlling convictions' expressed by Alister McGrath (McGrath 1994:51) as critical to the continuation of evangelicalism, and by extension, The Salvation Army. Whilst these are similar to Bebbington's four criteria, McGrath adds the Lordship of the Holy Spirit and the importance of Christian community, and places a different emphasis on the doctrine of Christ, which for McGrath encompasses his deity and Lordship as well as his saving work. Green then explores four contemporary criticisms of evangelicalism in relation to The Salvation Army. His approach is structural, concentrating upon denominational policy and features. However, I believe that each of the criticisms is also relevant to spiritual life in evangelicalism and the Salvation Army.

Firstly, there is a failure to appreciate the richness of other traditions. David Gillett (1993:2) suggests that spirituality has not traditionally been a focus for the

evangelicalism but that as the tradition evolves there is need for openness to other traditions, whilst retaining an understanding of the roots of evangelicalism and realising what is distinctive about it. This new openness is mirrored in Salvationist practice and writing as it draws upon the wider traditions of the Church, for example in its commitment to the 24/7 prayer movement (Bennett J. 2009), and exploration of spiritual direction as a way forward for officer initial officer training and subsequent development (Slous 2003:19; Faragher 2010:162-163). Faragher (2010:47-48) in her exposition of a contemplative stream in Salvationist spirituality writes

For while we (Salvationists) express ourselves primarily in the language of evangelicalism, we know ourselves to be called to deep, personal and loving relationships with God, expressed in compassionate ministry and in a growing, lived out, personal and social holiness. This is about interior transformation.

Faragher's thesis is that this is evidence of a separate contemplative stream in Salvationist spirituality, but it has been obscured by the dominant activist ethos. She demonstrates that the early leaders understood and valued contemplative spirituality, integrating it with action (2010:105) but argues that most contemporary Salvationists see themselves as belonging to evangelical and social justice streams of Christianity and have not been exposed to more contemplative traditions (2010: 42). However, this is perhaps too stark a contrast. The Salvationist tradition of holiness teaching and experience demands both engagement with the world and inner focus on God. Furthermore, the evangelical movement, of which The Salvation Army is a part, did not develop in isolation, and shows resonances with other theological and spiritual movements in the Christian Church, including contemplative spirituality (Adam 1988:6; Gordon 1991:9).

Secondly, evangelicalism has been accused of intellectual shallowness, possibly because the commitment to activism may have led to neglect of deep and rich theological thinking (Tidball 1994:228). In addition, the strong emphasis upon personal experience and trust in the work of Jesus on the cross seems to have engendered a distrust of critical academic theology in some parts of evangelicalism. Mark Noll (1994:4) argues that 'to articulate a theology that is faithful both to the evangelical tradition and to modern standards of academic discourse is not in itself the primary problem' but failure to think within a specifically Christian framework across the whole spectrum of academic discourse *is* the 'scandal of the evangelical mind' (1994:7). However, Green's (2003:62) contention is that historically The

Salvation Army 'failed to follow John Wesley in his appreciation for the life of the mind' and would include in this critique attention to a developed critical academic theology. There are now calls to redress this balance (Knight 2002:30-31; Burke 2005:42; Larsson 2005:5; Raymond 2005:12; Cairns 2007:18). Clifton (1999:38) argues that it is possible to be both evangelical and scholarly, combining the warmth of personal experience with keenness of mind, and suggests that intellectual understanding will enable Salvationists to enter into mutuality of understanding with other traditions. It might also be argued that there is evidence of depth of thought in the espoused theology of the movement, often expressed in its hymnody, or popular writing.

A third criticism accuses evangelicalism of failure to maintain the social commitments of early evangelicalism, particularly in relation to social justice issues. It is possible that during the early years of the twentieth century evangelicals began to concentrate upon personal evangelisation, fearing that the social vision of the nineteenth century had 'diluted' the pure gospel (Bosch 1991:403; Randall 2006:110). Although The Salvation Army has, throughout its history, retained a commitment to social services, it too has sometimes failed to speak for social justice. The relatively recent establishment of the International Social Justice Commission (2007) is an institutional commitment which both reflects, and is reflected by, local initiatives to reclaim to reclaim this focus as an intentional outworking of spiritual understanding (Shakespeare 2010a:3,14,17).

Finally, Green discusses the criticism that evangelicalism has accommodated itself to contemporary culture and so fails to make an impact upon it. The tension between relevant communication and compromise with culture is a recurring theme in Salvationist writing (Garnham 1998:5-8; Shakespeare 2002:56-60; Merritt, 2002:49-53, Camsay 2008:20-22), which also impacts upon spiritual experience and understanding. To what extent can spiritual experience be re-defined in contemporary terms before it loses its meaning? (Reardon 2010:1). Conversely, does the traditional terminology and understanding of spiritual experience actually mean anything to those who have not studied its foundations, or see it as irrelevant to twenty-first century living? Thus, certainly within the espoused theology of the organisation, there is both celebration of evangelical engagement with culture and an appreciation of the challenges that this can bring.

Green (2003:66) concludes that it is necessary for The Salvation Army, with other evangelicals, to find ways of moving into the future that are biblically focused, Christ honouring and life affirming, 'a particular and intentional expression of the evangelical and Wesleyan tradition'. Here we see a commitment to The Salvation Army's Wesleyan roots that is particularly prominent in Green's North American context, but less acknowledged in other parts of the world where the historical roots are acknowledged, but other influences are seen as more significant, both historically and in the contemporary Salvation Army (Lydholm 2004:72; Parkin 2004:39; Kleman 2011:71).

Thus it is possible to locate the Salvation Army within the broad historical framework of evangelicalism as a Biblicist, crucicentric, conversionist and activist movement, and to demonstrate that each of Bebbington's criteria are deeply embedded in the current ethos of the movement. A brief discussion of Green's article also shows the relevance of contemporary criticisms of evangelicalism to The Salvation Army, although recent history suggests a willingness to address these in a number of ways. The next chapter will build upon this discussion, with particular reference to Salvationist spiritual understanding and practices.

## **Chapter 3**

### **The Salvation Army and evangelical spirituality**

Having located The Salvation Army within the broad framework of evangelicalism, this chapter will explore key texts in evangelical spirituality and so provide a historical and theological background for a subsequent review of the calls of the International Spiritual Life Commission. This will position the Salvation Army's self-understanding in the wider context, identifying similarities to evangelical norms and distinctive features.

#### **Evangelical spirituality**

In his historical account of evangelical spirituality, seen through the stories of evangelical activists and thinkers, James Gordon (1991:7) stated that while no characteristic is unique, taken together Bebbington's key markers represent 'a doctrinal and experiential framework which has produced a particular expression of Christian piety'. He identifies the central theme in evangelical spirituality as new life lived in the power of grace which is both disturbing and recreating. The understanding of this experience appears to provide the content for a spirituality which is succinctly described as 'lived doctrine'. Further explanation relates doctrine to the inner life and praxis.

Spirituality is doctrine prayed, experienced and lived in a life of committed obedience to Christ.... Second, the conformity of the will to God, the renewal of the mind and the transforming of the moral life by the Spirit of Christ, are the ethical goals of such obedience... Third, this inner dynamic of moral obedience must find external expression in lifestyle and behaviour, and this too is an integral part of spiritual experience.... Finally, the Christian spiritual life requires stimulus to promote growth and nourishment to sustain it; the means of grace are integral to a balanced spirituality (Gordon 1991:3, 6).

This evangelical perspective echoes that of theologians from the wider Church. For example, Roman Catholic scholar Philip Sheldrake (1991:60) states that spirituality is about the 'whole of human life at depth' which necessarily includes questions about our understanding of the nature of God, of humanity and the relationship between them, and the development of a conscious relationship with God through Christ in the context of the Christian community. Spirituality is in effect 'concerned with the conjunction of theology, prayer and practical Christianity' (1991:60). This definition was adopted by Randall in his work on evangelical spirituality, *What a friend we have in Jesus* (2005). It is a call to live and experience faith as well as

understand it (Houston 2003:34), which has variously been described as knowing, being and doing (Boa 2001:300), and head, heart and hands (Hollinger 2005:16).

Understanding spirituality as a dynamic interplay between understanding, the inner life and praxis provides a holistic approach which is consistent with the evangelical insistence that personal experience leads to action. It is undoubtedly true that, despite an activism which can seem to dominate, evangelicalism is shaped by a spirituality that is both deeply personal and corporate, both inward facing and demanding engagement with the world.

The importance of the personal dimension is evident in the work of John Cockerton (1994:3) who judged spirituality to be 'that way of regarding Christian living which articulates the believers' personal relationship to God', which goes beyond a narrow understanding of spirituality as prayer. Similarly, Kenneth Boa (2001:19) writes of 'an all-encompassing, lifelong response to God's gracious initiatives in the lives of those whose trust is centred in the person and work of Jesus Christ'. Nevertheless, although it is deeply personal (Tidball 1994:200; Randall 2005:23), evangelical spirituality is not individualistic or solipsistic, but is outward facing as it shapes the interaction between individual believers and their context, the Church and the world.

Beginning from a generic definition of spirituality as 'the study of the inner reality of human existence in relation to the particular life purpose to which that religion or philosophy is committed', Gillett (1993:4) suggests that Christian spirituality centres on the ways in which we articulate and develop our relationship with God in Christ. Furthermore, 'as Christianity is, in essence, a personal relationship between the individual and God, growth occurs naturally and uniquely in so far as the person remains open to the work of the Spirit of God within his or her life' (1993:2). The task of Christian spirituality is engagement with four different horizons, the revelation of God as discerned in the Bible, the tradition and history of the Church, the cultural context and the personal context of the individual. Together, these four horizons point to the holistic nature of evangelical spirituality.

Peter Adam (1998:4), defining evangelical spirituality as 'the public expression of their shared theological convictions', notes the need for a spirituality which is not bound to the past, but is 'contemporary and accessible to the people around us,' whilst not uncritically adopting the practices of other traditions and therefore losing the evangelical focus upon the Bible as the 'root' which 'nourishes, feeds and

corrects (1988:23). Similarly, in the 1993 St Antholin's Lectureship Charity Lecture, Alister McGrath (1993:1) suggested that evangelical spirituality must be faithful to both the gospel and the pressures of modern life. Recognising that the traditional evangelical pattern of the daily quiet time is not always feasible in contemporary society, McGrath (1993:11) voiced concern that evangelicalism has become 'spiritually derivative', borrowing the spirituality of other traditions instead of paying attention to its own spiritual heritage. In contrast, Gillett (1993:1) identifies a new openness amongst evangelicals towards spirituality, which encourages new understanding of their own tradition and the tradition of others. In addition, Tidball (1994:196) notes that the use of the term 'spirituality,' which would seem more naturally to resonate with other traditions, is relatively recent in evangelical circles. Defining spirituality as that which is 'to do with the inner life', he suggests that 'it is designed to bring the head and the heart together, to encourage a spiritual journey and lead to spiritual formation', and that evangelical appropriation of other traditions may partially be the result of not understanding their own heritage and therefore feeling spiritually inferior. He suggests that the wisest response is to work for renewal of the tradition so that it is 'taught again and experienced afresh' (1994:22). Beginning from this premise, Randall (2010:35) argues that the recovery of evangelical spirituality will come from a re-assessment and re-appropriation of Bebbington's four distinctives as experiential expressions of theology within the life of the Church.

Recognising the tension between those who define evangelicalism primarily in terms of theological propositions and those for whom it is primarily concerned with personal experience of faith and holiness, Alister McGrath (1994:6) argues that evangelical spirituality is Bible centred and is tested by 'the conformity of heart and life to the confession and character of Jesus as Lord'. This allows the possibility of a creative dialectic between theology and experience through 'understanding', which recognises and explores the coherence of the Christian faith, and 'appreciation' or 'grasping the way in which the Christian faith changes our outlook on life and our experience' (McGrath 1995:21-22). Writing from the Reformed tradition which has a strong tradition of academic theology and suggesting that the Enlightenment emphasis on reason has impoverished theology, McGrath (2003a:14) later made the claim that 'spirituality is about the personal appropriation of what theology signposts and promises' and that therefore 'there is need for us to allow our minds, imaginations, and emotions to be stimulated and informed by theology...rightly grasped it will force us to our knees in adoration and praise, as we catch a glimpse



of the immensity of this God who loves us and has called us to be God's own' (2003a:21). This definition seems to bring together theology and spirituality in such a way that it could be argued that a 'true' definition of theology would negate the need for a definition of spirituality, providing believers with 'a formidable amalgam of living faith that will sustain them throughout the pilgrimage of faith' (2003b:204). Whereas it is important to guard against a theology that has no connection to the life of faith, and a spirituality that is unrooted in the tradition (George 2003:3), in practice there seems need for distinction, whilst acknowledging their close relationship. This is all the more important for those evangelical traditions, including The Salvation Army, which have not prioritised the intellectual exploration of the faith in academic theology.

Randall (2005:23) identifies the 'central theme' of evangelical spirituality as 'a personal relationship with Christ'. He noted that 'although evangelicals have often been divided over aspects of theology, their experience has been to a large extent a uniting factor' (2005:183). In contrast to McGrath, this seems to indicate that the shape of evangelical spirituality begins not from correct or agreed doctrine, but from a common experience and a relationship. This approach resonates with the notion, as seen in Cockerton and Gillett above, that spirituality is the nurturing and development of the believer's relationship with God. Whereas McGrath does not discount experience, he seems to give a more prominent position to the importance of theology in spirituality. Thus through the voices of formal theology there is ample evidence of the diversity of spiritualities in the evangelical movement. This variety and difference reflects the diversity and dynamism of evangelicalism, which is neither monolithic nor static.

### **Salvationist spirituality**

At the inaugural meeting of the International Spiritual Life Commission (1996), Paul Rader said that for over two million people, The Salvation Army had become the primary, often sole, 'point of insertion into the Body of Christ. We are the fellowship within which they experience their connectedness with the Body of Christ' (Street 2008:ix). It is where they receive instruction in Christian doctrine, experience prayer and worship, learn personal spiritual disciplines and, as part of the Salvationist community, find their identity in relationship to the Christian Church.

The subsequent report of the Commission gives an indication of the self understanding of Salvationist spirituality at the end of the twentieth century. The

twelve calls to Salvationists together give a broad overview of the major themes, the means of nurture and development, and the denominational context. As noted in the previous chapter there is no distinction made between the spiritual experience and its outworking in context. The calls are an expression of 'doctrine prayed, experienced and lived in a life of committed obedience to Christ' (Forsyth 1991:3) in which the experience of the individual, their life in the Church and interaction with society are interwoven to give a holistic picture which includes elements of both resonance and dissonance with the wider evangelical context. The twelve affirmations which accompany the calls are a reminder that these calls grow from, and build upon, the tradition; for The Salvation Army the spiritual life has always been a priority. Although sometimes obscured by programmes and the activist mindset, this is clearly evident in both the espoused theology of the movement (examples include Booth 1881:75, Smith 1963:10-11, Bond 2011:10-11) and its normative theology (TSA 2010b:xvii).

The calls begin from the premise that The Salvation Army's *raison d'être* is participation in the *missio dei*. They are pervaded by the missional activism that reveals the priorities of the Salvationist mind, including references to proclamation, salvation and redemption. In consequence there is a danger of assuming that this is a purely functional spirituality in which the focus is always upon doing, rather than being or understanding. However, the calls also identify personal and corporate spiritual disciplines as the locus of the spiritual life and begin to explore ways in which Salvationist understanding can be developed and enriched. The commission noted the need to recognise

that any outward movement of love for the world requires first of all an inward movement from each Christian towards God. The vitality of our spiritual life as a Movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in evangelism and service, but the springs of our spiritual life are to be found in our turning to God in worship, in the disciplines of life in the Spirit and in the study of God's word (Street 2008:4).

The following overview of each of the twelve calls draws particularly on the work of Robert Street (1999, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2008), the Chair of the International Spiritual Life Commission, who expanded and explicated the official report in *Called to be God's People*. This is a book of espoused theology written for congregational use, an accessible study guide rather than an academic work. Nevertheless it is an official publication which, in some countries where it has been widely promoted, has almost reached the status of normativity. It expands the key themes of Salvationist

spirituality as understood by the International Spiritual Life Commission and as such is important as an exposition of how The Salvation Army understands its spiritual life. The themes are not unique, but their combination, context and particular emphases give a measure of distinctiveness. Although developed with reference to The Salvation Army as an organisation, they form the central core of the spiritual life of any Salvationist, including officers.

#### *The call to worship*

*'We call Salvationists worldwide to worship and proclaim the living God, and to seek in every meeting a vital encounter with the Lord of life, using relevant cultural forms and languages' (TSA 1998:2; Street 2008:9).*

Salvationist worship is vital to a shared spiritual life. Understood primarily as a meeting with God, worship is a corporate means of encounter, which can also be deeply personal. At the same time worship reflects the essential missional focus of the movement; personal encounter is never solely for private edification but is a source of motivation, inspiration and equipping for evangelism and service (Street 2008:11). Salvation Army meetings (services) do not rely on a written liturgy, although in many cultures there are traditional elements which are included. An evangelical focus upon preaching as the centrepiece of worship (Randall 2005:50), and the primary means of conversion (Tidball 1994:123) is the norm, although more personalised and interactive forms of evangelism are now common in Western contexts.

Music provides both a means of corporate worship and a source of theological understanding. Growing from a pragmatic decision to use brass instruments in open-air worship (Sandall 1950:113; Holz 2006:65,) the Salvation Army brass banding tradition provides accompaniment for congregational singing and a vehicle for expressing and encouraging encounter with God. Choirs, known as Songster Brigades, were established from 1892 ('The Editor' 1892:6). A large repertoire of music expressing Salvationist theology has evolved. As a response to the popular culture of the 1960s the first 'rhythm group,' The Joystings, was formed in London (Boon 1966:190). The notion of popular music as performance was eventually displaced by worship leaders and accompanying bands taking their place alongside, and sometimes replacing, the traditional brass or piano accompaniment, reflecting changes in the wider environment of evangelical expressions of corporate spirituality in song (Gillett 1993:19, Randall 2005:90-91). Thus for many Salvationists music is a significant factor in the development of the spiritual life and, in common with

evangelicalism in general, it takes a prominent place in corporate worship and individual spiritual development (Randall 2005:88).

#### *The call to God's word*

*'We call Salvationists worldwide to a renewed and relevant proclamation of and close attention to the word of God, and to a quick and steady obedience to the radical demands of the word upon Salvationists personally, and upon our movement corporately' (TSA 1998:2; Street 2008:17).*

The importance of relevant Biblical preaching and obedience to the demands of scripture reflect the traditional evangelical focus upon the Bible. In response to the publication of the Revised Version of the Bible William Booth (1885:1) wrote

I want to see a new translation of the Bible into the hearts and conduct of living men and women. I want an improved translation - or transference it might be called - of the commandments and promises and teachings and influences of this Book to the minds and feelings and words and activities of the men and women who hold on to it and swear by it and declare it to be an inspired book and the only authorised rule of life.

The International Spiritual Life Commission re-iterated this call, particularly with reference to preaching as the word of God 'opened, read, proclaimed and explained' (Street 2008:17). The rationale given is that neglect of Biblical teaching leads to loss of spiritual authority and diminished success in mission. This is presumably because neglect of Biblical principles and precepts may lead to neglect of first purposes. It is noticeable that the main focus of the chapter is upon Biblical preaching as a means of development and edification, with only a brief comment that it may be complemented by reading, electronic resources, seminars and courses, each of which may be suitable at different stages of spiritual development. Nevertheless the basic principle of biblicism remains; that attention to the Bible is significant in the development of Salvationist spiritual life.

#### *The call to the mercy seat*

*'We call Salvationists worldwide to recognise the wide understanding of the mercy seat that God has given to the Army; to rejoice that Christ uses this means of grace to confirm his presence; and to ensure that its spiritual benefits are fully explored in every corps and Army centre' (TSA 1998:2; Street 2008:23).*

From the earliest days it has been the custom in The Salvation Army to invite a public response to preaching. The Salvation Army mercy seat, sometimes called the penitent form, is derived from the, 'mourner's bench' of American Revivalism, which

was re-named the 'anxious seat' by Finney (Randall 2005:34). Rooted in the Biblical foundation of a meeting place with God (Exodus 25:22), it shares similarities with the altar in some other holiness denominations, such as the Church of the Nazarene, as a place of prayer, calling people to repentance and sanctifying grace (Bovey 1996:28). Initially intended as a place where penitents could seek conversion, the mercy seat retains this original use, but in the twenty first century it is also more generally viewed as a place of prayer and encounter with God. Often the focal point at the front of Salvation Army halls (churches), it is most often a simple bench where people kneel for 'confession, repentance, consecration and spiritual guidance' (Street 2008:26). Maddern (2010:59) identifies the mercy seat as an expression of The Salvation Army's covenantal tradition; it is a place where a commitment which leads to covenant with God is made. Frequency of use varies considerably between cultures and individual Army corps, ranging from rare and spasmodic to regular and consistent. However, the mercy seat has never been viewed as the only place of encounter with God or as possessing any special spiritual power; it is merely a symbol and a sign. Salvationists sing the words of William Cowper, expressing a theology that is shared with other Christians:

Jesus, where'er thy people meet,  
There they behold the mercy seat;  
Where'er they seek thee thou art found,  
And every place is hallowed ground. (Cowper in TSA 1986:604)

Described by Clifton (1999:46) as the 'heartbeat' of The Salvation Army, and by Bovey (1996:xi) as a distinctive aspect in Salvationist worship, the mercy seat is a sign of the movement's commitment to conversionism, and a spirituality of redemption and renewal which brings the possibility of radical personal change.

#### *The call to celebrate Christ's presence*

*We call Salvationists worldwide to rejoice in our freedom to celebrate Christ's real presence at all our meals and in all our meetings, and to seize the opportunity to explore in our life together the significance of the simple meals shared by Jesus and his friends and by the first Christians (TSA 1998:3; Street 2008:31).*

In the earliest days the Christian Mission observed both water Baptism and Holy Communion. However, since 1883 neither ceremony has been part of Salvationist practice. Whilst not wanting to 'destroy the confidence of Christian people in institutions which are helpful to them' (Begbie 1920a:469), Booth decided against

the inclusion of Baptism and the Lord's Supper in Salvation Army worship. However, he did not forbid Salvationists from participating in the Sacraments and urged officers never to speak against the practices of other Churches (Booth 1882:3). The rationale for the decision, which was not viewed by Booth as a final, settled, choice, was complex. The Salvation Army's acceptance of the equality of women in all aspects of ministry and the difficulty this would cause in the celebration of communion was a factor, as was Booth's insistence that the Army was not a church, but a mission for salvation and therefore not in need of the normal institutions which characterized church life. However, most significantly, Booth regarded both Baptism and the Lord's Supper as outward signs which could not be regarded as conditions of salvation and this has remained the official position to the present time. Nevertheless, the Salvation Army has always viewed itself as a sacramental people. 'We are a sacramental community because our life, our work and our celebrations centre on Christ, the one true Sacrament' (TSA 2010 b:270).

The *Handbook of Doctrine* also connects the strong Salvationist tradition of holiness teaching with sacramental living. 'The Salvation Army is a permanent witness to the Church as to the possibility, and practicability, of sanctification without formal sacraments' (TSA 2010b:271). Through the experience of holiness grace is mediated to the believer. This conviction is viewed by some as a prophetic witness to the Church that 'God also works outside the sacraments or any other material sign' (Metcalf 1965:39).

The question of sacramental observance is a matter of continual debate within the Salvationist community. Following extensive study and research, The Salvation Army's response to the World Council of Churches' Lima Text, reaffirms the conviction that the grace of God can be directly mediated to any believer and that no symbolic ritual practices are *necessary* to salvation (TSA 1990:63). In the twenty-first century, internationalism adds to diversity of opinion. In some countries, sacramental rituals would lend credibility in marking status of The Salvation Army as a Church, whereas for others that same identification would create difficulty and confusion.

It is significant that the deliberations of the International Spiritual Life Commission leading to this call were thorough and extensive, drawing on the work of Salvationists, and other Christian academics and clerics including Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, Dr Nigel Wright and Bishop (Dr) John Austin Baker (Street 2008:111).

The report again reiterates the conviction that no outward observance is necessary to inward grace and whilst discouraging the development of set rituals, encourages the development of creative means of hallowing meals with 'remembrance of the Lord's sacrificial love' (Street 2008:109).

This is one aspect of Salvationist spirituality which is almost unique, certainly among evangelical Churches. Although there is considerable variance in theology, practice and the importance placed on the sacraments, all of the major evangelical denominations observe some form of baptism and holy communion, and would agree that the experience of Christ is nurtured by the sacraments (Randall 2005:75). Thus The Salvation Army does not have the facility to share in a corporate means of grace that is available to almost all other evangelical Christians. Nevertheless, the normative theology of The Salvation Army would argue that the same grace can be received by means other than the normal institutions.

Many Salvationists receive the sacraments as guests of other Churches, and are enriched by the experience, nevertheless, for the foreseeable future Booth's decision remains unchanged, but not unconsidered. It is not possible to say with any certainty how Salvationist spirituality may have been different if the sacraments had been continued, but for Salvationists it is not the omission that defines the denomination, but the affirmation that Christ is always at the centre, offering grace in the ordinary as well as the extraordinary moments of life (TSA 2010b:270).

#### *The call to soldiership*

*We call Salvationists worldwide to recognise that the swearing-in of soldiers is a public witness to Christ's command to make disciples and that soldiership demands ongoing radical obedience (TSA 1998:3; Street 2008:43).*

Salvation Army soldiership is viewed as the public witness to the experience of conversion. It is not the conversion experience, but a commitment to the life of discipleship which grows from it. It is initiation into the part of the Church known as The Salvation Army and is a statement of allegiance and obedience, primarily to Christ, but also to the values and norms of The Salvation Army as expressed in the Soldiers' Covenant. In soldiership the personal experience of the spiritual life is nurtured and finds its outworking in a given context. It does not claim to be the only way of Christian discipleship and in fact many within The Salvation Army choose to be adherent members or have no formal membership at all. Flowing from the

military metaphor, Salvation Army soldiership is also an expression of evangelical activism; for Salvationists a corollary to personal discipleship is commitment to the *missio dei* as expressed through the Army.

#### *The call to the inner life*

*We call Salvationists worldwide to enter the new millennium with a renewal of faithful, disciplined and persistent prayer; to study God's word consistently and to seek God's will earnestly; to deny self and to live a lifestyle of simplicity in a spirit of trust and thankfulness (TSA 1998:4; Street 2008:49).*

'At the heart of any consideration of our spiritual life is prayer – faithful, disciplined and persistent prayer' (Street 2008:50). Seen as the source of a deep relationship with God and a means of discovering God's purposes and direction, prayer is viewed as a source of strength and vitality in the movement. Street particularly emphasises the need for personal daily devotions in this chapter, linking together prayer and Bible study in the time-honoured fashion of the evangelical tradition (Randall 2005:45). Often referred to as the 'quiet time,' this habit is traditionally viewed as central to evangelical spirituality (Gillett 1993:144; Tidball 1994:205; McGrath 1995:x). Drawing on the pattern of Jesus in the gospels, who counterbalanced his public ministry with prayer and withdrawal (Mark 1:35, 6:31-32), Street links the emphasis upon prayer to the Salvationist activist lifestyle, suggesting that activism cannot be sustained without attention to the inner life. However, it is also significant that the Commission was asked to explore wider disciplines of the inner life including 'solitude, fasting, spiritual retreats, the use of mentors or spiritual direction, study and meditation' (Street 2008:53). In common with many evangelicals at the end of the twentieth century, Salvationists are learning to value the distinctiveness of their own position, whilst learning from the traditions of others (Gillett 1993:182; Tidball 1994:204-206; Randall 2005:182).

#### *The call to our life together*

*We call Salvationists worldwide to rejoice in their unique fellowship; to be open to support, guidance, nurture, affirmation and challenge from each other as members together of the body of Christ; and to participate actively and regularly in the life, membership and mission of a particular corps (TSA 1998:4; Street 2008:59).*

This call acknowledges and celebrates the corporate dimensions of the Christian life. It begins from the assumption that it is natural for believers to be in community, having a mutual responsibility for, and accountability to, each other. It also



acknowledges the value of community in decision making and discerning future vision. The structure of The Salvation Army, in the local, national and international contexts, means that Salvationist community is wider than the local congregation, leading to enrichment and sharing of ideas, resources and, particularly at a leadership level, personnel. This call moves away from any conception of privatised faith towards the encouragement of community and a unity that echoes Biblical images of unity and mutual responsibility. This does not negate the fundamental call for a personal experience, but puts that experience in proper context as personal, but not private. However, this does not imply any form of denominational exclusivity or superiority. The evolution of structure and support within the denomination is to be celebrated, but should not isolate.

#### *The call to our life in the world*

*We call Salvationists worldwide to commit themselves and their gifts to the salvation of the world, and to embrace servanthood, expressing it through the joy of self-giving and the discipline of Christ-like living (TSA 1998:5; Street 2008:65).*

The first part of this call is a straightforward commitment to that evangelical activism which is inextricably linked to conversionism. However it is here coupled with the notion of servanthood and Christ-like living. Thus evangelism becomes an expression of commitment to God and, therefore, to the needs of others. The accompanying affirmation suggests that 'commitment to Christ requires the offering of our lives in simplicity, submission and service... which is a self-giving for the salvation and healing of a hurting world, as well as a prophetic witness in the face of social injustice' (Street 2008:65). Summarising a vital aspect of Salvationist spirituality, this call links together major distinctives of the movement. Revivalism leads to both discipleship and activism in the interests of other people. The reference to 'prophetic witness' is a timely reminder that, in common with other evangelical traditions, The Salvation Army in the twentieth century began to focus upon personal transformation rather than social change (Randall 2005:163). The commitment to the poor and marginalised was largely expressed in social service for individuals rather than in the pursuit of social justice. However, in the twenty-first century,

A re-exploration of a rich heritage and an honest appraisal of the demands of true discipleship are resulting in a resurgence of interest in issues of social justice at all levels of the movement. Some would say that we have been recalled to our roots, to the prophetic heritage that made us distinctive and

courageous enough to challenge the prevailing norms as well as the undercurrents of society. In the West, the reaction against individualism and an increasing sense of social responsibility contribute to a society that makes space for the prophet and the activist, even when their message is disturbing. (Shakespeare 2010a:16)

### *The call to cultivate faith*

*We call Salvationists worldwide to explore new ways to recruit and train people who are both spiritually mature and educationally competent; to develop learning programmes and events that are biblically informed, culturally relevant, and educationally sound; and to create learning environments which encourage exploration, creativity, and diversity (TSA 1998:5; Street 2008:73).*

Acknowledging the need for development and growth, this call goes some way to redressing what has been viewed, by some, as an imbalance in Salvationist thought and practice. Set in the context of the need to nurture faith - in essence spiritual life development - it also acknowledges the need for appropriate scholarship and learning. It has been noted that from the earliest years of the movement, some key thinkers in The Salvation Army were suspicious of academia, particularly in relation to the training of officers (see p. 16-17, Orsborn 1928:313, 1951:155). In the second half of the twentieth century some officer training colleges, particularly in the west, adopted and developed academic programmes for initial officer training which Needham (1990:112) suggests may reflect a movement from a missional focus to a self-conscious, settled self-understanding. Nevertheless, it is still the case that there is no developed academic tradition within the movement.

However, this is not primarily a call for academic theology, but for the development of a learning culture within the organisation. The twentieth century saw a gradual shift in perspective towards appreciation of education in the spiritual formation of Salvationists. An International Education Symposium (1999) proposed twelve strategies for faith development within The Salvation Army. Focusing upon the faith education of the laity, it recommended the development of programmes for lifelong learning through consistent teaching of Biblical principles and spiritual disciplines which should be taught relationally, contextualised according to culture and subject to local accountability (TSA 1999:24-26). However, at the present time the recommendations remain unrealised.

Continual emphasis upon activism can lead to lack of appreciation, or neglect, of other aspects of the Christian life, including Christian education. Paul Knight (2002:31), calling for the development of theology in The Salvation Army, writes 'even in an activist movement like ours, surely theology is vital for maintaining motivation and direction, for keeping a cosmic perspective, and for safe engagement with the world'. Street (2008:76) concurs, 'intellectual laziness has nothing to commend it, yet the very busyness of Christian service can sometimes appear to encourage it. Almost imperceptibly, what began as Christian service can become activity for activity's sake'.

Although this call relates specifically to the life of faith in the congregation, it does affirm the need for development, and the creation of appropriate learning environments. It is essentially a mandate for the Centre for Spiritual Life Development

#### *The call to holiness*

*We call Salvationists worldwide to restate and live out the doctrine of holiness in all its dimensions personal, relational, social and political in the context of our cultures and in the idioms of our day while allowing for and indeed prizing such diversity of experience and expression as is in accord with the Scriptures (TSA 1998:6; Street 2008:79).*

Alongside the missional focus of The Salvation Army, the priority of personal holiness, understood as a dynamic and deepening relationship with Christ which has implications for life in the world, stands as a key focus of self-understanding. The priority of personal and social holiness is a well documented feature of evangelicalism, although understanding of the means by which this is achieved differs. Bebbington (2003:301) identifies four traditions, Reformed, Wesleyan, Keswick, and Charismatic, which are each, in part, a reflection of the social context in which they developed. The Salvationist understanding of holiness is rooted in the Wesleyan tradition of perfection as a description of the holy state, and is influenced by the altar theology of Phoebe Palmer who taught the 'shorter way' to holiness by 'laying one's all on the altar' (Palmer 1845:18,60, see also Kent 1978: 320, Randall 2005:117).

The possibility of the holy life is enshrined in the articles of faith - 'We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified' (TSA 2010b :xvi). Aspects of the doctrine of holiness have formed the core of much of the Salvationist teaching

and writing throughout its history. The earliest handbook of doctrine, *The Doctrines and Discipline of The Salvation Army Prepared for the Training Homes* viewed holiness as essential to the officer 'it is impossible to be an efficient officer without the enjoyment of this blessing' (TSA 1881:90). Samuel Logan Brengle, focusing on holiness as 'pure love' 'perfect love,' and 'Christ in you' viewed holiness as 'a second work of grace' which leads to a new experience of consecration (Brengle 1896: iii, 2, 92, 8). His work dominated much of Salvationist holiness teaching in the early twentieth century. William Booth underlined the importance of holiness, 'I regard the enjoyment and publication of the Blessing of the Clean Heart as being essential to my own peace, power and usefulness and as necessary to the progress and prosperity of the Army as it ever was' (Booth 1902:15). From the mid twentieth century Frederick Coutts emphasised 'Christ-likeness' as a definition of holiness, thus shaping the beliefs of generations of Salvationists (Coutts 1957:24-25). More recently Edward Read (1975), John Larsson (1983), Chick Yuill (1988), Shaw Clifton (2004) and others have articulated Salvationist understandings of holiness for the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. There have inevitably been changes of emphasis, particularly concerning the way in which holiness is received and develops, nevertheless the fundamental belief that holy living is both a possibility and a requirement for the Christian remains a fundamental part of Salvationist spirituality. The words of Colin Fairclough give expression to the belief:

Gracious Lord, thy grace apply  
Both to save and sanctify  
All my life wilt thou control  
Calmly ordering the whole  
That the world may ever see  
Christ, and only Christ, in me. (Fairclough in TSA 1986: 479)

For Salvationists, holiness is not only personal, but is also corporate. Philip Needham writes

If holiness is, as we Salvationists have claimed, perfect love, then it is meaningless outside a community in which the love of God can be experienced, expressed and learned ... We must be that kind of community or our holiness is empty... holiness must be seen as a personal journey only as part of a journey in fellowship with other believers (Needham 2000: 11.14).

Furthermore, drawing on the Methodist tradition of social holiness, it also demands our involvement with the structures of society. The 'call to holiness' challenges Salvationists to 'restate and live out the doctrine of holiness in all its dimensions -

personal, relational, social and political - in the context of our cultures and the idioms of our day.' Holiness in The Salvation Army finds its expression and outworking in relationship and action and is best understood as relating to definitions of evangelical spirituality which move beyond the purely personal to life in the Christian community and thence into engagement with the world.

### *The call to war*

*We call Salvationists worldwide to join in the spiritual battle on the grounds of a sober reading of Scripture, a conviction of the triumph of Christ, the inviolable freedom and dignity of persons, and a commitment to the redemption of the world in all its dimensions- physical, spiritual, social, economic and political (TSA 1998:6; Street 2008:87).*

In 1878 (1878:2), William Booth addressed the 'War Congress' of the Christian Mission, which one month later would be re-named The Salvation Army: 'We are sent to war. We are not sent to minister to a congregation and be content if we keep things going. We are sent to make war... and to stop short of nothing but the subjugation of the world to the sway of the Church Lord Jesus'. Tidball (1994:166) comments 'the priority of mission in the Church, taken to its logical, and many would say unbalanced, conclusion, can be seen in the formation of The Salvation Army'. Whereas some justification for this comment can be found in the eccentric methods and language of early Salvationism, the Biblical principle of the redemption of creation, and the responsibility of the Church to engage in mission to bring it about, remains. He continues 'The Church is God's agent for change in the world both through evangelism and social action' (Tidball 1994:166). The 'call to war' is entirely consistent with this statement. Initially understood in revivalist terms as the need for personal conversion from sin, the 'war' quickly became a war against evil in all its forms, including those social evils that prevent human beings from flourishing. Booth became convinced of the need for a holistic approach to salvation which fought for the transformation of people's physical circumstances as well as their spiritual orientation. 'This Army was designed to fight *for* people, to rescue them from poverty, misery, injustice and pain.....The Church is engaged in warfare against both personal and corporate sin' (Street 2008:88, 93). It is not surprising therefore that the call to war speaks of a holistic approach to redemption.

A clear statement of the activism which marks evangelicalism, the call to war is a summary of first purposes for The Salvation Army. John Coutts (1977:50) expresses the ethos succinctly 'Salvationist spirituality is active, rather than contemplative. It

turns from the beatific vision to the nightmare of human need'. There can be no understanding of Salvationist spirituality that does not include this commitment to transformation - of people, physical circumstances and structures - because of Christ. Here Coutts echoes the typical evangelical understanding that the corollary of personal holiness is action, as expressed by Randall (2005:111): 'A recurrent theme in evangelical spirituality has been the reality of the power of the Holy Spirit to enable the Christian to live a life that is holy and is also effective in terms of mission' (see also Bebbington 2003:300).

*The call to the family.*

*We call Salvationists worldwide to restore the family to its central position in passing on the faith, to generate resources to help parents grow together in faithful love and to lead their children into wholeness, with hearts on fire for God and his mission (TSA 1998:7; Street 2008:97).*

Recognising the influence of changing social structures in many parts of the world, the call to the family is a reflection of a perceived need to value and nurture families in the Christian context. This embodies an understanding of the family as the secure ground from which the individual moves in order to interact with the world. The importance of generating resources which enable families to grow together, and to be a locus of spiritual nurture, is noted. However, not all individuals can have this secure network in the traditional family unit, and for some, a Christian community can provide a place of security and support. Salvation Army social service programmes, community work, and local congregations, can each contribute to this gift of nurture and security. The metaphor of the family of God offers a means of affirming and including those for whom the traditional family unit is not a major focus. Whilst valid as an affirmation of the family, this call may seem to exclude some individuals and would benefit from expansion and clarification in order to ensure that no one is marginalised by its focus.

In summary, although the language used is, at times, idiosyncratic, the Salvationist understanding of spirituality is firmly rooted in the evangelical tradition. It is a holistic spirituality, combining understanding, the inner life and praxis as 'doctrine prayed, experienced and lived' in 'conformity to the will of God' and finding its expression in engagement with the world through 'lifestyle and behaviour' (Gordon 1991: 3, 6). As such, it is the outworking of Biblicism, conversionism, crucicentrism and activism in the life of both the individual believer and the organisation. Evolving from the revivalist and holiness traditions of the nineteenth century, Salvationist spirituality is

most often expressed as a personal relationship to Christ, in which the holy life is nurtured in personal and corporate devotions, and expressed in holistic mission. In the calls of the International Spiritual Life Commission personal spiritual experience, corporate spiritual disciplines, theological understanding and the historical self-understanding of the movement are interwoven to form a statement of belief, purpose and aspiration, which gives shape to Salvationist spiritual experience. Some key factors are evident; an all-pervading activist missional focus is counterbalanced by commitment to the inner life and to holiness; a strong sense of communal identity is prevented from becoming insular by a constant call to engage with, and work for the transformation of individuals and society; and whilst rooted firmly in tradition, Salvationist spirituality is dynamic and evolving, seeking to respond to both culture and context in appropriate ways.

## Chapter 4

### Education for ministry

Having located The Salvation Army, and Salvationist spirituality within the broad boundaries of evangelicalism, this chapter turns to the educational voices in the dialogue in order to see how the philosophy and practice of officer training within The Salvation Army resonates with, or is challenged by, them. The notion of a Centre for Spiritual Life Development assumes some form of progression or process, it is concerned with *development*. It is significant that it is not called a centre for spirituality, and that the possibility of providing for, or facilitating a developmental process is inherent in the title. This, in conjunction with the physical situation of the CSLD as a partner with the ICO which is a learning institution, my own professional and academic background in theological education, and foundational work completed during Stage 1 of the Professional Doctorate, have each contributed to the choice of dialogue partner.

The first part of the chapter will discuss three major themes of ministerial education in order to discern their possible contribution to understanding the development of the spiritual life within Salvation Army officership and shaping the policy and practice of the CSLD. In so doing it will draw upon research conducted, in the context of initial ministerial education, for Stage 1 of this Professional Doctorate. Although the thesis focuses upon post ordination development of the spiritual life, there are a number of significant areas of overlap. The first section deals with the notion of *habitus* in ministerial education and a possible interpretation for the Salvationist context. The second section explores the philosophy of Salvation Army officer training and vocational education, and the third turns to models of reflective learning in order to gain insight.

The second part of the chapter draws upon entries from my professional journal and textual research in order to explore aspects of ongoing ministerial formation in the Anglican Communion. The international context in which the CSLD operates does not allow for easy comparison with other denominations, which are more often autonomous in each country even if affiliated to a world council or alliance. However, the Theological Education for the Anglican Communion (TEAC) grids are an international document that provide a base for ministry throughout the communion which is interpreted 'in a contextually appropriate way keeping in mind



available resources and mission needs' (Wondra 2008:2). Although structural differences between the Anglican Communion and The Salvation Army make a direct comparison impossible, the international focus does allow for possible similarities and points of contact.

### ***Habitus***

Edward Farley's seminal work, *Theologia*, first published in 1983, has provided the foundation and benchmark for contemporary thinking about the notion of *habitus* in ministerial education. Drawing upon a detailed historical analysis of the nature of theology, and tracing it through three periods, Farley (1983:35) demonstrates the shift from the exposition of faith as found in the Bible to the medieval concept of *habitus*, 'a cognitive disposition and orientation of the soul, a knowledge of God and what God reveals' - practical, rather than theoretical, wisdom. Sheldrake (2010:57) notes that in effect, 'the unity of theology implied that intellectual reflection as a whole, contemplation, worship and the Christian life were, ideally speaking, a seamless whole'. Drawing upon the rational thinking of the Enlightenment, the third era resulted in an increasing movement towards expressing theology in propositional and conceptual terms. It became understood as the scientific technical rationality needed for ministerial practice, exemplified by the fourfold pattern or 'encyclopaedia' of biblical studies, systematic theology, Church history and practical theology. This had the effect of separating the knowledge needed for practice from the interpretation of Biblical revelation through 'means of grace', and the distinctive orientation of the individual implied by *habitus*.

Farley (1983:194) calls for a renewed clergy education based upon '*theologia* as a *habitus* of understanding', combining sapiential knowledge with dialectical activity. *Theologia*, or theological understanding, is viewed as both the subject matter and goal of theological education so that all elements are seen through, and evaluated by, a theological lens. Farley sees this as 'an ecclesial counterpart' to the Greek notion of *paideia*, which focused on the development of *areté*, virtue. The wisdom of *habitus* is rooted in grace and divine self-disclosure, nevertheless the notion of the individual being 'cultured' into the life remains (1983:153).

David Kelsey's (1993:221) critique of Farley questions the philosophical compatibility of the critical thinking demanded by dialectical activity and the form of *paideia* which leads to *habitus* and *sapiential wisdom*, concluding that they are 'ultimately unsynthesizable types of education. Kelsey argues that the classical

notion of *paideia* as character formation that cannot be directly taught (1993:6,9) would need to be modified in order to allow for the critical thinking of the post-Enlightenment tradition of theological enquiry. In contrast, Foster *et al* (2006:48) conclude that theological educators 'embrace the necessary interdependence of the two traditions in their teaching'. Their research report, *Educating Clergy*, identifies a pragmatic approach in seminary teaching which acknowledges the need for the integration of normative, cognitive and practical apprenticeships in the development of clergy (Foster *et al* 2006:22).

Building on Farley's notion of *habitus* as a dialectical activity, and drawing upon the Aristotelian notion of praxis as 'reflective doing,' Groome (1987:69,155) offers a model of shared praxis which uses critical correlation as a way of forming people 'in the *habitus* of doing theology'. For Aristotle, praxis arises from and leads to *phronesis*, which is practical wisdom or prudence. Praxis must be freely chosen, a response to circumstances which draws upon existing *phronesis* and leads to its development. Praxis is therefore holistic, 'an activity of the total person – head, heart and lifestyle' (Groome 1980:155). Groome (1980:152) argues that praxis, properly understood, moves away from a dichotomy between theory and practice to an understanding that they are 'twin moments of the same activity that are united dialectically'. Beginning from a premise that theology is primarily concerned with the intention of God to save, personally and politically, the historical praxis of the Church is brought into a dialectical hermeneutic with the activity of the world around in a critical conversation. This will facilitate the development of a *habitus* that holds the tradition of the Church and the contemporary situation in a creative tension, enabling transformed and transformative living. Thus, for Groome, cognitive activity must be balanced by engagement with context in order to achieve God's purposes.

Rebecca Chopp (1995:15) identifies a need to reflect upon the actual practices of theological education 'in order to see if the shape of *habitus* or theological wisdom emerges'. She concludes that it is learned through participation in specific Christian practices which involve 'emotional, aesthetic, affectional, spatial and empathetic learning' (1995:17) as well as cognitive dimensions. Drawing on feminist processes and calling for a reform of the total understanding of theological education, Chopp (1995:18) defines *habitus* as 'a practical knowledge, but one with particular visions, values and norms, all aimed at substantive dialogue with the world'. This, she suggests, is close to the *theologia* of Farley, although not to the notions of cognitive ordering which he envisages as the route to *habitus* (1995:103).

Elaine Graham (1996:95) critiques Farley's retrieval of *habitus*, arguing that it 'runs the risk of imposing an anachronistic unity on postmodern Christian practice' and calls for 'a model of practical wisdom which is both "indwelt" and "constructed"; *habitus* as handed down and reinterpreted anew for every generation'. Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* provides insight, contending that norms and values for action are socially constructed and are both individually subjective and formed by objective social networks and cultural traditions. *Habitus* then becomes a 'principle of self-regulated improvisations', embodied history which has been 'internalized as a second nature' which includes both continuity in, and transformation of, social practices (Bourdieu 1990:56-57). This allows for flexibility, creativity and complex layers of meaning. For Bourdieu practice is 'structured and value directed but not inflexibly determined by external forces' (Graham 1996:101) and is 'the embodied and enacted *habitus* of cultural norms and values' (Graham 1996:111). It therefore allows for both connection with the past and improvisation in response to new circumstances.

'It is with the heritage of these past understandings that we begin our present interpretation' (Ward 2005:97). Also drawing on the work of Bourdieu, Graham Ward (2005:20) argues that a theologian 'cannot be separated from the internalisation of the cultural values and systems that nurtured him and his response to those of which he was conscious.' Thus, for the theologian, and also for the Christian minister, the resources of the tradition and the cultural situation both contribute to *habitus*, which, situated in a space of possibilities, is always in negotiation with new experiences and encounters as it is shaped and re-shaped.

Christopher Brittain (2007) raises important questions about *habitus* as a foundation for ministry. What is the source of the practices, habits and values that form its foundation? It could be argued that an unreflective approach may lead to the perpetuation of traditions that are no longer effective in the contemporary context, or have their origins in societal rather than Christian values. A hermeneutic of suspicion in which the norms of the past are critiqued and interpreted in an ongoing process of development is vital. Thus, Brittain perpetuates the notion that *habitus* must be subject to reappraisal and cannot be envisaged as a static deposit of truth, but must be viewed as a dynamic response to the tradition, which in itself may be re-shaped as new understanding emerges.

Stating that *habitus* is learned by careful attention, Michael Roberts (2007:33) argues '*habitus* is to do with instinct, a default setting, something that has become natural through discipline and reflection'. Inherited wisdom, discerned using resources for interpretation provided by academic study, must be brought into engagement with present involvement in the world and a willingness to be led by the Holy Spirit. Writing in the context of theological education in the United Kingdom, he calls for habits of reflection and social awareness that 'offer the possibility of forming God-centred people for people centred ministries so that the people of God may be God-centred' (2007:33). The explicit reference to a relationship with God is significant. Whilst valuing the resources of academic intellectual inquiry, and acknowledging the need for involvement in the social context, Roberts warns of the danger of focusing on the secondary facets of religion rather than the transforming power of the gospel. He therefore transforms and expands the notion of *habitus*, shifting the focus from the academy to the ecclesial setting; *habitus* is a default setting for ministry, a way of being in the world.

*The importance of habitus to the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers.*

The general order of *Orders and Regulations for Salvation Army officers* begins with the following statement; 'By reason of the work to which they have committed themselves, and to which they declare themselves to be divinely called, it follows that officers must first of all live godly lives' (TSA 1997a: general order). This places the spiritual life of the officer as a primary requirement, noting that other abilities, skills and gifts are secondary. It is the character of the officer that forms the foundation and framework for all other qualities, skills and knowledge. Officer life and ministry are seen to flow from the fundamental basis of the godly character although the development of both knowledge and practical skills is viewed as essential as a means to effective ministry. This primary requirement is exemplified by commitment and development in three significant areas, each of which is a witness to The Salvation Army's heritage in, and ongoing commitment to, evangelical Christianity.

Firstly, the importance of holiness, both as a personal experience or quest, and in teaching and lifestyle, is vital. Secondly, there is a requirement for commitment to prayer as a means of personal enrichment, as intercession for others, and as a foundational part of ministry. This is complemented by the third area; Bible reading as a means for personal study and preparation for ministry. Together these form the

basis of the 'character,' the 'default setting', that The Salvation Army hopes to engender in its officers. The way in which this is nurtured and monitored in initial officer training, and provision for further development vary significantly with context and culture, but throughout the world this character, or *habitus*, forms common ground.

Similarly, *Orders and Regulations for the Training of Salvation Army Officers* call for the development of 'that personal fervent faith in God which forms the basis of Salvation Army ministry' (TSA 2005:3.1.1), an appropriate education programme and practical experience which includes 'vision kindled, character strengthened, spiritual growth enlarged and, above all, love for souls deepened' (TSA 2005 3.3.2f). It would seem that this primary requirement for enculturation into certain values and a lifestyle would suggest a theological education, and ongoing focus, that has its goal as *habitus*, a way of being in the world. Foster *et al* (2006:115) describe this process as a 'pedagogy of formation,' noting that 'pedagogies practising holiness are more concerned with fostering the character of the *habitus* of the religious tradition than in replicating the rules'. In an interview conducted for Stage 1, Paper 2, a training principal summarised, we want our students 'to *be* certain kinds of people' not just to 'do things' (see p.220).

It is clear that Farley's concept of *habitus* as a 'cognitive disposition' only partially resonates with these organisational requirements. Whereas the priority of practical wisdom for living and acting appropriately in the world is evident, Farley's focus upon dialectical activity is absent; The Salvation Army's requirements are experiential, and the emphasis upon devotional activities could be suggested to be a type of *paideia*, or culturing the soul (Kelsey 1993:6) which cannot be taught directly but is formed by prayer and devotion. There is, perhaps, more similarity with Roberts' definition of *habitus* as 'a default setting' a form of instinct that is the basis for creative, flexible and genuine engagement with the world (see also Groome, Chopp), although there may be difference in the assumptions made about how this *habitus* is to be nurtured. *Salvation Army Orders and Regulations* assume this to be a spiritual way of being in the world, which, whilst not precluding cognitive understanding, does not rely upon it.

#### *The organisational model of The Salvation Army*

This highlights tensions with the organisational model of The Salvation Army. Based on a military hierarchical model, the movement has a tradition and reputation of

articulating strong boundaries which provide norms and shape behaviour and attitudes. From this perspective, one might suggest that in effect it is an organisation which values and rewards 'replicating the rules,' passing on the 'deposit' of the tradition in order to ensure that it is safeguarded for future generations. This would seem to resonate more clearly with the professional school of Hough and Cobb (1985:19) in which 'effective church leadership...must be capable of guiding the Church in developing its own theological identity so that its organisations will be authentic expressions of that identity'.

Similarly, the Salvationist focus upon effective officership (TSA 2005, Section 1) would suggest a model of education that is more concerned with efficiency and competence rather than character and being. The pragmatic nature of Salvation Army officership means that the tension between character and competence is a reality of both ministerial education and officer life. Whereas character is viewed as of prime importance, the military model also values efficiency and consequently the development of skills. Yet efficiency alone does not allow sufficiently for the dynamism that is ingrained in the Salvationist psyche.

*'A permanent mission to the unconverted'*

Whilst the language is somewhat archaic, Albert Orsborn's (1954:74) description of The Salvation's Army's *raison d'être* succinctly summarises its missionary character. Despite the monolith of the organisation, its essential purpose ensures a dynamism that presupposes engagement with individuals and the world in order to seek their transformation. The tradition provides a framework and boundaries, but is not unchanging. The *habitus* of Salvation Army officership begins from a centre of personal holiness, prayer and Bible reading in order that the essential mission may be achieved. 'In the efforts to bring about a moral and spiritual change in the lives of others, an officer's personal godliness will count for more than any other quality' (TSA 1997a, 1.1.1.:2). Personal immersion into ways of living and believing form one strand of *habitus* but this only makes sense for The Salvation Army when accompanied by a reaching out to the world with the intention of bringing the holistic hope and healing that is the characteristic of salvation. It is in fact an instrumental *habitus* which, whilst valuing the transformation of the individual as the goal of Christian living, sees this as incomplete unless it leads to a commitment to work towards the transformation of others and society. Salvationists are, in the words of an old Salvation Army motto, 'saved to save'.

### *Fostering and developing habitus*

This missional, activist, *habitus* can only be effective if it has a dynamic nature, a commitment to engagement with the contemporary context, a willingness to understand the times and to articulate and demonstrate the tradition in ways that can connect with the lives of individuals and structures of society. It therefore has resonances with Graham's (1996:209) model of a *habitus* which is both 'indwelt' and 'constructed' but would give more weight to 'eternal moral norms or rules' than Graham would allow.

Jane Leach and Sean Michael Paterson (2004:21-22) draw a contrast between 'life on board ship'- passing on a static deposit of faith in unchanging conditions with 'surfing the waves' in which attentiveness to change and climactic conditions, geography and personal skill combine to allow effective 'surfing'- living creatively from a centre formed by '*habitus*'. Ministry is therefore concerned with articulating faith, in any given context, in ways which both critique the status quo and work for transformation.

Engagement with the traditions of the past is important in determining future practice, but faithfulness in the future will require new improvisations and taking risks. The *habitus* of Salvation Army officership must be marked by flexibility and openness to new insight. There is safety in the familiar and the known but it can lead to stagnation. The Salvation Army is rooted in its own traditions, and a superficial reading might seem to require inertia and slavish replication of the past. A nuanced understanding of the notion of faithfulness offers flexibility and movement, requiring not repetition but revision in the light of present need. Writing in the context of lifelong learning, Frances Ward (2005:4) roots faithful discipleship in the willingness to risk former certainties, to be changed in a journey that is marked by openness to the leadings of God.

It can be argued that the goal of Salvation Army officer training must therefore consist of the formation of this distinctive *habitus*, and that ongoing development in officership, including ongoing spiritual life development, must foster continued flexibility and willingness to change. Ward (2005:17) comments: 'to minister is to refuse to understand oneself as ever "formed", but always open to growth, to the encounter with new ways of doing things and to interpret the given practices and traditions of faith in new ways'.

## **The philosophy of Salvation Army officer training and vocational education**

### *The philosophy of Salvation Army officer training*

The lasting legacy of William and Catherine Booth upon the organisational philosophy of, and policy for, initial officer training also influences approaches to continuing development. A few years after the establishment of the first Training Homes in 1880, Catherine Booth (in Booth Tucker 1893:88-91) described the ethos and goals:

In the first place, the great aim of all our training is to fit our officers for the work they have to do. We abjure all mere learning for its own sake. Moreover, we believe a great deal of it is calculated rather to unfit than to aid its recipients for actual warfare...

...the apprenticeship is intended to teach the apprentice the particular trade to which he is destined, so we think training for the work of God should be adapted to qualify its recipients for that work....

First we begin with the *heart*...We take it to be a fundamental principle that if the soul is not right the service cannot be right, and therefore we make THE SOUL THE FIRST AND CHIEF CARE.

We try to train the *head*, so as to put our officers a little in advance, in intelligence and information, of the people to whom they are to minister...

The next point is to instruct the candidates in the principles, disciplines and methods of the Army, through which they are to act upon the people. Not only is this done in theory in the lecture-room, but they are led out into actual contact with the ignorance, sins and woes of the people.

Catherine Booth's threefold categorization of 'heart', 'head' and 'hands' - instruction in practical skills - has shaped The Salvation Army's understanding of training, persisting into the twenty-first century both in official documentation (TSA 2005:3) and the thinking of practitioners (Larsson 2007:126). The required Training Programme is divided into spiritual development, education and field operations, with the priority of spiritual formation over academic achievement clearly articulated as 'the primacy of spiritual growth and Salvationist identification over a predominantly academic approach to the training of officers' (TSA 2005: General Order).

### *Spiritual development*

Spiritual development is characterised by love for, and commitment to, God, compassion for those within and outside the Church, sacrificial caring, and Christ-like qualities demonstrated in 'utter integrity' (TSA 2005:3,1,2d). Development is encouraged through private and corporate daily prayer, worship which is specifically designed to foster spiritual formation, an interview programme and the example of staff as role models. This pattern draws on the traditional evangelical tradition of the



'daily quiet time' as a major source of maintaining and nourishing faith (McGrath 1995:7), combining it with corporate discipline and a mentoring and monitoring process.

### *Education*

Early Salvation Army officers were often themselves a product of 'the roughest classes of the world's population', sometimes learning to read in order to be able to study their Bibles. This, coupled with the activist missional ethos resulted in a pragmatic approach to training that held little similarity to the theological training of the day, of which the Booths were actively suspicious and dismissive. Whilst not unique to The Salvation Army in evangelical circles (Tidball 1994:28), this anti-intellectualist bias has to some extent persisted and shaped approaches to officer training and development.

Currently an aim of training is for colleges 'to provide teaching in scriptural truth and academic instruction in accordance with a basic curriculum approved for international use, with a view to bringing officer cadets to an acceptable level of academic achievement, providing a foundation of understanding and tools for learning' (TSA 2005:1,2,d). Broad areas of academic development include Biblical studies, doctrine and Church history, pastoral theology and an understanding of context, as well as communication skills and leadership development. It is inevitable that the 'acceptable level' will vary with the context. Whereas the regulations may seem prescriptive in comparison with the requirements of other denominations, there is no detailed international curriculum and considerable freedom of interpretation is both desirable and necessary. Nevertheless, the general ethos of acceptability rather than excellence remains as a denominational benchmark.

### *Field operations*

This section of the training programme is designed to 'provide the practical experience which will build upon the education programme and enable the development of the skills required 'for effective work as Salvation Army officers' (TSA 2005:3.3.1). This suggests a model of learning in which theory has logical priority over practice. In the light of the history of the organisation this seems to strike a dissonant note. The pragmatic ethos which has led to Salvation Army activism might indicate a less linear approach in which practice and theory interact and combine to produce learning, but this is not evident, although the requirement that both students and staff should evaluate the practice does allow for a process of

reflection which may lead to new learning. The final aim of field operations suggests that it is not separate from spiritual development, as through their practical training, officer cadets should 'have vision kindled, character strengthened, spiritual growth enlarged and, above all, love for souls deepened' (TSA 2005 3.3.2.f).

In each of these areas the actual practices of colleges may differ whilst remaining within the broad guidelines given. This means that although there may appear to be homogeneity in the training of Salvation Army officers, the experience of individuals can differ significantly. This includes their experience of spiritual life development.

### **A vocational model of training**

These three areas form the basis of Salvation Army training programmes, whether delivered residually, by distance learning or by mixed mode training. Methods, duration and balance between the three elements vary considerably, but all will be recognisable in any training programme. However, the way in which they are presented in the documentation is not entirely helpful. There is danger that an unreflective reading of the orders and regulations will lead to a training programme that has three distinct and unrelated strands, each with its own goals and direction, but with little integration or cross-fertilization between them. Separate departments within a college may shape and deliver curricula, vying for time and resources but with little emphasis upon an integrated *habitus* of Salvation Army officership. It could be argued that Salvation Army orders and regulations embody an underlying philosophy of education that focuses upon function and form, but only hints at the possible integration of the pieces into the coherent whole. This process has been summarised by Ian Bunting (2009:12) as formation into the ministerial life by 'the integration of who I am (authentic being), what is true (intelligible belief), and the way it works out in practice (fitting discipleship)'.

It would seem, then, that there is need for a philosophy and theology of officer training which can provide a more holistic focus and consequently shape future curricula. Whilst this is outside the scope of this work, it is necessary to give a brief summary of my own perspective in order to show relevance to ongoing spiritual life development and the Centre for Spiritual Life Development. Given that the ethos of the movement, organisational policy and a deeply embedded tradition of officer training are at stake, it seems wise to seek a model of education that will both understand and resonate with the past but allow for creative development in the future.

*Orders and Regulations for the Training of Salvation Army Officers* outline a form of vocational training which recognises the importance of character formation, knowledge and skill in the development of individuals who are preparing for a particular role or profession. David Heywood (1997:46) argues that ministerial training, properly understood, can be located in this tradition.

Seen within the vocational tradition, the training of a minister of religion will encompass three broad areas – the skills and competence appropriate to the many and varied tasks she is called to undertake, the psychological and spiritual maturity required for her calling and the necessary background knowledge of theology, psychology, contemporary culture and human development. These three elements will be linked by the habit of ‘thinking (and acting) theologically’- the facility of applying the required body of understanding in a mature and sensitive way to underpin the exercise of appropriate skills and competencies.

When comparing the Salvation Army requirements for training with Heywood’s definition, a significant difference is noticeable – Heywood’s notion that the three major elements are linked to provide an integrated whole.

#### *Vocational learning*

Heywood argues that good teachers in theological institutions will use methods that foster the development of the tacit knowledge on which explicit knowledge rests and which allows the student to deploy existing skills in order to interpret new situations. They would then interpret the world from a theological perspective, a ‘*habitus*’ of understanding, and be equipped for continuing learning and development within the framework of theological thinking. This is achieved when ‘students are taught in such a way that new knowledge is related to their existing experience. Only then will they acquire the skill of learning to see familiar situations in a new light’ (1997:49). This requires the adoption of a fully vocational model of training that may be contrasted with the norms of liberal education which require expertise in explicit knowledge and initiation into the governing paradigm but with no necessary reference to the concrete experience of the everyday world.

Heywood’s model has much to commend it to Salvation Army philosophy and practice. The importance of a pragmatic, activist approach to ministry requires practitioners who are able to interpret new situations in the light of the tradition, creatively finding a way forward. The need for flexibility which is rooted in secure theological understanding and principles is paramount. A vocational model which encompasses the traditional Salvationist model for training could provide a new

focus for training which shapes initial officer education, ongoing practice and lifelong learning but moves beyond it towards integration.

### *Pastoral imagination*

Foster *et al* (2006, 5, 22) argue that a cognitive approach is insufficient for the needs of clergy practice which occurs at the intersection of personal, collective and public experience.

Professional education is a cognitive or intellectual apprenticeship, a practical apprenticeship of skill, and an apprenticeship of identity formation.....clergy education involves more than teaching students a particular way of thinking; it requires that those ways of thinking be linked constructively with ways of being and doing. In this linking we can see in clergy education the *necessary interdependence* of the cognitive, practical and normative apprenticeships of professional education (*italics added*).

Drawing upon the work of Craig Dykstra, they suggest that this interdependence is cultivated by a pastoral imagination, an 'internal gyroscope and distinctive kind of intelligence' (Dykstra 2001: 2-3,15), which shapes action and thinking and enables the minister to see and interpret the world in a distinctive way. This imagination is developed in both explicit teaching practices and through the mission and culture of the seminary. However, Dykstra (2008:51-52) argues that it cannot be completely developed in the seminary. Requiring multiple types of intelligence and a willingness to be 'trained and formed within a process of lifelong learning', the pastoral imagination demands experience, a deep personal life and, most importantly, 'clarity of mind and spirit about what it means to worship God in spirit and in truth'. The interaction of learning, experience and personal spiritual depth leads to the emergence of pastoral imagination over time. It is not a direct result of the hard work and discipline that is required in ministerial preparation but comes as a gift 'given and received in the midst of a life spent in service to God's people' (2008: 52). In terms of the ongoing spiritual development of Salvation Army officers, the notion of pastoral imagination can provide a creative description of the interaction between normative, cognitive and practical strands of ministry, leading to a form of *habitus* that is the result of a whole life perspective.

Two major challenges face the practical outworking of vocational models of education. Firstly the relative importance given to each element or 'apprenticeship,' with the consequent implications for the allocation of time and resources. Is knowledge the foundation of the other two, and therefore logically prior, or does, as

in the Salvation Army orders and regulations, spiritual development take precedence over theory and practice? Is learning from experience the foundation of both knowledge and spiritual life? Can equal attention be given to knowing, being and doing, or is this neither necessary nor desirable? Whereas it is impractical to simply seek to provide three equal portions of time, as in Court (2011), some form of equity is necessary in order to signal the relative importance of each area.

A second major question is the need to discern how 'interdependence' can be achieved. Heywood's cognitive model is one option, learning to 'think theologically' suggests an orientation of intellectual process which privileges a theological response to life. This is helpful, but does not necessarily provide the deep interaction between theory, practice and personal faith that is necessary.

Dykstra's 'pastoral imagination' seems to offer the interaction and interpenetration that is required, but it cannot be developed in ways that lend themselves to curricula and timetables. Although pastoral imagination cannot be taught, Dykstra acknowledges the role of practical theology in nourishing, nurturing, disciplining and resourcing its growth. The focus of practical theology upon faithful living in and for the world provides a lens through which ministry can be evaluated and imagination shaped. In order to discern theological significance and meaning in the realities of life, to live out the *missio dei* in a society which seeks its values and purpose in other directions, a reflective process which brings the disparate elements together is necessary.

Ministerial training is a process 'through which the Church empowers itself for its prophetic role' - offering 'transformation, healing and redemption of our culture' (Wright 1997:41). Donald Macaskill (2000:33), in evaluating the effectiveness of ministerial training within the Church of Scotland, noted that ministry in the twenty-first century will 'demand dynamic reflection and creative responsiveness' and that ministers must be 'equipped as reflectors, utilizing the insights of their education to enable others to reflect on their situation'.

### **Reflective models of learning**

In the later decades of twentieth century adult education began to reappraise its self-understanding in the light of influential developments in educational theory. David Kolb's (1993) experiential learning theory, drawing on the work of Dewey, Lewin and Piaget, moved away from traditional models of applied theory to an

inductive cycle which begins from experience, moving through reflection and conceptualisation to experimentation. This model resonates with the methods of practical theology which move inductively from experience to theological reflection, connecting practice with the theological tradition in the search for new understanding. Knowing becomes a process which is the result of reflection upon experience, rather than a product that is 'deposited' by a tutor in the student's mind. This is both a cognitive and highly personal process which draws upon former experience and personal biases. It involves persistent and careful reflection upon experience, drawing upon past experience in a search for new understanding. The insight generated can lead to changes in behaviour or to new understanding of a situation. Learning is constantly evaluated and tested by new experience and modified as necessary. Consequently learning is a process of adaptation, in which previous experience and understanding is modified or expanded by reflection upon new experience in a continual cycle. Thus, for the Christian, reflection on experience begins from an existing Christian frame of reference, but critiques it in the light of new experience, sometimes leading to new interpretation and new practice.

#### *Theological reflection in ministerial training*

Kolb's theory provides important foundational concepts for the suggestion that learning for ministry is necessarily a reflective process. Ministry 'is both shaped by theology and critiques the adequacy of theological formulations to the life of the Church' (Whitehead and Whitehead 1995:xi). Knowledge that exists in isolation from action has limited value in ministerial training and development. The notion of experiential learning highlights the connectivity that is desired; new experience must be integrated into existing understanding as previous learning is examined, evaluated, and modified, thus leading to action, a way of being in the world. Theological reflection is essentially a transformative process in which previously held assumptions and views may be challenged, situations viewed in a new light, and the resulting insights evaluated, reviewed from a critical distance and acted upon in order to be incorporated into the life of the Church (Thompson 2008:30, 32).

However, a perceived danger of reflective learning is a lack of connection to the tradition, and to the academic theological insight which is the result of centuries of scholarship (Graham, Walton and Ward 2005:7). It then becomes simply a way of reflecting upon field work that is divorced from the academy. But reflection in ministerial education must always be *theological* reflection, so that, in a mutual process of rigorous exploration of both theology and practice, theology may shape

practice and practice shed new light on theological thinking (Thompson 2008:27). There is need for intentional interaction between theoretical theological studies and practice in order for this to be attained. It is not enough to assume that students will 'naturally' make connections. At the same time, theology needs to acknowledge the 'affective, emotional and spiritual as well as the intellectual within theological education (Macaskill 2000:33).

### *The reflective practitioner*

Donald Schön distinguished between reflection-on-action in professional education, which is a retrospective process, and reflection-in-action, in which thinking helps to re-shape practice as it happens without interrupting it. Schön (1987:13) sees this ability as being developed in a reflective practicum, which is the foundation for professional learning.

The question of the relationship between practice, competence and practical knowledge needs to be turned upside down. We should start not by asking how to make better use of research based knowledge but by asking what we can learn from a careful examination of artistry, that is, the competence by which practitioners actually handle indeterminate zones of practice - however that competence may relate to technical rationality.

This model of learning draws on the richness of human experience, locating learning in a practical reflective process which includes the knowledge of academic courses and professional 'character' and judgement, whilst recognising the constraints of organisational settings. Practice then becomes the locus of creative and constructive development and of formation into the norms of the profession - in theological terms, the acquisition of a '*habitus*' which will shape ongoing ministry. Theology takes its place as a practical discipline which is rooted in real-life situations but draws on the expertise and knowledge of the past for illumination. As such it embodies a wisdom that directs being and action (D'Souza 2009: 81). Theological discourse is viewed as a critical reflective process rather than a product to be applied (Graham, Walton and Ward 2005:5). This hermeneutical model is concerned with working out faithful Christian practice in the world, in the light of knowledge and the life of the people of God.

Schön's concept of professional artistry has resonances with Dykstra's pastoral imagination. Ministerial formation, including spiritual growth, is organic rather than mechanistic; it might be described as the development of an art form rather than a set of skills. Both models recognise the need for a practice that goes beyond the

application of theories, but is the result of creative engagement with context. Both also assume a professional identity that is not solely defined by qualifications and professional expertise. But Dykstra's understanding of the nature of ministry as a vocation that cannot be divorced from the individual's personal life which is lived in the presence of God adds a further dimension. Martyn Percy (2006:173) notes that ministers 'often speak of intuition rather than extended calculation or analysis' when dealing with unique situations during practice as knowledge gained is 'held and dwelt upon, and in the process of reflection is slowly transformed into vital spiritual capital', which enables a creative response based upon wisdom rather than technical rationality.

### **Theological education in the Anglican Communion**

In addition to the theoretical perspectives discussed above, this complementary strand of research gives insight into the practice of theological education in another global organisation which is grappling with the tension between identifying and naming shared standards for theological and vocational development, and recognising where provision for diversity is beneficial. The Theological Education for the Anglican Communion (TEAC) grids 'aim to set out in an accessible way the 'competencies' that TEAC believes are essential for people engaged in various forms of ministry and discipleship within the Anglican Communion - at different stages in their formation' (Anglican Communion 2011). They were developed in August 2006 by a multi-national working party representing most provinces of the Anglican Communion, and disseminated in 2007 after some editing, as a resource to aid the development and monitoring of theological education. The construction of the grids reflects an outcomes-based model of education which places value upon different dimensions of the training process - intellectual, practical, emotional and spiritual - in the context of lifelong learning. 'Theological education at its best must invite those who are engaged in it to make space and time, to delve deep, reflect and question, and to avoid pre-packaged solutions. Theological education at its best involves the whole person, mind, body and spirit' (Amos 2008:197).

TEAC values learning as a process which begins before a person begins a post of responsibility, but should continue in some overt form for at least the first three years in which they are exercising that ministry. Five grids, for bishops, priests, vocational deacons, licensed lay ministers and lay people, refer to different forms of ministry and/or discipleship. Those relating to bishops and priests are most relevant to this work. In each, there is exploration of each of the four dimensions mentioned above.



The spirituality section contains reference to the development of self-understanding, personal and corporate devotional practices and ability to communicate spiritual experience. An important factor is the integral relationship between spirituality and practice so that life in the church flows from spirituality and faith. It is suggested that greater responsibility brings a need for development and change in the spiritual life, and that 'personal devotional practice and discipline and zeal for the ministry' should be 'lively' (Anglican Communion 2011:Bishops Grid). Whereas it is not easy to measure spiritual formation or to decide what is admissible as 'appropriate evidence' the inclusion of spiritual aspects of formation gives a clear signal that this must be taken seriously and that theological education cannot be solely an academic process.

The grids present a 'loose' set of competencies that rely on the ability of the leaders in a local context to develop the programme in ways that are consistent with the broad framework, within the parameters presented by the local situation. However the Anglican Communion is not advised or permitted to enforce them in any way. They are offered to, but not imposed upon, the Anglican provinces and have been used selectively, most often as a benchmark when a province is reviewing its theological education process and provision.

The critique of J Eileen Scully (2008:212) commends the grids as an expression of what Anglicans share whilst allowing space for development in each situation. She notes the clear articulation of the necessity of lifelong learning and spiritual and personal growth, and the 'integration of vocational responsibilities and personal maturity, integrity of character and faith'. Whilst applauding the systematic presentation which enables comprehension of the component parts of interrelated and complex issues, she identifies two challenges; the need to relate the parts to the whole in order to articulate what binds them together and the recognition of the necessary content of the training in any situation and at any level. Nevertheless a strength of TEAC is its ability 'to bring particular voices together to explore our common mission in the world, and to create and grow a culture that values theological education for all within our diverse contexts' (2008:221).

Clare Amos (2010) noted that a careful editing process was necessary to avoid prescriptive language or the production of a core curriculum. In addition, the different cultural contexts represented added richness to the discussion but also diversity of opinion, so that agreement had to be negotiated. There was common consensus

that a sense of vocation is the most important element, but then priorities varied considerably. Wondra (2008:2) suggests that 'an outcomes-based approach alone seems inadequate when education is concerned with training in critical reflection, with habits of heart and mind, and with formation of character'.

If the CSLD were to attempt to construct a common framework for spiritual life development similar practical challenges might apply. For example, there would be accord in terms of the value placed upon the development of the spiritual life but each territorial leader or educator would have a personal approach to promoting and facilitating this. Similarly, there may be differences of opinion relating to prioritising of means of grace. Some leaders may resent even the existence of the framework, challenging the need to make the processes for the development of the spiritual life any more overt than the general guidelines in *Orders and Regulations for Officers*. Further difficulties would emerge in the dissemination and application of the grids in the local context. Not all Salvation Army territories would have the necessary teaching resources, or the personnel, who could creatively interpret them, with the possibility of unhelpful confusion or misinterpretation.

Two points of divergence between the Anglican Communion and The Salvation Army are important. Whereas the TEAC grids are offered as an aid to the provinces and use is voluntary and selective, the more centralised structure of The Salvation Army, its military ethos, and the initial rationale for the instigation of the CSLD indicate a less fluid approach which may militate against a beneficial outcome. The foundation in outcomes-based education and reference to 'competence' might be seen to strike a dissonant note when applied to the spiritual life. If applied rigidly, spiritual life grids could feel mechanistic and inflexible, giving an impression of the need to reach a predetermined goal or target. Secondly, the stage of ministry or discipleship for which the individual grids are designed has universal theological significance within the Anglican Communion. Roles in The Salvation Army are defined pragmatically in terms of function rather than theology, with no real consensus relating to distinction between different levels. Without this theological foundation, it may be difficult to articulate difference, but also unhelpful not to do so in terms of practical use.

Scully's criticism must also be taken seriously; the grids do not articulate what binds the parts into a coherent whole. Given that there is need for attention to this coherence in the philosophy and practice of Salvation Army officer training, it seems

reasonable to suggest that it is also important as the CSLD shapes its policies and practices.

In summary, the example of TEAC shows the possibilities of flexible parameters that can be relevant in a range of situations, and which can lead to a 'local' development of a 'global' resource. But differences in the organisational ethos, in the approach to differentiation of roles and status, and the need for an articulated overarching coherence suggest that the formation of outcomes-based grids does not appear to provide a suitable way forward for spiritual life development in The Salvation Army.

In conclusion, it can be said that *Orders and Regulations for Salvation Army Officers* indicate the need for an experiential '*habitus*' or character as the foundation for Salvation Army officership. The personal spiritual life is central to this *habitus*, which is evidenced in action. A holistic understanding of spirituality as the interaction of the inner life, understanding and life in the world, calls for a holistic approach to its development. Similarly, the experiential dimension of faith must be understood and evaluated in the light of the tradition and must result in a distinctive way of life or it is incomplete. At an organisational level The Salvation Army is an activist movement that needs both spiritual and academic foundations for its activism, or it may lose focus. This means that the development of the spiritual life cannot be seen in isolation from the learning process. The importance of integrating 'knowing, being and doing' into a coherent whole which results in the development of a particular character or *habitus*, leads to the need for a philosophy of ministerial training that keeps in mind the whole as well as the constituent parts. This in turn seems to indicate a holistic approach to ongoing development. Personal spiritual development which is separated from knowledge or action will not sustain a ministry that is by definition holistic. A practical theological approach, rooted in reflective processes which interpret experience, leading to new understanding and the development of wisdom, may provide a way forward.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Research Design**

As practical theology, this research is not only concerned with theoretical perspectives but also with how the lived experience of individuals can inform practice and policy. The location of Salvationist spirituality within evangelicalism, and the exploration of the philosophy and practice of training in relation to aspects of theological and vocational education offer a broad conceptual framework with which the empirical research can interact in order to seek a way forward. Chapters 5-9 articulate this process.

This chapter outlines the research methodology and design. It begins by acknowledging that education is not the only possible conversation partner for this subject, but is nevertheless the most suitable choice. It then locates the empirical work in the field of qualitative research and explores the relationship of this to theology, before describing the research methods and process and my role as a researcher.

#### **Psychological approaches to faith development**

In seeking to achieve the aim of this research to investigate the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers, and to inform my professional practice at the Centre for Spiritual Life Development two major questions emerge. What is the nature of 'spiritual life development'? How is this demonstrated and achieved in the lives of Salvation Army officers?

One lens through which the research questions could be viewed is that of psychology. The word 'development' may imply a measurable process, a hierarchy that can be discerned, calibrated and monitored. A psychological understanding of faith development might offer a way forward. The work of James Fowler (1981) is foundational. Drawing on developmental psychology, particularly Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development and Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of moral development, Fowler posited six stages of faith which may occur in human beings during their lifetime. Ranging from primal or undifferentiated faith to universalizing faith, the stages show a process of increasing independence, acceptance of responsibility and the possibility of paradox in human faith development. These

often emerge during particular life stages in a parallel process to cognitive and moral development.

However, fundamentally, the use of the word 'development' in the name of the CSLD is not concerned with assessing progression on a psychological scale towards a projected target of maturity at a certain time of life, but with the notion that the Christian spiritual life is a dynamic process of formation for each individual. This formation is not measured against a universal benchmark of spirituality in order to discern a particular stage, nor against the 'progress' of others, but is a deeply personal response to the grace and revelation of God in an individual life. It is more similar to the development of a relationship than the achievement of goals or targets. Fowler (1995:302) concedes that it is difficult to speak of faith purely as a matter of stages of development because ultimately the writer 'comes up against the fact that the transcendent other with whom we have to do in faith is not confined by the models that we build and the patterns we discern'. Faith development theory is concerned with patterns of grace in nature, but does not allow for extraordinary grace, God's acts of self disclosure, given as a gift and the resultant 'claims upon our loves and passions' (1995:303). Whereas there are signposts that indicate development in terms of Christian understanding and lived experience, for each individual the trajectory will be personal and unique. The normative understanding of the organisation and of the Church provides some patterns of spiritual life development, as do the historical experiences of Christians, but a scale of achievement, or of development, does not seem to offer an appropriate way forward in this context. This necessarily poses challenges for the CSLD in terms of assessing effectiveness, but also allows for the appreciation of the unique experience of each individual.

A psychological model developed by Corrine Ware (1995:7) from the work of Urban T. Holmes III centres on a typology of spirituality. This does not depend upon a developmental pattern, but offers 'a tool and a method by which to conceptualize and name spiritual experience within a basic framework'. Holmes believed that four types of authentic religious experience, speculative-kataphatic (intellectual), affective-kataphatic (experiential), affective-apophatic (mystical) and speculative-apophatic (visionary, activist), are needed for a holistic and healthy spiritual life. Ware argues that individuals have a dominant type(s) which shapes their personal spiritual profile. Spiritual 'health' is found in awareness of the whole and appreciation of difference. Both integration, described by Ware in terms of immersion in form and

tradition, and individuation, a process of differentiation which allows for intentional individuality, are necessary.

Originally developed as a tool for use in individual spiritual direction, questionnaires based on the four quadrants of the spirituality wheel offer individuals and congregations the opportunity to know, understand and affirm, their dominant type and also to strengthen both this and the less favoured types as they seek a holistic spirituality. This model serves as a reminder that diversity in spiritual experience is to be expected, and when embraced and appreciated, brings enrichment. Faragher (2010), in tracing the influence of contemplative spirituality in The Salvation Army, has demonstrated that despite a shared heritage, individual Salvationists experience the spiritual life differently. Further work in assessing the dominant spiritual types in both denominational expectations and congregational life would be valuable.

However, for the purposes of this research, and reflecting the author's professional practice, both past and present, the work of the CSLD will not be viewed primarily through a psychological lens but will be brought into conversation with the philosophy and practice of theological education in order to discern a creative way forward. This also resonates more clearly with the location of the 'home' of the CSLD in an educational rather than a therapeutic setting.

### **Historical survey**

A second way of exploring the questions would have been to trace the idea of spiritual life development through the history of the Christian Church. Since the beginning of the Christian era the notion of the spiritual life as dynamic and therefore subject to change and development has persisted. Drawing on the New Testament image of the spiritual life as an organic process which requires growth (1 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 4:15-16; Colossians 1:10; 2 Peter 3:18), Christian teachers and leaders have consistently portrayed a progressive experience of the life of faith. This has been seen to be achieved either through participation in the community of faith, personal devotion, or a combination of both, and facilitated by Church teachings and the work of individuals. Through the centuries the understanding of Christian spirituality has been fostered by communal worship, sacramental theology and practices, asceticism, monasticism, the Celtic tradition, traditions of spiritual direction and Christian practice (Holt 1993:13). The multiple practices of the historic Church provide a 'root system' from which current practices have evolved and also a benchmark by which they can be evaluated. The broad tradition, whilst itself being

open to critique, highlights a narrow or incomplete perspective, offers variety and presents norms and boundaries, in order to allow creative engagement with the present (Holt 1993: 20-21).

Practical theology calls for a 'faithful response to the world in which we live and the tradition in which we stand' (Veling 2005:25). Therefore one possible way forward would have been to focus upon the tradition in order to discern if the practices of the CSLD should creatively recapitulate the past. But although the historical story which has shaped a Salvationist understanding of the spiritual life is important, and evident throughout this thesis, but it will be as a part of the whole, informing the contemporary situation rather providing the major framework. It is important that the voice of the present is also heard and understood. Percy (2006:60), writing in the context of Anglican ministry, argues that 'those ministries that survive and flourish will tend to be the most adaptive in relation to their changing situations'. By analogy it can be suggested that although the heritage of the past is important, it is not a sufficient foundation on which to build the CSLD. Attention to the faith tradition, to present reality and to the way in which these interact is central to the creative vitality of practical theology (Veling 2005:25).

### **Interpreting the present**

The development of the policy and practice of the CSLD will be shaped by a number of significant factors; the expectations of The Salvation Army and its understanding of the spiritual life, the evangelical context of the denomination, factors relating to the internationalism of the movement and the findings of this research. A Professional Doctorate seeks to enhance and improve performance through the examination of values and current practice (Bennett Z. 2009:338). It is therefore appropriate that work which ultimately aims to facilitate the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers is informed by the lived experience of Salvation Army officership. A view of the current situation, despite being limited by the boundaries of the research project, will illuminate practice and demonstrate the complexity of the situation. This will be achieved by a process which draws on the methodology of qualitative research.

### **Qualitative research- an inductive methodology**

Kolb has demonstrated that experience plays a central role in the learning process. Therefore in seeking to discern those factors which lead to development, it is necessary to take into account the human experience of the target group as well as

theoretical understanding. A methodology which allows for the exploration and analysis of experience is essential.

The methods of objectivist scientific research suggest that the world can be known, and reality can be explained, through the use of mathematical models and quantitative analysis. It seeks to discover 'the universal laws of society and human conduct within it' (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2000: 9). This suggests that variables could be constructed in order to demonstrate the optimum conditions for spiritual life development in Salvation Army officers. However, quantitative research, whilst made attractive by its structure and order, does not acknowledge the importance of subjective issues, alternative interpretations of reality and the diversity of human experience of God.

Qualitative research questions assumptions of neutrality in inquiry and views all research as interpretive. It is concerned with understanding the ways in which people interpret the world and consists of 'the search for meaningful relationships and the discovery of their consequences for action' (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2000: 9). It is not naïve, disorganised or random, but is necessarily rigorous and systematic whilst also taking into account the vagaries of human reality in a process described by Gillham (2000:8) as 'detached honesty'. Wallen and Fraenkel (2001:434) argue that the words and actions of people reflect their social and personal contexts. 'Methods are needed, therefore, that enable to researcher to capture the language and behaviour of the participants'. Qualitative research allows a situation to be viewed in social context and acknowledges that both researcher and participants bring their own presuppositions and bias to the work. It encourages dialogue between disciplines and a 'broad' approach to investigation.

As a qualitative research project this work has employed an inductive approach to data gathering and interpretation. This seeks for meaning in the complexity of lived experience, searching for a coherent and faithful understanding of spiritual life development as reported by a particular cohort of individuals. This is not the only possible 'story', or even the only possible interpretation of the material, but it is a believable, realistic and accurate account of the current situation as demonstrated by the research data (Cresswell 1998:22). It does not provide details of the percentage of Salvation Army officers who can be judged to be spiritually mature or even a precise definition of what that might mean, but it seeks to show how the research subjects understand the development of the spiritual life and gives an



account of their experiences, highlighting those factors which, they believe, have facilitated growth. Some facts and statistics are helpful in suggesting broad trends, and confirming, or refuting, impressions from a careful reading of the data, but they are not assumed to be a replicable set of data, provable by further research.

The spiritual practices of the subject group are not only an explanation of what people do, they also embody what they *believe* to be effective in spiritual practice. 'They express the contemporary living tradition of the Christian faith' (ARCS 2008), a personal spirituality of individuals in The Salvation Army, at a particular time in their officer ministry. This may be similar to, or different from the official account of Salvation Army tradition to which they subscribe and the wider tradition of evangelicalism to which it belongs. The purpose of the empirical research is not solely to provide a window on experience, but to show how that experience is consistent with, or differs from, the norms of the denomination and the tradition of the Church, and to offer some explanation, mutual critique and a way forward.

The use of the four 'voices' of spirituality, operant, espoused, normative and formal, has provided a tool which discloses the consistencies and disconnections between the practices of individuals, Salvationist belief and tradition, and the spirituality of the Church.

The analysis has enabled the development of a 'rich description', a complex holistic picture which will contribute to the understanding of trends and patterns of spiritual growth within The Salvation Army; identifying factors which individuals find helpful in their personal quest for development. As this was brought into a dialectic conversation with the wider conceptual and theoretical framework of the project, the subjects' understanding of personal spiritual growth critiqued, and was critiqued by, educational theory, the tradition of The Salvation Army and the wider Church context. Denzin and Lincoln (2003:5) suggest that this process is the creation of a *bricolage*, as the various elements interact to form an emergent construction, new understanding. 'The combination of multiple methodological practices, empirical materials, perspectives and observers in a single study is best understood, then, as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to any enquiry' (2003:8).

#### *Theology and inductive research*

Grounded in an interpretive constructivist epistemology, qualitative research assumes that reality is never 'pure' but always an interpretation which may be one of

several options, each of which many be equally valid. This means that objectivity is impossible, but that is not the aim of this investigation. The research does not seek to develop a reliable, definitive set of variables which could be verified and confirmed by further research in a new context, but rather to allow a valid and faithful interpretation of the given situation to emerge and to bring this into conversation with theory and tradition in order to allow new understanding and a convincing foundation for practice to emerge.

Some would argue that a logical consequence of a constructivist epistemology is a nominalist ontology which concludes that there is no shared reality but only the constructed world of individuals, each of which has validity only for that individual. However to say that it is not possible to access reality in its pure uninterpreted form is not necessarily the same as to deny the possibility of its existence. Evangelical Christian theology, and therefore Salvationist theology, claims to have its foundation in a shared revelation of God in Christ that is not a construction but reality, even though the description of that reality is an interpretation, which is in some sense provisional, and shaped by the limitations of human understanding and human ability to articulate profound and deeply personal truth. Therefore a version of constructivism is necessary which will allow for both the real and the interpretation.

### *Critical Realism*

Critical realism acknowledges that reality exists, but claims that access to it is a negotiated process involving the real and the knower. Set between the positivist and anti-positivist extremes of epistemology (Burrell and Morgan 1979:5), it views knowledge as a valid representation of reality, but does not assume that it is an exact depiction of it. It is a *re*-presentation, an approximation or interpretation that is shaped by the knower. We 'know' from our own perspective and that knowledge is always provisional, and open to challenge by other perspectives (Wright 1992:35; Swinton and Mowat 2006:37). Knowledge is therefore both independent of, and intimately connected to, the knower. Nevertheless it can be claimed to be valid knowing.

Osborne (1991:310) suggests criteria for validity; coherence within the broad framework in which it is located, comprehensiveness in interpreting the data, adequacy in its explanation of the real and internal consistency. This means that in the interpretation of the research data, although I may claim validity for my reading of the data, I must acknowledge that alternative conclusions are possible and that

more, or different, data could lead to alternative readings. Similarly, I must acknowledge a researcher bias, a tendency to view the data through a particular lens which reflects my own experience and worldview and therefore to offer an interpretation which 'fits' with my particular story and with the story of my context.

*A practical doctorate, qualitative research and faithful conclusions.*

A practical doctorate emerges from and returns to practice with the aim of 'enhancing the understanding of - and making a difference to - practice' (Anglia Ruskin University 2010:18). It is therefore inevitable that it is closely related to the professional practice of the researcher. This is not necessarily a tension-free relationship as the demands of practice interact with the norms and expectations of the academy.

The context of my research highlights these possible tensions. Funded by the organisation, my research has actually become part of my brief of appointment, a textbook fulfilment of the academy's aim to develop good practice and individual development (Anglia Ruskin University 2010:18; TSA 2009b). But it also presents significant challenges as the relationship between the organisation and the academy is negotiated and shaped. Scott *et al* (2004:42) identify four forms of knowledge, each of which has their own purpose and focus, leading to tension when they are encountered together. These are: the disciplinary knowledge of the university which sees itself as the 'ultimate arbiter of knowledge claims'; the technical rational approach which seeks to optimize efficient performance; the dispositional and transdisciplinary perspective which sees practice as 'the source and arena for theoretical development' (2004:46); and critical knowledge which seeks to understand, and change, what is happening in practice. This work does not seek to resolve the tensions but to work creatively within them. Thus the disciplines of theology and tradition will be set alongside practice as a source of, and catalyst for, developing the spiritual life.

A number of factors are significant: The Salvation Army, although not unchanging, is highly organised with technical rational 'regulations' relating to many areas of Christian life and practice; critical academic theology is not a highly developed field in the movement; my research is concerned with the deeply personal area of spirituality which is at the heart of Salvationist life and practice and in which knowing is not only cognitive, but experiential; and the organisation has its roots in evangelical theology in which certain understanding, including the reality of God and

the possibility of relationship between God and humanity, is not negotiable. A model of practical wisdom which is both rooted in the tradition and is also a new improvisation is called for in order to allow interaction between foundational beliefs and creativity, leading to new understanding. Swinton and Mowat (2006:4) suggest that 'practical theology takes seriously the idea of performing the faith and seeks to explore the nature and in particular the faithfulness of that performance'. They argue that the notion of faithful performance does not imply slavish repetition but improvisation within boundaries which may bring out new or forgotten aspects of the original 'text' which is the 'God given plot of the gospel... participation in God's redemptive practices in, to and for the world' (2006:5,6). This provides a broad, theistic framework in which qualitative research can take place, allowing for a critical realism that is shaped by two movements. Hospitality to the method, but with no a-priori assumption that theology will accept all of its assumptions or compromise essential truth, is complemented by 'conversion' which acknowledges the reality of God. This model takes seriously the notion that faith is not a static deposit of dogma, but is seen in the lives of the faith-ful as they interact with daily experience and the tradition of the Church. As the faith is performed, it is also transformed by the innovations and improvisations which emerge. Thus practical theology is located at the intersection of faithfulness and improvisation, negotiating a journey between unthinking and unreflective trampling of the familiar paths and leaving the road entirely, lured by another destination.

My task, as a researcher who is deeply rooted in the organisation, is to negotiate the route, to critique performance and to risk improvisation in order to seek transformation. I must be faithful to a commitment to share in God's redemptive activity in the world but also be 'open to growth, to encounter new ways of doing things and to interpret the given traditions and practices of faith in new ways' (Ward 2005:17). This has been achieved by through empirical research in conversation with theology and theory. Practice has been evaluated in the light of the deeply held theological convictions of The Salvation Army rather than any secondary habits or traditions which may be negotiable. These actions are generative of understanding which will guide future decisions.

## **Research methods and process**

### *The research environment*

Despite the slow beginnings of officer training and the suspicion of academic study, William and Bramwell Booth developed a vision of the importance of lifelong

learning to The Salvation Army. Henry Howard (1904 in Baird 1966:37), the International Commissioner for Training, believed that, if the Army were to have a 'staff lodge,' 'spiritual and well as administrative effectiveness would be very much increased'. For Bramwell Booth learning was a means to encourage total commitment to the fundamental principles of The Salvation Army, thus leading to 'greater efficiency in its direction and control' in the movement (Anon 1905:433). With this in mind, the Staff Training Lodge was established at Clapton in 1905. Renamed the International Staff College in 1909, it was affiliated to the International Training College and remained so until 1923, although it ceased to operate between 1914 and 1921 due to the disruptions of the First World War. From 1929, the depression years and the Second World War again resulted in closure. In October 1950 the re-established International Staff College opened at Sydenham as a centre of specialized officer training (Burrows 1975:21). At the opening Albert Orsborn (1950:5), describing The Salvation Army as 'essentially a spiritual movement', said that spiritual matters would therefore take priority in staff training. A change of designation to the International College for Officers in 1954 reflected a wider focus as a centre of further education. 'No officer's training is completed at commissioning. He (*sic*) is always coming to a deeper understanding of the faith he proclaims and the purposes of the Army in which he serves' (Burrows 1975:22). This effectively meant that officers in all types of appointment could be selected to attend; the word 'staff' in the original name indicated a (now largely unused) Salvation Army custom to differentiate those in administrative or organisational roles from those in church ministry. Since 1954, the International College for Officers has remained at Sydenham, with four sessions each year. The addition of the Centre for Spiritual Life Development in 2008 was the first significant change to the purpose of the college since 1954. Adjustments to programme are evident, with more emphasis upon formational practice, but further work needs to be done in exploring this complex relationship.

Officers are proposed for attendance at the ICO by their Territories according to the following criteria. They should

- Exhibit spiritual maturity and a strong desire to grow in holiness
- Demonstrate productivity in their ministry and in their spiritual leadership
- Show potential to develop as effective leaders in the field, in social work, in administration, or in special work (Munn R. 2011:6).

The requirements of maturity, productivity and future potential ensure that delegates are able to gain maximum benefit from the programme; selection is viewed as a mark of confidence in the present and hope for the future.

### *The research subjects*

The research subjects were delegates to the International College for Officers and Centre for Spiritual Life Development between April and December 2010. Although the remit of the CSLD is not exclusively limited to the ICO delegates, or to officers, this was a pragmatic decision which effectively provided an accessible international group of research subjects with some common experience and understanding. Officers are a category within Salvationists who share a common vocation and have been trained by The Salvation Army as leaders. Officers attending the ICO are typically in the middle years of ministry, although this can vary considerably with individuals. This means that they have experience, but also time in which to develop and to effect change in their own context. However, it is also likely that the responses will have a generational bias, so that the findings would not be replicated with a younger, or a much older, group of respondents.

Each cohort of students at the ICO and CSLD, known by number as a 'session,' comprises twenty six officers, drawn from each of the Salvation Army's five zones. This means that there are potentially one hundred and four delegates in each calendar year. In reality the maximum number is almost always a hundred, as it is the norm that two of the sessions each year are 'translation sessions' which include a group of six officers who share a common language, but whose English is not sufficiently developed to allow their participation in the complex teaching, learning and worship activities of the ICO. In this instance there are also two translators, almost invariably also officers, who work with the delegates as close colleagues, not only translating but guiding them through the whole process of being a stranger in foreign land and context, unfamiliar with both custom and language. It is often the case that the delegates are able to speak some English and that this will often improve considerably during the two months. Issues relating to the challenges of doing research which involves reliance upon a translator will be discussed in Chapter 6.

### *The research process*

Following ethics approval by the Anglia Ruskin University Arts, Law and Social Sciences Faculty Research Ethics Panel Chair (3 February 2010), the empirical

research was conducted throughout 2010. During Session 204 (13 January – 8 March) a pilot study of the questionnaire and the interview afforded the opportunity to refine the questions, to get a sense of the value of possible responses for the project and to judge the potential response rate. A pilot interview also allowed me to judge the viability of some in-depth conversations and the extent to which delegates would be willing to discuss deeply personal issues. The questionnaire responses were carefully considered and some changes made to the questions in three areas. One complex question was clarified, by breaking it down into a series of three simple questions, as responses showed that the original format had been confusing. Two supplementary questions were added to the request for an explanation of spiritual life development, relating to facilitation and evidence. Finally, a specific question concerning the relationship between spiritual life and practical ministry was added as a result of further reflection upon practice and text based research.

Delegates from the remaining three Sessions of 2010 were invited to complete the revised questionnaire (Appendix G: 272-277). Session 205 (14 April –7 June) was a Mizo translation session. Five of the six Mizo delegates came from the India Eastern Territory and one from Singapore, Malaysia and Myanmar. Session 206 (14 July- 6 September) was English speaking, although as with any session, the level of competence varied considerably. Session 207 (13 October- 6 December) included an Indonesian translation group, a number of whom spoke reasonably competent English. For both translation groups the questionnaire was translated into the relevant language and the responses into English by the official translators. In addition, three South American delegates completed the questionnaire in Spanish as a concession to the limited extent of their written English skills. In this case the official translator at International Headquarters provided the translation of both questionnaire and responses.

On each occasion, as part of a CSLD presentation given by a colleague, I was able to introduce my research and the questionnaire, and to encourage the delegates to spend time reflecting on their own experience and understanding in order to give the most accurate picture possible. The introduction took place within the first few days of the start of the session, with encouragement to respond as soon as possible. A 'deadline' for responses two weeks later was flexible, but allowed me opportunity to remind the group that I would value their help. This flexibility led to the possibility of subjects being influenced in their conversations with each other and by the intensive experience of the ICO which combines study with spiritual development, but it also

allowed the time for the reflection and remembering which is needed to complete the questionnaire and for people for whom English is not a first language to formulate responses which they believed expressed what they wished to communicate.

The questionnaires were analysed using NVivo8. The responses to each question were coded, and as themes emerged, hunches were tested and patterns began to emerge. The facility to generate a matrix of variables provided opportunity to investigate the possibility of zonal emphases, gender differences and response relationship, if any, to years of officership. The ability to generate statistical information allowed for numerical confirmation of emerging trends and identification of common responses. However the major aim of the questionnaire was not to discover statistical information but to hear the voices of the officers in a process that offered everyone the opportunity to participate.

Five delegates, one from each Salvation Army zone, were invited to meet me for a longer conversation. In all except one instance the questionnaire had indicated that they had thought deeply and comprehensively about their responses. They had also indicated their willingness to be interviewed. The final interviewee was chosen as a result of observing the delegate in the daily life of the college and realising that they may not be able to articulate their story well in writing but would be able to do so in conversation. The interviews allowed a more detailed and personal story to be told; the story of an individual but also a 'snapshot' of life in their territory and zone. This was particularly relevant for the African and South Asian delegates whose story of spiritual development revealed much about their life and context.

All of the interviews took place in my office at the CSLD and each one lasted between an hour and an hour and a half. They were captured using a small recording device which was demonstrated to the delegate at the beginning of the interview and then left openly on the table beside me. No interviewee asked for it to be switched off at any stage in the process. The audio files were then downloaded on to my computer and typed into a transcript as soon as possible after the interview, always within a few days. The interviews were also analysed using Nvivo 8, this time not revealing statistical trends and overall patterns but similarity and difference between the lives and experience of individuals.

A third strand of the empirical research process is found in information gained as a result of my professional practice. This includes conversations with training staff



from a number of territories in order to build a picture of practices of spiritual formation in initial training, and feedback from discussion when teaching at conferences and seminars in Africa, India, Europe and North America. This anecdotal information has been carefully recorded in a journal and, although standing outside the formal research process, has contributed to my understanding of the international situation.

### *The results*

A number of important issues emerged as the results were analysed. They can be grouped into three major categories: definitions and understanding of spiritual life development (Chapter 7); the 'means of grace' or the factors which facilitate spiritual experience and growth (Chapter 8); and the relationship between the spiritual life and ministerial practice (Chapter 9). The choice of these categories has emerged from my careful reading and analysis of questionnaire responses and interview transcripts in dialogue with text based research, and reflection upon the insights recorded in my professional journal. Each of the three categories has relevance to the spiritual life development in Salvation Army officers at the current time. In order to discern this relevance, the operant spiritual practices of respondents will be reflected upon in the light of the espoused spirituality within the denomination, the normative understanding of the *Handbook of Doctrine, Orders and Regulations* and the *Report of the International Spiritual Life Commission*, and the formal understanding of spirituality in the evangelical Christian tradition and academic theology and education. The outcome of this dialectical process will provide a foundation and a framework for the development of future policy and practice for the CSLD.

The discussion will draw on the responses to all of the questions, noting statistics and respondents' comments as appropriate. An analysis of the responses to each question can be found in Appendix H (pp. 278-291). Quotations from the questionnaire responses will be identified by a number (1-52), those from interviews by an upper case letter (A-E).

### *Limitations*

The narrow scope of the research sample necessarily places certain limitations upon this work. Delegates to the ICO are a minute proportion of the possible total research population of Salvationists or even of officers. They do not represent every territory or command, or language spoken. They are individuals who have not

necessarily reflected the views of the leaders in their territory in their responses. Attendance at the ICO is regarded as an honour, often reserved for those officers who are seen to have potential for significant responsibility, therefore they are not necessarily representative of the wide range of abilities of Salvation Army officers. Nevertheless their responses demonstrate some of the possible opinions about, attitudes to, and understandings of, spiritual life development in the contemporary Salvation Army. As such they have made a contribution to the development of ideas in this thesis.

The work is limited in direct application to the CSLD and The Salvation Army. As practical theology this research is grounded in a particular situation and therefore leads to 'disposable and contextual' (Pattison 2000:143) conclusions which cannot be viewed as universal, objective, or applicable in any other context. They are not replicable, but insights generated could be explored and investigated by further research. In addition, the unique ethos and structure of the organisation and of Salvation Army officership as a form of ministry ensures that the work has limited relevance outside the movement. Nevertheless, some insights may be of interest to other Christian denominations who are similarly engaged in work related to ministerial spiritual formation.

### **My role as researcher**

My role as a researcher was necessarily influenced by factors relating to my physical presence at the ICO as part of the community, but also on the periphery, so largely unknown, my place in the organisation, and my personal history and perspective.

The status of the Centre for Spiritual Life Development at the International College for Officers is not without ambivalence. There is lack of clarity concerning administrative issues and a blurring of boundaries relating to the expected involvement of ICO officer staff in the occasional CSLD events. A separate budget allows the CSLD to 'buy' support services from the ICO. In effect, as the CSLD develops further, discussion needs to take place as to whether it is a 'school' of the ICO and therefore an integral part of the whole, or an independent entity which rents office space and draws upon the services of the ICO for conference facilities. The ICO is a well established college, with traditions and patterns of work that have been developed over many years. This includes the normal practice that officer staff share in many aspects of the experience with delegates, not only in terms of the formal

programme, but also meals and some recreational activities. It is a tight-knit community which functions on a cycle of an intensive eight week period followed by a more relaxed regime for about five weeks. Both officer and lay support staff work to this rhythm. On my appointment to the CSLD, there was an intentional decision to separate my workload completely from that of the ICO. This means effectively that although in some senses I am a part of the community - my office is there, I share in daily worship and a lunch time meal - I am also separate from it, living away from the campus, with most of my work unrelated to the daily activities of the college, and I am often absent. The spiritual formation aspect of the ICO is viewed as ICO curriculum rather than as a function of the CSLD. Thus my contact with the delegates is minimal and generally limited to informal conversations during breaks in the programme. During the period of the research my only formal contact with two of the sessions was to introduce the questionnaire and give a brief overview of my research, explaining the importance of the project and the way in which they could contribute. This changed slightly for Session 207 as I was asked to teach for three hours on one day as a replacement for a lecturer with a serious health problem. The teaching was not directly related to my research and was at a stage in the session when most of the delegates would already have completed their responses. In addition, because part of my work is to teach at conferences and seminars, I am invariably away from the ICO for part of the session, on average for two weeks of the eight. I have noted that if I am absent at the beginning of a session it is harder for me to establish a relationship with the group, but because I am often responding to other people's agenda it is not possible to control this variable.

These factors mean that I am both familiar and strange, an insider in the wider community, but also an outsider in that I do not 'share the journey' with the delegates but only observe them at a distance. This ambivalence does not appear to make any difference in the response of some delegates; I become aware of a hospitality which seeks to include me as an insider, a fellow traveller and part of the community. However others prefer to retain a distance, courteous but not inviting, or seeking, any real contact.

This may be further exacerbated by my perceived status in the organisation. Officers hold a rank, which is often related to years of service but sometimes to seniority of appointment. My rank of Lieutenant Colonel falls in the latter category and immediately makes me less approachable and accessible in the minds of some delegates. Whereas in many Western contexts rank is no longer a key factor in

officer identity and relationships, in other situations it is still prestigious, so that 'higher' ranks command automatic respect and, in some cases, deference. Although it is both my personal practice and that of the community to use Christian names on all but the most formal of occasions, my assumed seniority is there in the background and shapes some people's attitude to me. This is compounded by the fact that cultural norms differ in relation to the way in which questionnaires, especially those which are perceived as official, should be completed (even if it is explained that this data will not be used directly for any organisational purpose and will remain anonymous). I have become aware that some of the responses to the questionnaire reflect the individual's understanding of what they believe will be acceptable as the 'correct' answers, not because they wish to deceive, but because they wish to present themselves as a 'worthy' or a 'mature' officer. There is a desire to please, to be seen as of value in the organisation, which can mask the real individual. This is not unique to this research, but is clearly evident in daily interactions at the ICO, even in simple domestic situations. Often it is compounded by limitations of language ability which make it difficult for the delegate to express nuances of understanding in English or to appreciate an alternative perspective.

My personal history and perspective are evident in the research design and the analysis of the responses. Adopting a posture that is consistent with my own history, I see the Centre for Spiritual Life Development as a 'place' of learning, an opportunity for reflection, growth in understanding and acquiring new knowledge with the aim of enabling the individual to develop spiritually and thus to participate more fully in the *missio dei*. However, it cannot only be about academic learning. Fowler (1995:302) acknowledged the limitations of psychological models of faith development when faced with the revelation and grace of God, and this is also true of educational processes. Therefore it is important that I am open to the dangers of analysis that only uses an educational lens and have had to make a conscious adjustment to my thinking in order to take a more holistic perspective. Nevertheless, the insights of educational theory provide, for me, a natural reference point and inspiration for the constructive part of the research.

At the same time I also share the vocation of the respondents. A Salvation Army officer by conviction and calling, I have an inherent loyalty to the organisation and a long term commitment to Salvationist theology and practice. But personal educational opportunities have allowed me some perspective, some understanding of the 'other' who does not believe, worship or theologise in the same way. My

studies have given me the opportunity to think more critically about accepted norms but also to appreciate and celebrate the good. This too perpetuates the theme of insider/outsider. The typical evangelical suspicion of academic theology persisted late into Salvation Army history and although this is changing rapidly in some territories, such as the United Kingdom, it is still relatively rare for an officer to be pursuing doctoral studies.

Finally, The Salvation Army's deeply pragmatic approach to the Christian life resonates with my own personality and the expectations of a Professional Doctorate. This has ensured that throughout the process of the research my focus has been upon the usefulness of the work to the organisation as well as new knowledge and insight. In this there is no dissonance; knowledge that is both scholarly and practically useful is suited to the Salvationist ethos, the needs of my appointment and my personal developmental goals.

In summary, as a work of practical theology, this thesis will bring to the lived experience of individuals into mutual critical dialogue with the conceptual framework in order to gain insight and to identify a way forward for the policy and practices of the CSLD. The methodology is qualitative, drawing upon critical realism for epistemological focus and seeking to come to conclusions which are faithful to the tradition in which the research is located. The context, subjects and process of the empirical research imply limitations which have been noted. A description of my role as researcher and the influences that this has upon the research acknowledges personal bias but also underlines my suitability as researcher. The next chapter explores the challenges of conducting research in an international organisation and with research subjects for some of whom English is a second, or third, language.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Challenges encountered relating to the global context of the research**

The Centre for Spiritual Life Development relates to the international Salvation Army administratively through International Headquarters, practically through its location at the International College for Officers, and also by invitation when CSLD staff visit territories and commands to teach and lead worship. It is therefore appropriate that this research includes officers from different contexts. They are united by their vocation to Salvation Army officership, their attendance at the ICO and their willingness to participate. But there is also difference, some of which is relevant to this research. This chapter explores challenges relating to the global context of the research in order to acknowledge their contribution to the outcome.

There is a strong sense of unity within The Salvation Army. Its internationalism is celebrated in international conferences, church celebrations (congresses), and in through the sharing of resources and personnel. This interconnection is strong, as Salvationists throughout the world recognise a 'unique fellowship' (Street 2008:60) and a global culture which includes music, dress, and style of worship. But alongside this sense of interconnectedness there is also difference; people live in particular places, have particular practices and traditions, and interpret the global culture locally. Both similarity and difference are evident in the results of the empirical research. The spiritual life development of officers has common elements, but there are also divergences, some of which may be significant.

#### **The questionnaire- demographics**

Between April and December 2010 seventy two delegates attended the International College for Officers. They represented each of the five Salvation Army zones, but not in equal proportions, as delegates are selected on a numerical ratio relating to officer numbers and financial strength of the zone, rather than 20% of the places being allocated to each. This ratio has remained constant since at least 2007, with Africa, Europe, the South Pacific and East Asia, and South Asia each allocated eighteen delegates per annum and the Americas and the Caribbean thirty two. A current tendency to growth in the number of African and Indian officers and dwindling numbers in Europe may eventually result in adjustments.

Fifty two responses were received; a response rate of 72%. Of these sixteen were from the Americas, ten from the South Pacific and East Asia, nine each from Europe and Africa, and eight from South Asia. The gender balance (53.8% male, 46.2% female), mirrored well the gender balance of the sessions (54.2% male, 45.8% female). It is interesting to note that the research population reverses the balance of the gender related demographic of officers throughout the world (see p14). This illustrates the tendency for territories to nominate more men than women as delegates to the ICO, and may be an indication of a cultural bias against identifying women as leaders in some contexts.

The delegates had completed between six and thirty two years of officership, with the average being 20.4 years, based upon forty four responses. It is exceptionally unusual for an officer who has completed less than ten years of service to attend the ICO and there is a requirement that they have at least ten years left to serve before retirement. Therefore it is typical that delegates are in the mid years of ministry.

In financial terms Salvation Army territories are classified as financially independent (FIT) or grant aided (GAT). The latter receive a proportion of their running costs from International Headquarters in accordance with annual budget proposals and available funds. Financially independent territories pay their own costs for ICO delegates, but those from grant aided territories are sponsored by International Headquarters, including preparatory English lessons where needed. Although the financial status of the territory might seem to be irrelevant to a discussion relating to spiritual life, some trends in the responses suggest that it may be a factor. Responses were received from twenty two delegates from financially independent territories and thirty delegates from grant aided territories.

### **The questionnaire- language**

#### *Competence in English*

English is a second or third language for a considerable proportion of ICO delegates, with competence varying considerably. Many are fluent, understanding the complexities and intricacies of both spoken and written English with ease. Nevertheless, although there are guidelines issued to territories and zones relating to expectations, the reality is that these are interpreted flexibly, and the requirements are not always fully met, so that a minority of delegates arrive with considerably less than the optimal level of English required for the complex

interactions required by the ICO programme. In such cases it is inevitable that there are considerable difficulties associated with achieving effective communication at all levels; between delegates, with staff and in the learning programme.

This inevitably affected both the response rate and the clarity of a few responses. Completed questionnaires were received from twenty delegates for whom English is a first language, eleven were translated by official translators (two Mizo, six Indonesian and three Spanish) and twenty one completed by delegates for whom English may be a second official language, or simply used in international contexts. In The Salvation Army, English is the language used for interactions between territories and with International Headquarters, therefore it is advantageous for delegates, who are viewed as potential future leaders in their territorial context, to be able to communicate effectively in speaking, reading and writing. All delegates were given the option to respond verbally to the questionnaire although only two did so. It is likely that lack of confidence and/or competence in written English contributed to the decision of a minority of delegates not to participate.

The responses to the questionnaire were affected by language competence in a number of ways. A few responses were very short, with simplistic language that did not communicate nuances of thought. For example, 'serious in implementing tasks and ministries' (50) is noted as evidence of a developing spiritual life, but it is not evident whether this relates to the conception that duty and involvement in Salvation Army activity is inherently a sign of spiritual depth or if it is a way of saying that the attitudes displayed in ministry are expressions of the spiritual life. There was occasional lack of clarity; 'I believe in prayer as the most powerful weapon we have as servants of God in our Bible study and sincere to our work practices' (37). The word 'sincere' appears to indicate an important relationship but it is not evident what this might be. Responses also occasionally indicated misunderstanding of the question, so that in response to 'how is your spiritual life related to your ministry as an officer' one delegate wrote 'meetings between pastors, corps activities', thus listing some activities that he saw as spiritually related, rather than exploring the relationship between the inner life and practice. Inevitably these issues presented some challenges for coding and analysis. As a general rule I chose to code as many responses as possible, occasionally making judgements relating to meaning.



### *Translation of responses*

As the researcher I made a deliberate decision to include the groups of translated delegates, despite some obvious logistical challenges and potential skewing of responses due to the translation process. By doing so, I was able to include representatives from a wider range of Salvation Army territories in the research, signalling that their opinions, whether or not they are able to express them in English, are valuable and can contribute to understanding. This inclusion also allowed the maximum opportunity to discern difference in Salvationist ethos, practice and understanding of the spiritual life. On a practical level it also allowed me to invite the entire population of ICO delegates between April and December 2010 to participate. It required extra work of the translators, which was undertaken promptly and graciously. My impression was that at least one translator also quietly encouraged 'her' delegates to participate.

Despite inclusion for positive reasons, working through translation is not without its challenges. It inevitably creates a gap between the respondent and the researcher, as there is no longer a direct relationship between them. In this case, the delegates would also be aware that the confidentiality of the responses could be compromised. This is not to suggest that the translators would deliberately breach this trust in any way, but for the Mizos and the Indonesians the only available translators were officers from their own context, who would know them and their circumstances. The translators may, at some future date, be involved in the officership of delegates as colleagues or line managers, and this may have led to less open responses than if they had been able to submit them to an independent translator. This was not the case for the three delegates who completed the questionnaires in Spanish as the translator is an employee of International Headquarters who has no possible connection to either their present or future ministry.

George Steiner (1998:xii) argues that translation is 'formally and paradigmatically implicit in every act of communication, in the emission and reception of each and every mode of meaning... to understand is to decipher. To hear significance is to translate'. Thus there is a sense in which every reading of the responses is an act of translation, but when this requires a third party, there is more the possibility of distortion of meaning, or of the translator reading the text through a different lens from that of the participant and/or the researcher.

Translation always involves interpretation, so that the sense of a text is conveyed rather than just the meaning of the words. It relies heavily upon the skill of the translator to express concepts and nuances accurately, not adding any thoughts of their own, nor detracting from the original text in any way. I discovered that I needed to trust the translators, both to accurately translate the questions and to faithfully represent the delegates' responses. Umberto Eco (2003:5) writes of the need for faithfulness in translation in which translators must aim to render 'the intention of the text'. This involves a process of negotiation which moves beyond translation of individual words to conveying meaning in a new vernacular, thus adding a new layer of interpretation to the text. Even if there is a commitment to faithfulness, Steiner (1998:251) argues that translation always diminishes meaning, as there is a 'devaluation which must occur in all interpretive transcription - substantively each and every act of translation leads "downward", to one further remove from the immediate moment of the *logos*'. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this research I have assumed that the transcripts provided by translators are sufficiently faithful to the original responses to be of value in contributing to the whole picture.

Some similarities emerged in the transcripts of the Indonesian language group. Different explanations may be possible. The multiple instances of the phrase 'to this day' probably indicates the existence of a similar phrase in Indonesian indicating both history and currency. However, it more difficult to discern whether the similarity of major themes between responses is an indication of the ethos of the Salvation Army in Indonesia or the consequence of discussion between a group of colleagues, who were both isolated and united by a common language, before completing their questionnaires. Thus the emphasis upon active participation in the community as an indication of spiritual life development may represent the shared views of the small group or the culture of the territory. Although it is possible that the responses of any of the respondents may have been influenced by conversation with other delegates, it was perhaps more obvious in this small sub-group.

Despite these challenges, the completed questionnaires of the translation groups have added to my understanding of the diversity of Salvationist thinking relating to the issues surrounding spiritual life development.

### **The interviews**

The decision to interview one delegate from each of the Salvation Army zones ensured that there was geographical distance and diversity in the group. However, it

cannot be said that the interviewees were typically representative of their zone, as each zone contains multiple languages, cultures and Salvation Army expressions. Nevertheless the interviews give some insight into the diversity of experience of Salvation Army officers and the complexity of the discussion surrounding spiritual life development. There were three men and two women interviewees, three of the territories represented are financially independent, two are grant aided. Each interviewee spoke fluent English, although it is an 'official' language of government and The Salvation Army for two of them, rather than their first language.

The interviews followed the same pattern as the questionnaire, drawing upon responses already made, and seeking expansion, clarification and greater depth. They began from the personal spiritual experience of the individual with a request to the interviewee to expand upon their answer to Question 2, the two factors which they had identified as having the most significant impact upon their ongoing spiritual development. The delegate would tell their story, often including cultural factors and references to personal ministerial practice, and their experience of Salvation Army belief and governance. Supplementary questions were asked as necessary.

Each of the responses was unique and very personal. The common theme was a strong sense commitment to the Christian faith and to a vocation worked out in the context of The Salvation Army. However their experience of the outworking of this vocation varied immensely. Other common threads which emerged in the analysis, such as the value of mentoring and the contribution of academic study, were most often shared by two or three of the interviewees, but never by all. Essentially, the interviews enabled me to hear the story of five people, each with a different experience of what it means to be a Salvation Army officer in the twenty-first century.

### **The results in relation to the global context**

The questionnaires and interviews produced a highly diffuse data set which indicated diversity of opinion and understanding in Salvation Army officers. It is possible to suggest a number of contributing factors. The international demographic of the group inevitably brings diversity. The metaphor of an Army might suggest homogeneity but in reality there is flexibility within broad boundaries. Although The Salvation Army has many unifying aspects, including a common statement of faith, patterns of governance, a bias towards the marginalised, and some shared practices, it is also the case that there are myriad variations. Salvationists are not

isolated from the society in which they live and worship, but are embedded in it, and as such will be influenced by its practices, norms and values whilst also critiquing them in the light of their Christian faith. The assumption of a unique Salvationist identity and spirituality (see above p.19) must be held in tension with the reality that The Salvation Army also encourages engagement with context. Corporate identity and contextual expression both play a significant role in the spiritual life development of individual officers.

This diversity was particularly evident in two of the interviews (A, B), in which cultural expectations and norms relating to family and marriage (A) and status in society (B) have had a profound impact upon the developing spiritual experience of the officers. A described how the cultural unacceptability of her unmarried status 'pushed me to lean on God' as family and friends encouraged her to resign from officership and marry. For B, living in a Dalit Christian family adversely affects the educational opportunities for children, and creates an 'everyday challenge' to spiritual life. These interviews showed clearly how personal history influences and shapes spiritual understanding and development. Cultural norms were also implicit in the responses of C and D who both described a personal spiritual experience which to some extent echoed the predominant 'privatised' approach to faith which permeated the faith of the western world for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Their description of their spiritual life contained little or no reference to the external world and was permeated by phrases such as a 'personal lonely journey,' 'my conversation with God' (C), and 'time alone with God' (D). The interviews illustrated the truth that spirituality is always embedded and expressed in context, it is 'never pure in form' (Sheldrake 2010:39). The ability of evangelicalism, including Salvationism, to 'adapt to differing socio-cultural contexts without losing its core identity' (Randall 2005:188) has led to difference in practice, and according to the interview responses, difference in the ways in which spiritual life is shaped, understood and described.

The local response is supplemented, in some territories, by an exported Salvationism; there is evidence that the practices of western missionaries have been adopted and adapted by other cultures. Thus in some parts of the developing world where a Salvationist culture was imported from the west in the early twentieth century, a 'traditional' approach to Salvation Army life and worship, often blended with indigenous elements, persists more strongly than at its original source, where older practices have been substantially modified or abandoned. For example, open

air services which are followed by a 'march of witness' to the local Salvation Army hall where the main worship will take place, are still a regular feature of Sundays in parts of Africa, but are increasingly rare at their place of origin, the United Kingdom. Similarly, discussion with Training Principals from two developing territories in the course of my professional practice revealed an approach to spiritual formation during initial officer training that has now been substantially revised and supplemented in the west.

Furthermore, the increasingly local and contextual approach to mission may result in significant difference even within a small geographical area, therefore it is inevitable that this is magnified substantially in the international context. In recent years International Headquarters has developed and promoted a process of integrated mission which aims 'to find innovative local responses in a changing and diversified world' (TSA 2006a). It takes a broad approach which encompasses church practices and community projects; 'a mandate to identify with and participate in the joys and sufferings of the world in everyday life, that the presence of God may be revealed in the reconciliation and transformation of people and their situations' (TSA 2006a). This will inevitably foster greater diversity of practice, but may also lead to difference in understanding and perspective as reflection upon experience contributes to the development of the individual and to the local expression of what it means to be The Salvation Army. This seems to challenge the notion of a single definitive Salvationist spirituality, and point to a diverse network of Salvationist spiritual practices which, whilst sharing common elements are shaped by cultural influences.

A further factor is the accessibility and availability of resources written by, and for, Salvationists. Although territories are encouraged to translate important documents and some provision of funding is possible, there is no centralised translation department which produces multiple language editions of texts. Choices have to be made, and are often shaped as much by financial constraints as by motivation or theology. So, for example, the new edition of the *Handbook of Doctrine*, which explores the articles of faith and includes resources for teaching and personal reflection, was published in 2010. At the time of writing translation is underway in eight, mainly European, languages, which is a minute percentage of the one hundred and seventy five languages in which The Salvation Army operates (TSA 2010a:29). Although there are some countries for which English, or another European language, is an official language and therefore understood and used by many of the population, the proportion is still small. This means that some territories

will be relying for teaching purposes, including officer training, on earlier editions, or on Christian texts in their own language which may sometimes vary from the theological views of the organisation. Despite the fact that there is encouragement for Salvationists worldwide to develop resources in their own language which are suitable for their cultural setting, the general activist ethos, and the lack of foundational resources to contribute to the writers' personal development, has not led to a Salvationist culture in which this is the norm. When these factors interact with differences in circumstances, experience in officership personality, age, gender and ethnicity, a variety of responses is inevitable.

In summary, it can be seen that the international demographic of the research population has had an impact upon the research in a number of ways, including the richness of language used, the need for translation, the content of interview responses and the context of individuals. The next three chapters will report upon the research findings and discuss the three major categories identified in Chapter 5: definitions and understanding of spiritual life development; the 'means of grace' or the factors which facilitate spiritual experience and growth; and the relationship between the spiritual life and ministerial practice. In each case the empirical results will provide the starting point for a broader exploration which also draws upon the conceptual framework.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Research findings and discussion: understanding of spiritual life development**

This is the first of three chapters which discuss and interpret the empirical research findings. The phrase 'spiritual life development' does not have a long history within The Salvation Army. Emerging in the wake of the International Spiritual Life Commission as the title of an appointment, it became more prominent with the establishment of the Centre for Spiritual Life Development in July 2008. No definition or explanation of the term was offered. But where meaning is assumed there is the possibility of lack of clarity and misunderstanding. Thus one section of the questionnaires and interviews aimed to encourage officers to articulate a personal understanding of the meaning of 'spiritual life development,' and how this might be facilitated and recognised, in order to see whether shared meaning emerged.

Three questions were asked: 'If you were asked by a candidate for officership to explain the phrase "spiritual life development" what would you say?', 'What would you recommend to help them develop their spiritual life?', and 'What, in your opinion, is evidence of a developing spiritual life?' The questions were expressed in this way to encourage clear articulation of thought - explanations of our thought processes to other people, especially those who we have a duty to nurture, require careful consideration if meaning is to be transparent. I also hoped that the request for an explanation would encourage a discursive response.

#### **Spiritual life development**

The most obvious factor was the lack of any shared or corporate definition of spiritual life development. No respondent quoted, or even alluded to, any official publication or any literature, Salvationist or non-Salvationist, dealing with the subject. The responses were varied, reflecting and revealing personal convictions and perspectives, with a wide variety of language and expression. They were invariably brief and few contained the element of explanation and expansion that I was hoping to see. This may in part be due to the language issues discussed above, but may also, in some cases, reflect a struggle to articulate meaning where it has formerly been assumed.

The major theme was that of a dynamic process which in some way expands, enlarges or improves the spiritual life. Fourteen respondents referred to growth, typically this was with reference to the 'spiritual life' (1), 'the 'inner life' (17) or was expressed relationally as in 'becoming like Jesus,' (12) and 'in knowing God' (21). Five uses of the word 'nurture' suggested cultivation and care, something to be tended, leading to growth: 'The nurture and growth of our inner life... growing in faith and holiness' (36) 'nurturing their personal holiness' (28) and 'nurturing and developing the spiritual man or inner soul' (8). Here the emphasis was not on the movement towards a goal but upon the action itself, so that development is the by-product of nurturing the relationship.

Spiritual life development was also described as 'the process by which Christ is formed in us and we overcome the barriers and wounds that are inherent to the human condition' (11) and 'a holistic process that awakens you to rediscover who you were born to be' (24). These two responses alluded to the broken nature of humanity, giving a sense that spiritual life development is about restoration of the *imago dei*. This operant spiritual understanding reflects the normative theological understanding of humanity as flawed by original sin and in need of salvation, which in turn leads to growth towards wholeness. 'As we move towards wholeness, it affects every aspect of our being, including our relationships with God and other people, our self-image, our attitude to the created order and our being in society' (TSA 2010b: 200).

Some responses suggested that this process of growth should be constant (1), or continual (2,27,42), with the implication that a goal is to be achieved - 'growing in holiness' (5), 'daily improvement in our close relationship with God' (29), 'to grow in knowing God' (21). These may be seen to have resonance with models such as Fowler's stages of faith, in which spiritual development is associated with a linear process in which an upward trend on a graph is a desirable sign of 'progress', reflecting the instrumental values of modernity which focus upon an ideal goal to be achieved in order to achieve 'success'.

The responses demonstrated that the operant spiritual understanding of individuals has similarities to the normative theology of the organisation but does not exactly mirror it. The Salvation Army has a dynamic understanding of Christian faith. Although there are doctrines and theological tenets of belief, ultimately faith is not understood as acceptance of a static deposit of truth but as trust in a relationship.



Similarly, this experiential dimension is an essential component in evangelical spirituality; faith is marked by 'a personal relationship with God in Christ' (Randall 2005:183). By analogy with the complex nature of human relationships, this relationship can be superficial or deep, at the level of acquaintance or of deepest intimacy, on the periphery of, or central to the whole of life. It always has the potential for change. It is a relationship which is built upon God's self-giving and a human response of trust and obedience. The ninth of the Salvation Army doctrines states that 'we believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ' (TSA 2010b:xvi). The *Handbook of Doctrine* expands the statement with reference to an ongoing faith-journey. 'Our conversion inaugurates a journey during which we are being transformed into Christ's likeness. Thus salvation is neither a state to be preserved nor an insurance policy which requires no further investment. It is the beginning of a pilgrimage with Christ' (TSA 2010b:181). Rooted in a Wesleyan theological understanding of the Christian life as consisting of both instantaneous moments of insight and change, and gradual growth (Rack 1989:388), the Salvationist concept of the spiritual life combines the notion of a decisive moment (or moments) of change with a progression towards virtuous, or Christ-like, living. It is summarised by the requirement for officers 'to maintain this experience of saving grace' in an 'ongoing living relationship with God' (TSA 1997a:1.1.2.1). This has often been interpreted as requiring continual movement towards a goal, with the suggestion that faith cannot be static, but must always be in a state of flux, and therefore if it is not progressing, it must be regressing, or 'backsliding'. However, careful consideration reveals that the operative spiritual understanding has acquired a meaning that is not consistent with the normative theology of the organisation. Backsliding, properly understood, occurs when the relationship with Christ which is a result of conversion is deliberately and constantly neglected or severed and not when 'forward' movement is temporarily lost (TSA 2010b:180).

Ten responses indicated a dualistic approach in which the 'spiritual' or 'inner' life is distinguished from the 'physical' or 'outer' life. Thus spiritual life development is seen to be 'nurturing and developing the spiritual man or inner soul' (8), 'the growth of the inner believer' (20), and 'developing the inner spiritual life so that it reflects God' (15). In its extreme form this may suggest that a separation between 'normal' life and the spiritual life is possible. One participant in a seminar expressed it simply by asking 'If you say that holiness affects the whole of life, does that mean that I can't have a private life?' Whereas this is an isolated and highly unusual enquiry, it

highlights the need for careful use of words and a relatively sophisticated understanding of the 'inner life' in relation to the whole of life. In contrast one interviewee was adamant that this distinction is not helpful 'I don't have a spiritual life and a non-spiritual life. I can't compartmentalise my life... I've got one life, I live it for Christ' (E). Whilst acknowledging the importance and value of disciplines such as prayer, Bible study, and mentoring to Christian living, he argued that all of life should be viewed holistically with no separation or distinction between 'inner' and 'outer' life. Theologian Glen Scorgie (2007:26) adopts a similar holistic posture in which spirituality is 'the Christian life lived with God'. However the more usual response to the questionnaire was to see the 'spiritual life' which is in some way to be 'developed' as representing a deeply personal aspect of human experience which is directly related to the individual's understanding of, and relationship with, God. This is an interesting emphasis. Although the International Spiritual Life Commission affirmed 'the consistent cultivation of the inner life as essential for our faith life' (Street 2008:49), it was in the context of being part of the whole. The call to the inner life is one of twelve calls which together are seen to represent private and public expressions of Salvationist spirituality. This seems to indicate that many of the responses to the questionnaire were focusing upon a narrow understanding of spiritual life which is not necessarily consistent with the approach of the International Spiritual Life Commission.

In contrast some responses interpreted 'development' as the cultivation of a lifestyle and practices leading to a change of behaviour: so therefore spiritual life development is 'all the tools, practices, disciplines available to help develop our growth in becoming like Jesus...' (12), 'enough time to be in prayer alone, to study God's word and to reflect on his or her individual ministry. Lastly to have physical rest.' (40), and 'exploring different spiritual disciplines.... the importance of private devotion...seeking and growing in holiness' (5). Some responses included reference to Salvation Army corporate practices which develop the spiritual life. These included 'service and worship' (6), 'studies, courses and seminars' (9), and 'learning from experience' (45). This attitude was summarised by one respondent who compared spiritual development to physical fitness: 'in order to have growth you must "workout" the area in which you want growth, so spiritual life development is a workout - by Bible reading, study, devotions, prayer, events, workshops etc' (47). The pragmatic nature of these comments is consistent with the strong activist ethos in Salvation Army officership. Thus the development of the spiritual life is viewed as being concerned with 'doing' - making something happen - rather than an organic or

evolutionary process of growth. The terminology used may also be a factor. 'Development' may be associated with acquiring skills and knowledge, becoming more competent and reaching goals or benchmarks. Each of these has an implication of progression and the need for strategising to achieve an end or goal. This instrumental approach is consistent with the Salvationist ethos; a strong emphasis upon usefulness, competence and efficiency in officership has pervaded the movement since the earliest times alongside the primary requirement of godliness or spiritual maturity.

### **Advice for developing the spiritual life**

The two supplementary questions provided further insight. The first asked what the respondents would recommend to a candidate in order to help them develop their spiritual life. Four broad themes emerged: the predominance of prayer and Bible reading, the value placed upon learning, the significance of lifestyle and practice and the need for strategic engagement with other Christians.

There was a definite and significant trend towards a traditional evangelical, and Salvationist, belief that personal prayer and Bible reading are indispensable in developing the spiritual life, with thirty-five respondents mentioning prayer and thirty-six Bible reading. This was surprising in view of the fact that they appear much more infrequently on the list of the two major factors in officers' own spiritual development since their commissioning (see pp.116-118). Reasons for this may vary. It is possible that some respondents gave little reflective thought to the question and so gave the 'obvious' answer, or have simply offered the institutionalised theoretical response. Some may have written what they believed to be the 'right' answer. Others may believe that these two elements are foundational and should therefore be in place before other disciplines are explored. The two following quotations illustrate a thoughtful response to the question, suggesting awareness of the candidate as someone who is exploring vocation and giving guidance for the establishment of personal devotional habits.

Exploring different styles of prayer to keep prayer life meaningful and vibrant. Using a Bible study method – individual or group that challenges and stretches you (1),

I think we all have a very personal relationship with the Lord and the way we each relate to .... and grow is different. With that in mind I would like to chat with them and see what switches them on and encourage them in it. The basics of course will always remain; prayer and the study of the word (51).

There are a few suggestions that other spiritual disciplines are important, including fasting, solitude, and retreats but these are much less prominent and may reflect the personal preference of the individual respondent.

The second major trend was towards encouraging learning and reading. This is unsurprising as the candidate stage is one in which there is not only discernment of vocation but also encouragement to begin the learning, growth and development necessary for any prospective officer. The Corps Officer is encouraged to 'do all in his (*sic*) power to further their development' (TSA 1997b: 5.3.1). Some responses were generic, 'learn and keep learning' (45), 'study' (7,34), whilst others were more specific, referring to 'discipleship teaching and training in the spiritual disciplines' (11), and 'books relative to ministry' (23). It is perhaps significant that where there was any expansion to include content, the emphasis was either upon devotional books, or ministry related learning. There were no specific references to academic study. One respondent widened the learning experience.

Never stop learning. Learning from the Bible, learning from other people, learning from life experiences, read more spiritual books and do more listening to the spiritual leader. Get involved actively in the ministry and if there us an opportunity given, take it seriously and do the best as you can (52).

A holistic approach to ongoing learning as an attitude of life is clearly evident. There is no suggestion how this learning is to be achieved; the statement simply assumes that it can happen.

Thirdly, references to lifestyle and practice give an indication of an operant spirituality which advocates that that spiritual life development is fostered by action, either personally or as part of the group. A constant and consistent life that is marked by personal holiness, and demonstrated in relationships and action, was viewed as an indication of growth. Personal spiritual life development must be characterised by changes in individual behaviour. At the same time, there was a perceived need for involvement in public Christian practice, for example, 'attendance at worship' (12), 'active participation in the corps', (3), and 'diligent in attending services' (49), which seemed to indicate that development is fostered by participation in the corporate acts of the people of God. The early history of The Salvation Army shows a pattern of activity and involvement in which converts were quickly absorbed into the worshipping community, not only on a Sunday, but in a programme of meetings and activities throughout the week. This had two major

consequences. It exposed the new Christian to regular teaching and worship and it also provided a new circle of social interaction that was not based in the local public house. Although the latter may seem irrelevant, the demographics of early Salvationists and social mores of the time made it a very practical consideration for the new Christian. The responses may indicate some echo of this early practice, but also contain the assumption that activity and community are able to facilitate spiritual maturity. The Christian faith is not essentially a solitary experience, and, for all but a few exceptional people, it should be lived in company with other believers. Corporate worship involves encounter with God alongside, and with, other people, leading to personal and corporate enrichment. It may also inspire to action. Street comments 'Our meetings are vital to the spiritual life we share.... They have the capacity to change our lives, to redirect them, all because God is in the meeting. He is present, he speaks and he acts' (Street 2008:11).

Another layer of Christian practice also emerged as a means of developing the spiritual life. The commitment of The Salvation Army to evangelism and social action ran through a number of responses which include 'engagement in mission' (11), 'service to others, particularly the poor' (12), and 'serving and loving people in need' (17). This operant spirituality can be contrasted with the espoused theology expressed in Street (2008:4,7,10) who, reflecting the normative views of the International Spiritual Life Commission, argues that the vitality of spiritual life provides the resources from which service can be offered. This thesis will explore the possibility that there is a more mutual relationship between the inner life and practice in which service contributes to, as well as draws from, the spiritual life.

The final emergent theme was that of strategic and intentional involvement with other Christians, most often those who were more mature, or in some way able to resource their growth. One response was brief and to the point, 'assign spiritual mentor' (10), another suggested 'one on one discipleship with a more mature Christian' (12), a third 'someone to share their spiritual journey with' (19) and others mentioned the need for a spiritual director or spiritual guide (4,5,11). Another group of responses spoke of accountability, either to an individual, 'find a friend that they feel accountable to' (24), 'one to two accountability partners for the long run' (46), or to a group, 'some likeminded people' (30), and 'network with other candidates' (33). Here is a further indication that spiritual life development does not take place in the purely private sphere and that others can, and should, be involved in guiding and holding the believer accountable. The mix of responses suggested either a

professional relationship with an individual who is trained or qualified in some way, such as a spiritual director, or a mentoring relationship in the local church community, with an individual or in a group. Whereas the two suggestions will not have exactly the same outcome, together they indicate the importance of the Christian life as a shared journey with others, whose presence and involvement can highlight personal responsibility and bring enrichment.

### **Evidence of a developing spiritual life**

The final question was concerned with the outcome of the experience. 'What, in your opinion, is evidence of a developing spiritual life?' A significant proportion of responses described, or implied, a process of change using phrases or words such as 'increasing evidence' (4), 'growing' (1,3,9,12), 'more concerned' (41), 'continued' (1), 'striving' (28). This indicated ongoing development rather than an achievable goal. Most were concerned with a change in the inner life, described in religious terms such as 'Christ-likeness' (seven responses), the fruit of the Spirit (eleven responses), and holiness (four responses). Each of these expressions may be interpreted in terms of The Salvation Army doctrine of holiness, which is described as the 'privilege of all believers' (TSA 2010b:10). Resultant attitudes and behaviours included 'maturity in relationships, openness to learning from others and changing behaviours when confronted with a need to do so' (1), 'concern and efforts for others' (12), 'willingness to forgive' (28), 'patience in the face of challenges' (45). The answers can be seen to summarise and affirm the doctrine, pointing to evidence that it is still a major influence in Salvationist thinking, even if the explicit language is not always used. The *Handbook of Doctrine* summarises the process, which may have been accompanied by one or more decisive events or 'crises':

We are in the process of becoming what we already are in Christ through justification... Christ's presence changes us as we live in and through him. Our self-image undergoes a change... Our relationships are marked by those qualities of life which are describe by Paul as "the fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-26). As we follow Jesus, who came to seek and save the lost, we sense the call to serve others in Christ's name... We are drawn to search for truth and justice and the righting of wrongs in the name of Christ (TSA 2010b:194-195).

A debate which centres on the relative importance of the 'crisis' moment in comparison with a motif of the ongoing journey has been a feature of Salvation Army holiness thinking for most of its history, reflecting a similar discussion in evangelicalism as a whole (Randall 2005:Chapter 7). An emphasis upon a

necessary 'second work of grace,' which runs through the teachings of Samuel Logan Brengle (1896:8), continues to influence, but this is counterbalanced by a more nuanced understanding of a journey on which there are decisive moments of insight (Coutts 1957:37; Larsson 1983:46). Ian (John M.) Barr summarises as follows: 'Christian experience is not validated either by the manner in which it is received or the label that one attaches to it, the evidence of such experience is to be found in its "fruit" or "outcome"' (Barr 1999:11). It is perhaps significant that the responses showed an overwhelming emphasis upon process and journey.

A strong theme which emerges from this commitment to holiness is that maturity in the spiritual life will result in good interpersonal relationships, succinctly summarised as 'inward and outward transformation evidenced in relationships' (11), 'love your fellow neighbour'(44), and 'a person who is learning to love more, to judge less' (9). One respondent summarised well the ongoing nature of development and the frailty of human nature, whilst identifying signs of progress.

It's difficult to measure, because we are all vulnerable, and not perfect.... but prayer in one way or another... see people change by leaving some things, habits or other... grow in attitude to others and respect and care...growing less self occupied and have more interest in others' well being, salvation and sanctification. (5)

Alongside this emphasis upon the signs of personal change was a parallel strand which highlights the importance of active participation in ministry. This 'fruit in the Church' may be suggested to be a communal counterpart of personal 'fruit of the Spirit'. The implication is that the personal inward change will result in an outward change that will overspill into the congregation. 'The lifestyle will show that God is working in a person's life, which in turn will bless the life of the church' (3). Consequently the individual will have 'a passion for the word and mission' (25), 'involvement in serving the poor (12),' will be 'serious in implementing tasks and ministries' (50) and will become 'more concerned/interested above everything else in the spiritual growth of his members-and thereby spending time with them through teaching, praying, mentoring and witnessing' (41).

The overriding theme in the responses to the three questions is that spiritual life development is concerned with a personal growth experience which results in transformation of attitudes and actions in community. Whilst the language of holiness is not predominant, the responses tend to reflect the denominational

heritage, with a strong emphasis upon the journey or process rather than upon instantaneous change, or 'crisis'.

The pragmatic nature of the denomination results in this often being expressed in terms of relationship and action; spiritual life development must be seen to have taken place. It is possible that the questions, by referring to a candidate for officership have to some extent skewed the responses, so that ministry is a more dominant theme than it may have been if the question has been worded differently. Nevertheless, the choice of words might be justified by the fact that this research is concerned with Salvation Army officership, which is by definition, concerned with ministry and those who minister.

In summary, it can be seen that there was no clear consensus relating to the definition, facilitation, or evidence of, a developing spiritual life amongst the research subjects. The idea of some kind of dynamic process which is facilitated by personal devotional exercises, learning and practice, and evidenced in a particular character, appropriate relationships and participation in the life of the church is common, but not expressed in any recognisably similar form. It would seem that there is need for a model which can help clarify understanding.



## Chapter 8

### **Research findings and discussion: ‘means of grace’ and spiritual life development in Salvation Army officers.**

The second of three chapters which discuss and interpret the empirical research findings focuses upon the factors which enable and encourage spiritual life development. The expression ‘means of grace’ has a long history in the Church (George 2003:5). It signifies those factors which enable the Christian to connect with God and to sustain their Christian life. The normative theology of the Lutheran catechism defines the means of grace as ‘those things by which God offers and gives His gifts of forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. More specifically, they are ‘the Gospel in Word and Sacrament’ (Luther 1956:191). In an important sermon, which was probably first preached in 1740, John Wesley explained his understanding of the ‘means of grace’ and their necessity in the Christian life. ‘By "means of grace" I understand outward signs, words, or actions, ordained of God, and appointed for this end, to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men, preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace’ (in Burwash 1967:152). For Wesley, therefore, they are a channel through which God’s gifts are given. Noting that they are ‘means’ and subservient to the ‘end’, that is the *telos* or goal, of religion, Wesley stated that the most important are private and corporate prayer, reading, hearing and meditation on scripture, and receiving the Lord’s Supper as an act of remembrance of Christ.

The phrase ‘means of grace’ came from Methodism into the Salvation Army, and became used as a summary for those things which facilitate the growth of the believer. The contents pages of *The Song Book of the Salvation Army* (1986) lists three sections under the heading ‘means of grace’: prayer, scriptures and family worship. Of the three, the latter is the shortest section and has consistently received less emphasis in the practice of Salvationist worship and life.

Whereas the actual phrase ‘means of grace’ would not necessarily be part of contemporary Salvationist vocabulary, it summarises well the idea that there are those factors which influence, sustain and develop the spiritual life of the Christian, bringing them into contact with the divine and enabling them to receive God’s gifts. If the Centre for Spiritual Life Development is to be effective in its mission, it would seem helpful to have some knowledge of the means of grace which Salvation Army

officers believe are instrumental in sustaining and enabling development in their spiritual life. Thus the research sought to discover those factors which officers who attended the ICO between April and December 2010 would recognise as significant in their personal spiritual development.

A series of four questions investigated the delegates' experience of officer training and present experience. Respondents were asked to retrospectively consider their initial training experience in order to identify three or four of the most important factors that were significant for spiritual growth. From a given list they were asked to select, or add, those factors which have been significant in their spiritual development since their commissioning as officers, and then to name the two that have been most significant, giving some description of practice and the influence upon their ministry. The final question asked delegates to identify those things, for example events, resources and personnel, which have been provided by their territory and which have facilitated development.

### **Significant factors in the training experience**

The initial training experience of the respondents, whilst always constructed according to the guidelines found in *Orders and Regulations for the Training of Salvation Army officers*, will have differed considerably depending upon the ethos, facilities and location of the college they attended. There would also be differences relating to the date of training, as colleges are continually reviewing and revising their curricula and practices. It is important to note that the responses rely upon the respondents' memories of the experience which may have been influenced by subsequent experience or the passing of time. However only one respondent felt unable to give a response because she could not remember what had been important.

Alessandro Portelli (1998:69) argues that "memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meanings" so is therefore always an interpretation which reveals the interviewee's efforts to make sense of the past. Changes in personal circumstances and subsequent events, for example, elevation to the senior leadership of the organisation, may affect the presentation and selection of data, and contemporary values and thought process may "shape the informants" interpretation of their own past and impose the subconscious historical structure of the narrative' (Lummis 1998:276) (from Stage 1 Paper 2 see p.210).

Although there were no multiple choice answers given for this question, most of the responses related to four broad areas: study, personal and corporate spiritual formation, the influence of staff role models and peer friendships, and practice. Of these the single most significant factor was study (53.8%). One delegate summarised his experience: 'study began as an aid to knowledge but has become a key tool for spiritual development and nurturing' (1). This high appreciation of learning appears to diminish considerably in later officer experience.

Personal (40%) and corporate (30.7%) spiritual formation were both valued, with a number of delegates noting that the scheduled 'quiet time' was helpful to personal discipline and development. The practice of allocating time in the college timetable for personal devotion was a longstanding feature of officer training which is now less rigidly adhered to in some colleges. This is not to diminish the importance of personal devotions but simply to acknowledge that different times work for different individuals and families, and to allow for personal responsibility and choice. An interesting comparison is the reaction of officers encountered during my professional practice who suggest that it is possible to become so committed to the work that they forget to be intentional about their spiritual life. Similarly one interviewee said that the discipline of a daily 'quiet time' is difficult for some individuals to sustain in ministry and often a first casualty of busy activism, commenting 'I failed in doing this because my children are growing up and my wife has to prepare' (B). Interviewee A, speaking of their appreciation of the time devoted to spiritual formation at the ICO suggested that, for some officers in their territory, intentionality in the spiritual life has been lost and officership has become a 'job'. Responses to a question relating to delegates' hopes for their ICO experience suggested a similar theme 'providing me time and space to re-kindle my spiritual disciplines' (8), 'I have not managed to have the private devotion life that I want. I hope to be back in good routine' (5), and 'to have time to spend with God' (32).

The perceived influence of training staff as role models is noteworthy (36.5%), not particularly for the level of incidence, but rather for the high value placed upon the relationship. Comments included 'the example and testimony of experienced officers. Observing what they did first and then listening to what they said' (34), 'the love and passion of my principal' (39), 'godly officers on the staff whose lives modelled grace' (4). These comments show the importance of training staff in developing the lives of students. They are consistent with the findings of research for Paper 2 in which present and former Training Principals in the United Kingdom

articulated clearly the importance of staff as role models in the initial training experience (see pp. 215-216). A similar level of importance was placed upon peer relationships by almost a quarter of the respondents (23%): 'having close networks for accountability' (10), 'strong lasting friendships' (6), 'unforced accountability group' (20), 'together we journeyed through college, experiencing highs and lows, we prayed together and encouraged one another' (51). The combined responses for staff and peers give a strong indication of the importance of people in the training experience of the respondents. This emphasis contrasts sharply with the experience of later officership (see p.118-119).

### **Factors in ongoing spiritual development**

Many delegates identified a wide range of factors as significant in their ongoing spiritual development, with an average of 6.1 responses per questionnaire. However, the results did not show an even spread of preferences, with some factors proving to be almost universal, for example, prayer and Bible reading (both 88.4%) and others much more infrequently valued (silence 28.8%, fasting 36.5%). One reason for this may be the emphasis placed in officer training upon the evangelical habit of personal devotions as a means of spiritual formation, with *Orders and Regulations for the Training of Salvation Army officers* stipulating that in addition to daily corporate prayer, a 'specified half-hour daily should be spent by the cadets in private prayer - wherever possible in their own rooms' (TSA 2005:3.1.3.b). It would seem that, for officers in the mid years of their ministry, the habit of prayer and Bible reading remains a significant factor in their ongoing development, although the questionnaire did not suggest a daily practice.

Similarly, the relatively low incidence of silence and fasting may also be a reflection of the Salvationist heritage from the evangelical tradition. Gillett notes that, within the evangelical world, spirituality has traditionally been thought to refer to systems and methods, linked to monasticism and sacerdotalism, used by the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions.

The evangelical approach to religion is that our freedom of access to God, the availability and comprehensibility of the scriptures to all, and the priesthood of all believers, render unnecessary all reliance on systems and special intermediaries to foster growth in the spiritual life. As Christianity is, in essence, a personal relationship between the individual and God, growth occurs naturally and uniquely in so far as the person remains open to the work of the Spirit of God within his or her life (Gillett 1993:2).

Thus practices which might be seen as related to 'spiritual' traditions were viewed with suspicion. However, during the twentieth century a new spirit of openness to other traditions began to expose evangelicals to new spiritual practices (Gillett 1993:3; Tidball 1994:197). There has been a new appreciation of 'being' and 'listening' which challenges the activist ethos with its emphasis upon 'doing' and 'going' (George 2003:5). Randall (2005:188) writes 'evangelical renewal brought about by the charismatic movement, followed by a growing interest in contemplative spirituality, has done a great deal to open up evangelicals to the spirituality of the wider Christian tradition'.

This new, or renewed, emphasis upon contemplative spirituality is reflected in The Salvation Army. Faragher (2010:10-14) argues that it has always been present, but often as a 'hidden stream' in an activist setting which can be inferred from early Salvationist writings and lists of books read by officers. It may be that during the twentieth century activism and militarism became the primary source of identity and disguised the contemplative in the tradition. This is now changing, with openness to contemplative practices such as silence and solitude more evident. The results of the questionnaire seem to confirm this gradual change. Although the incidence of these means of grace is less than more traditional evangelical practices, they were nonetheless present in the responses. A further research project might investigate the preferred means of grace of the younger generation of officers, in order to discern whether they have been more significantly influenced by the changing trends.

Thirty-seven delegates agreed that practical ministry has been a significant factor in spiritual development, thus suggesting an integral link between the spiritual life and action. This will be investigated further in Chapter 9 which investigates the relationship between the spiritual life and ministry.

Just over half of the delegates (55.7%) noted the importance of study to their ongoing spiritual development. This may be seen to be a reflection of the particularly activist tendency of the organisation and the early suspicion of academic study which has persisted in some geographical contexts. Although McGrath (2003a:13) describes the 'rather academic approaches to Christianity that have dominated the academic evangelical community', there has also been a strand of evangelicalism that has been wary of an academic approach, to the extent of being anti-intellectual. Whereas there has never been any suggestion that Christians should not think

deeply about their faith and be able to articulate an understanding of it, study has been perceived as secondary to experience.

However, it is also true that evangelical spirituality is a living tradition which is influenced by its context and environment, changing and adapting whilst retaining its own identity (Tidball 1994:215). Similarly, The Salvation Army has prided itself on its ability to change and adapt to the surrounding culture. Booth advocated the principle of adaptation (Booth:1895:4; see also Carpenter 1993:140,146) and the notion of flexibility within boundaries has remained a constant in the mythos of the movement.

The grace of flexibility without surrender of essentials is a gift of the Spirit, a pragmatism firmly bound within the unchanging truth of the founding beliefs, purposes, and passions that have made us what the Lord set us out to be...Some changes are planned; others come gradually, almost imperceptibly, and are not immediately reflected in any official corpus of orders and regulations... Change should help The Army in a positive way to be more Christlike in its spirit and more effective in its ministry to Salvationists and its witness and service to the world (Wiseman 1979:192).

Amongst these changes is a recognition that the standards of officer training must adapt to the needs of contemporary ministry, particularly in the area of academic understanding. As educational standards in society as a whole have been raised, so too has the expectation that the minister will be a 'professional' in their own field. Whilst priority is still given to personal Christian experience and a definitive vocation, there is also the acknowledgement that the officer must be prepared for the task in terms of understanding and relevant skills; the apprenticeship of identity (being) must be accompanied by an intellectual apprenticeship (knowing) and an apprenticeship of skill (doing) (c.f. Foster *et al* 2006:5). This has led to an increasing appreciation of study both as a preparation for ministry and in the context of lifelong learning, resulting in adjustments in college programmes and provision of grants for further study in officership. As officers have the opportunity to study it is inevitable that their spiritual life will be changed in some way as they internalise new knowledge. Interviewee B spoke of a 'radical experience' which also changed his spiritual understanding as he began to understand the value of critical analysis in education. This is one area in which the opportunities and resources are unequally distributed. Both from a financial and an access perspective, it is more likely that officers from western, financially independent territories will have opportunity to pursue further studies following their commissioning as officers.

### **Most significant impact**

Again, the responses to this question were very diverse. As may be expected there was a low incidence of those practices such as solitude, silence and fasting which have not historically been most prominent in the evangelical tradition. Analysis showed that there were no significant patterns relating to individual practices and years of officership but that three gender differences were apparent. Men were more likely to identify practical ministry (eight men and three women) and study (six men and two women) as one of the two factors that have had the most impact upon their spiritual life. In each case the sample is too small to draw any major conclusions, but this may point to some cultural and societal influences regarding who has access to study, who is seen as the 'worker' and how the spiritual life is perceived. Conversely, six women and two men were convinced that a mentoring relationship had been a key factor in their spiritual growth. This may suggest that women are more likely to feel that they flourish in a relational environment and to be willing to be open and vulnerable with other people. Again the sample is too small to lead to conclusive arguments. However, further research could investigate whether there are any significant gender differences in how people believe that they develop spiritually. This may contribute to further clarity in understanding the needs of officers and the challenges as the CSLD develops its policies and plans.

Whereas the first question indicated that the traditional elements of the evangelical 'quiet time' - prayer and Bible reading – are relevant to the spiritual development of a high percentage of the respondents, the questionnaires indicated that a considerably lower number identified them as the *most significant* (prayer 53.8% and Bible reading 34.5%). Although they remain overall the highest incidences, and also produce the highest, and only noteworthy, combination of two factors (23%), the lack of overall dominance may suggest that there is a movement towards seeking spiritual development in a wider range of practices. Here we see that the operant spirituality of the ICO delegates is not entirely consistent with the espoused and normative spirituality of the movement, which still emphasises prayer and Bible reading as the key factors in personal spiritual development. This is evident in *The Songbook of The Salvation Army*, its orders and regulations (TSA 1997a:1.1.2. 3 & 4) and the report of the International Spiritual Life Commission (TSA 1998:4; Street 2008:49).

One possibility is that prayer and Bible reading are still valued, but that they remain as a constant in the background, assumed and therefore not mentioned in the

responses, so that a variety of other means of grace take the foreground. But in direct contrast some evangelical scholars note difficulties with the traditional formulation. Formal theology offers some explanation. Tidball (1994:208) suggests that transmission of a tradition may sometimes lose sight of the real meaning or value, so that the practice is passed on but not the real value behind it. This may be true of some of the practices of evangelicalism. 'So many have found the quiet time a legalistic chore, perhaps because they have never really grasped the meaning of grace'. Similarly, McGrath (1995:x) notes that 'particularly among younger Christians, the traditional quiet time has become tired and problematic', so new means of grace, which are still Biblically based, must be explored.

However another variable is noticeable. Of the twelve respondents who named the 'classic' evangelical combination of prayer and Bible reading as most important for them, eleven were delegates from grant aided territories. One possible reason is that, where resources are limited, there is a need to rely upon simple devotional practices which involve little or no extra financial cost. This may also be indicated by the fact that, of the nineteen remaining delegates from grant aided territories, prayer was important for thirteen and only two delegates mentioned any practice, other than the normal Salvation Army practice of holding officers' councils/retreats, that would require any kind of funding. Both of these referred to study in some form, one by reading Christian books, the other by following a formal course of academic study related to their appointment as a member of the training college staff. In contrast, of the twenty-two delegates from financially independent territories, eleven prioritised practices which required financial investment in some form.

Another factor may be the ethos of the territories represented. Although the Salvation Army worldwide has certain common features individual territories have been influenced by cultural norms and have developed in different ways, with some retaining a greater emphasis upon traditional evangelical methods than others. This was clearly stated in the Annual Spiritual Life Report from Congo Brazzaville Territory (2010) which contrasted the 'current climate of post-modernism in western culture' which includes an 'urge to explore paths long forgotten, spiritual formation, and a variety of disciplines' and 'to apply dominant societal themes to the life of the Church, such as accountability, mentorship,' with an African approach. 'In the Congo if anything it is a more consequent application of the traditionally known spiritual discipline of prayer and bible study that mark the spiritual life of our African Salvationists'. These attitudes were not encountered anywhere else in the research



process, but may nevertheless hint at differences of focus between the West and the developing world.

Finally, the variable access to suitable written or media resources is also significant. For territories where English is a first or major language, there is a wealth of options, some from within the organisation and others from the wider Christian community. But for other language groups access to resources is often more restricted. The minute population of Salvationists in countries which may often be dominated by another tradition, or none, leads to isolation and paucity of choice. This too may result in reliance upon what they have - the Bible and prayer - as the primary means of grace. This inequity of resources was also noted in the General's Consultative Council report, *The spiritual formation and development of officers* (2009a), most often in terms of budgetary restrictions curtailing or preventing the organisation of events, or lack of funding for translation.

### **Provision by territories and commands**

At an introductory session to the CSLD one ICO delegate summarized aptly the feeling regarding organisational attitude and practice; 'We are strong on events and weak on intentional systematic discipleship' (18 April 2011). Whereas this may be too simplistic, it was certainly the perception of the respondents that the single most important factor in territorial provision for officers' spiritual life is the provision of events (76.9%). In comparing this with the next highest questionnaire response - resources (32% ) - it is evident that events form the major part of territorial provision. This dominance was confirmed by *The spiritual formation and development of officers* (2009a) in which all territories recorded the provision of events, particularly officers' councils. These are universal, and are most often held annually or bi-annually, sometimes with a deliberate emphasis upon a spiritual retreat rather than a business meeting. Responses to 2010 Annual Spiritual Life Development reports also confirm the reliance upon events and, to a lesser extent, the development and dissemination of resources as the mainstay of provision for spiritual life development in The Salvation Army. The notion that officers, by meeting, usually for two or three days, for worship and teaching will be enriched, enthused, sustained and encouraged to develop spiritually is foundational to the Salvationist mindset.

In contrast, only 15.3% of the respondents noted the availability of personnel, either specific individuals or appointment responsibilities. This can be contrasted with the training experience in which personnel were seen to be highly significant. Some

reasons may be suggested. It is a truism to state that more support is needed at the training stage in any profession. This is often found in interaction with a more experienced practitioner, as might be suggested by the notion of apprenticeships in Foster *et al* (2006). An apprentice is one who learns alongside, and from, the master. Therefore the importance of good role models is vital in shaping the identity of the officer. Subsequently officers may become more self-reliant and therefore feel that they are less likely to need, or rely upon, other people in their spiritual lives. Alongside this the hierarchical structure of the organisation may engender a spirit of self-sufficiency as officers seek to prove themselves 'competent' and shy away from being potentially viewed as vulnerable by their peers or line managers. The historical foundations of The Salvation Army are rooted in a time and place when individualism, as a value of modernity, was paramount in society. In this climate, the evangelical insistence on a personal relationship with Jesus Christ could easily lead to an understanding of faith as private to the individual, and consequently shift the focus away from any concept of the need for mutual support and accountability.

Building on this theme, David Taylor (2011) suggests that the military metaphor also carries with it implications for deep personal relationships. He argues that an army can be characterized as a collection of individuals gathered to fulfill a task and that a corollary of this is that individuals function alongside one another in a supportive relationship in order to accomplish mission, but are not necessarily strong in building mutually supportive *koinonia*.

One option for a way forward would be the development of formal procedures for spiritual mentoring. The report '*The Spiritual formation and development of officers*' (2009) summarised the situation in the autumn of 2008. Fifteen territories had formal provision for the one to one mentoring of officers, but of these only seven continued beyond the first five years of officership. The scarcity of this provision is significant in relation to the high percentage of respondents to the research questionnaire who noted that they would value a relationship with a mentor in order to foster spiritual growth (71%), and the appreciation of the mentoring relationship by those for whom it is a reality. One possible way forward for the CSLD may be to explore the possible benefits or negative effects of providing mentors or spiritual directors for officers, although interviewee A noted the strangeness of the concept in the South Asian context, so further work is necessary to ensure appropriateness of any proposed strategic plan.

There is some tension between provision for mentoring and the traditional Salvation Army policy that leaders at any level are spiritually responsible for those 'under their care', that is those for whom they are responsible in terms of work and ministry. Scholtens (2011:9) sees the latter approach as untenable, and unworkable in many situations, especially when geographical distance and numbers of people militate against a positive outcome. This raises important issues around the distinction between supervision and evaluation, and resourcing and journeying with the individual. Whereas attention to the spiritual life is necessary to supervision for a spiritual ministry, a distinction can be made between accountability and provision.

A typical example is that of the relationship between a Divisional Commander (DC) and the officers in their division. *Orders and Regulations for Divisional Commanders* appear to combine both functions.

A superficial knowledge of the officers can be dangerous, but a wise leader who cares for them will, by frequent interviewing, develop insights and intuitions which will reveal the strengths and weaknesses of their personalities. The DC will thus learn to understand and appreciate the officers and to help them in time of difficulty (TSA 1973 1:1)

Scholtens (2011:9) argues for a system in which the DC should recognize when an officer needs spiritual guidance, but need not play a substantive role in the process. If this distinction were to be clarified and understood, the role of the DC would be to ensure that development was taking place, but there would be no expectation that they would provide the resources to facilitate it.

Again *The spiritual formation and development of officers* (2009) is relevant. Analysis of the data shows that, statistically, there was equal emphasis upon the language of monitoring, evaluation or oversight and that of nurturing or caring (29%), suggesting that the regulation is interpreted with differing emphases according to culture and personality. This has implications for how the DC is viewed by officers in their division in terms of spiritual life development. In reality, the workload of many DCs, and the number of officers for whom they are responsible, precludes anything but occasional involvement at a personal level with each officer. It might be argued that this regulation is more realistically interpreted as relating to the monitoring function, perhaps as part of an appraisal process, than to in-depth nurture and personal resourcing. However, if this is not acknowledged, and no other options for mentoring or spiritual direction are encouraged, it may result in a

situation in which officers perceive themselves to be unsupported spiritually. It would seem that there is need for clarification regarding expectations on both sides.

In summary, it can be seen that, according to the self-reported experience of ICO delegates April-December 2010, a wide range of factors are significant in the development of the spiritual life. The traditional evangelical personal means of grace found in prayer and Bible reading are the most important factors for only a small percentage of the total population of respondents. Geographical and economic factors may be relevant to this data. In relation to the policy and practices of the Centre for Spiritual Life Development it is clear that no assumption can be made about the means of grace that sustain Salvation Army officers and that diversity will be required in order to stimulate the spiritual lives of individuals.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Research findings and discussion: spiritual life and practical ministry**

In the last of three chapters which discuss and interpret the empirical research findings it is important to examine a recurring theme throughout this research - the relationship between an officers' spiritual life and their practical ministry. The requirement of *Orders and Regulations for Officers* that 'officers should first of all live godly lives' is supplemented by a note that 'personal abilities and a strong desire to serve are commendable but without conversion and an ongoing living relationship with God, an officer will not be equal to the demands of this high calling' (TSA 1997a:1.1.2.1). Here the inference is that practical ministry is deeply connected to the spiritual life. This is most often interpreted in a linear, unidirectional way, as by Rader 'our mission is energised by our spirituality' (in Street 2008:x). It suggests that mission, characterised here by the practical ministry of an officer, is contingent upon the spiritual life, so that 'the vitality of our spiritual life as a movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in service' (Street 2008:7).

This espoused and normative understanding was typically expressed in questionnaire responses in terms of effectiveness and empowerment: 'my spiritual life is the core factor in my ministry, it is the source of power' (31), not sure how effective ministry would be without it' (32). Alternatively ministry was viewed as the outward expression of spiritual experience, as in 'my own spiritual life is the source, the well. Officership is the channel, the tool, to practise or exercise this' (30). A third alternative saw the spiritual life as the fulcrum which stabilises ministry so that 'without a healthy spiritual life my officership is totally out of balance' (10). Each of these have a strong emphasis upon the priority of the spiritual life and the secondary and derivative nature of practice.

Randall (2006:109), writing of nineteenth century evangelicalism, notes 'what is striking is how often evangelical activism was nourished by a rich spirituality'. Evangelical theologian Charles Ringma (2003:xv) views contemplation as a pre-requisite to action; 'we need to be still before God in order to hear and then do. We need to disengage in order to be empowered. We need to be embraced in order to serve. Or to put all that differently, mission comes from contemplation'.

This strongly applicationist model is deeply ingrained in the Salvationist psyche. The normative theology of the *Handbook of Doctrine* identifies a necessary relationship between the inner life and action.

The holy life is expressed through a healing, life giving and loving ministry. It is the life of Christ which we live out in mission. God sanctifies his people not only in order that they will be marked by his character, but also in order that the world will be marked by that character..... Holiness leads to mission. (TSA 2010b:198)

In 1930 an extension of this belief was expressed poetically by Ruth Tracy, an officer songwriter, in words that are still sung by English speaking Salvationists

Only as I truly know thee  
Can I make thee truly known;  
Only bring the power to others  
Which in my own life is shown. (Tracy in TSA 1986:377)

This is to some extent logical. It is difficult to conceive of an effective spiritual ministry led by an officer whose own spiritual experience is immature. However, it can imply that the spiritual life development of the officer must be more advanced than any of their congregation, so that 'my spiritual life should be better than the people I serve' (49). This tendency towards superiority appears to be closely linked to hierarchical understandings of The Salvation Army and a view of officership in which the officer must be seen to be in some way superior to, or at a 'higher' level than their congregation. Thus Divisional Commanders would be more mature than corps officers and so on 'up' the tiers of responsibility. This is challenged by an understanding of the spiritual life, which would certainly be encountered in many western territories, in which rank or appointment has no direct relation to spiritual authority, or spiritual maturity. Many officers would recognise within their congregations the presence of individuals who are more spiritually mature than themselves, and who become mentors and role models for them (30). This does not negate the validity of Tracy's words, but does caution against a hierarchical interpretation of them.

### **A mutual relationship?**

Furthermore, it can be suggested that this tells only part of the story; the relationship between personal spiritual development and practical ministry is more complex and mutually influencing than the song, or the quotations above, imply. Some of the responses to the questionnaire and interview questions, as well as conversations

during my professional practice, indicated awareness that spiritual life is not simply the motivation and the energizer for mission, but that it is in some way connected with practice in a more mutual relationship. One delegate wrote that 'my calling and my spiritual life are closely intertwined. The acceptance and health of one contributes to the other' (6), another 'they are cross-cutting themes that are united together, we could not separate them' (3), and a third simply stated 'inseparable' (51). It appears that there is a strand of operant spirituality that recognises the relationship between practice and ministry as complex and mutually influencing. Two delegates suggested a reciprocal relationship. One noted that coping with the vagaries of practical ministry is a stimulus to growth, 'my practical ministry challenged me and questioned my spiritual life' (27). The second summarised his habit of 'being personally reflective on my ministry' (6).

There is need for movement from the applicationist model to one which takes seriously the influence of practice upon the spiritual life. Miller-McLemore (2010:820) writes of practical theology as 'a discipline persistent in its attention to how ministry students, ministers and people of faith integrate religious knowledge and practice and how religious vocation evolves over time'. As such it seeks to bridge gaps between academic theology, practice and the life of faith with integrative intent.

### **Practice and Theology**

Thus the relationship between practice and theory is also important. Groome (1980:53) suggests that a movement from speaking of practice to speaking of praxis is helpful, leading to 'a shift in consciousness away from dichotomizing theory and practice, toward seeing them as twin moments of the same activity that are united dialectically'. Arch Chee Keen Wong (2009:242-44), drawing on the work of W. Carr, identifies four approaches: firstly, common sense, or the primacy of practice; secondly, applied science; thirdly, practical, in which theory is used as a lens to understand and explore meaning; and finally, critical abstract developing theory in relation to practice. Wong concluded that ministers shift between two or more of the approaches in their ministry, but that those who take the practical or critical approaches see the relationship as a dialogue, rather than viewing theory and practice as competing forms of knowledge (Wong 2009:249). Thus a conversation between theory and practice leads to both understanding and action.

Zoë Bennett (2007:53) points to the inevitable provisionality of a Christian epistemology of praxis. In contrast with 'theoretical' knowledge which is, by

definition, normative, praxis generated knowledge must take account of 'the contingent realities of Christian discipleship in Christian communities'. The practices of witness and risk aid understanding. Witness enables the believer to say, with conviction that they have found the truth and to act in accordance with it. Risk allows for transgression of the status quo in the interests of faithfulness as new understanding emerges.

The notion of reflective practice may be helpful in exploring this further. Whereas this is most often assumed to be a way of exploring the relationship between theory and practice, it is also possible that it can contribute to understanding the relationship between theory, practice and the spiritual life. 'The assumption is that the general aim of reflection is to move beyond current thoughts, ideas or behaviours with regard to the experience - in other words to learn from it' (Moon 1999:27). However, there is no necessity that this must be cognitive learning. Schön's notions of reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action locate learning in a creative reflective process which is formational as well as informational. Therefore it can be argued that reflection may contribute to a process of spiritual growth in which the *habitus* of officership is refined. Thus it is not the practice *per se* that is the source of spiritual life development, but the process of reflecting upon that practice, which may confirm, challenge and develop the spiritual life. In a cycle of action and reflection new understanding is generated which facilitates development and growth. For example, E spoke of his encounters with a homeless alcoholic man who as a result of his, sometimes disruptive, attendance at the corps Bible study, began to pray with other homeless people. E commented 'I've learned more about Jesus from guys like him than I have from people who've written books.'

Graham (1996:209) argues that the practices of life and ministry are 'performative', that is they not only reveal faith, they embody and create faith. Practice 'inherits and inhabits traditions of practical wisdom that are realised and re-enacted through the purposeful ordering of the community'. Thus ministerial identity is not static, but a work in process, capable of change and development and, consequently, the tradition can grow and change as it is performed in new and creative ways. Whilst acknowledging the significance of practice as the locus of both performance and change, Salvationist theology does not share Graham's turn to uncertainty and Divine Provisionality, but envisages ministry as rooted in the tenets of evangelical faith which assume the certainty of the Divine, despite human limitations in understanding and articulating the nature of God.



Nevertheless, for The Salvation Army, the gap between normativity and provisionality is not always as clear as some would assume. The interplay between theology, personal experience and practice is evident in Salvation Army history. William Booth's theology was rooted in the 'sacrificing love of Christ to men (*sic*), love which impelled him to continually seek their welfare' (Booth 1889:1). In the early stages of his ministry, Booth believed salvation to be an exclusively spiritual matter and paid little attention to physical circumstances. Subsequent engagement with people from the lowest strata of society led to a change of perspective, to an understanding that the whole person is engaged in the process of redemption and that salvation does not only apply to preparation for the 'next world' but to addressing alienation and misery in this world (Booth 1889:1-2). Here we see a dialogic and mutually influencing interaction between Booth's deeply held theology and the practice in which he was engaged. The practice did not in itself generate new truth, but reflection on it did disclose new facets of normative understanding. The adjustment of theology subsequently led to change in practice through the development of Salvation Army social service programmes, to which initially Booth had been firmly opposed, thus completing the cycle of reflection. So although any belief generated by reflection on practice is, of necessity, provisional, the process is valuable, as practice can disclose new insights which may be tested and refined, shaping and forming both the individual and the community.

### **Practice as one of the most significant factors in spiritual life development**

For 21% of respondents, practical ministry is one of the two most significant factors in the development of their spiritual life. Reasons varied considerably, often suggesting that being among people is in some way energising (9,13), or that being able to 'give' fulfils a personal need. One delegate wrote 'I am a doer of the word so I need to be in ministry to those who are lost/hurting' (47). Here we see the Salvationist ethic of ministry to the marginalised combined with a self perception of activism. A much larger number (71%) noted that practical ministry is one of a range of factors in spiritual life development, and 36.5% rated it as one of the most important sources of spiritual development during initial training. This would suggest that whereas most officers are prepared to acknowledge that there is a relationship between the spiritual life and practice, only a minority value it highly.

Yet from the earliest days of The Salvation Army, the link between the spiritual life and practice has been evident. George Scott Railton, writing in 1877 to persuade Bramwell Booth of value of provide training for early mission evangelists, stated

simply '...we want to train men to be like us without time for self, always at it, and yet always being fed and stoked up as they fly' (Railton in Watson 1970:38). It appears that a corollary to Railton's activist and missional mindset is the belief that dedicated practice will in some way nourish and 'feed' the officer. Thus, for Railton, mission is not only the result of spiritual experience but also the sustainer of it. Tidball (1994:207-298) comments:

True to its activist nature, evangelicalism cannot separate action from spiritual growth. Rather growth is both manifest in action and takes place through action...Holiness is seen in the bearing of fruit...prayer is the engine of mission and service. Disciples do not truly learn in the classroom or the chapel but only as they are on the road and on the job. To the evangelical, a spirituality which does not lead to such usefulness is suspect.

This seems to indicate that true learning is that which issues in a change of behaviour, which in turn will lead to new learning.

### **Spiritual development as useful for ministry**

A second connection between spiritual life and practical ministry can be discerned, in that a relatively high proportion of respondents (55.7%) noted the effect of their most significant factors for spiritual development upon their ministry, or gave ministry related reasons for their choice.

Some of the answers implied that the spiritual life is intrinsically connected with vocational practice. One delegate noted that 'the mentorship of older, more experienced ministers/leaders has helped me to grow in my leadership and in using the gifts of the spirit' (30). Here ministry and personal development are brought together in leadership development. Another summarised their experience as follows 'reading the Bible and spiritual books to build my faith and there is something new for my ministry' (10). This effectively demonstrates that for them there is no sharp divide between 'personal' and 'vocational', between the inner individual and the public leader.

A much more common approach was to value spiritual life practices that are useful in, or for, ministry. One delegate wrote 'a regular prayer time has been insightful and provides much revelation about ministry' (19), another 'Bible studies have been the way to be instructed for service' (16). This instrumental approach evaluates spiritual practice according to its functional utility. A means of grace is seen as most valuable when it is most useful to ongoing ministry. Here we see the strongly pragmatic

nature of the organisation clearly embedded in the answers. There was no sense of respondents avoiding the personal issues, rather of their need to make their personal spiritual development 'work' in relation to the whole of their life, and therefore their ministry. Evangelical spirituality understands and endorses this notion. 'True spiritual experience was to be seen in action when the living of the Christian way in fellowship with Christ was, as (Jonathan) Edwards put it, the whole "business of life"' (Randall 2005:24). This approach has much to commend it; it demonstrates the evangelical commitment to action as an outcome of spiritual experience; it signifies integration of the personal and public life and it engenders a 'fresh' approach to ministerial practice as new insights are gained and acted upon. However, if not carefully managed it can lead to a situation in which spiritual practice is evaluated and valued solely for its utility and any sense of *personal* spiritual development for the individual is marginalised or lost entirely.

### **Practice as a negative factor**

Two of the interviewees (A, B ) spoke of their concern that the institutional emphasis upon the necessity of activism expressed through ministerial practice can be detrimental to spiritual life development. A commented 'we want to grow, but most of the time our eyes are on our problems' (problems encountered in ministry). B wistfully recalled the discipline of his training days when personal devotions were written into the daily timetable, suggesting that the pressures of a busy routine easily lead to loss of habit. He also noted the distraction caused in an appointment when it is the responsibility of the officer to generate the means to satisfy extreme financial need. In addition, anecdotal evidence from my professional practice suggests that some officers feel that the busyness of officer ministry is one of the strongest detrimental factors to spiritual life development. Scholtens (2011:6) suggests that 'pressures of work and the issues of the day often swallow up available space and time unwillingly'.

There is a strong sense of a spiritual requirement for self-sacrifice embedded in Salvation Army history and hymnody which is not always appropriately balanced with a call for self-care. The words of William Pearson still appear in *The Song Book of The Salvation Army*, but are now rarely, if ever, sung

I'll fight to the last with the Lord's sword and shield,  
And count it an honour to die in the field;  
In death and the grave there is victory for me,  
A salvation soldier in Glory I'll be. (Pearson in TSA 1986:684)

However, Ruth Tracy's verses are still in current use

.... Since my redemption cost thee such a price  
Utmost surrender alone will suffice.

All in my heart, Lord, thou canst read;  
Master, thou knowest I love thee indeed.  
Ask what thou wilt my devotion to test  
I will surrender the dearest and best. (Tracy in TSA 1986:507)

The perception that an officer, or indeed any Christian, needs to 'surrender all' in the interests of the other, if misunderstood or pushed to its logical conclusion, can lead to over-tiredness and self-neglect. Too often the notion of self-giving can be distorted into a demanding cycle of activity that bears little or no resemblance to the biblical call to be a 'living sacrifice' (Romans 12:1).

In addition, problems and personalities encountered in ministry may derail equilibrium and prevent development, draining spiritual life from the beleaguered officer. 'I have been attacked by robbers... I have been sent to appointments that are difficult for me... at first I wanted to go home' (A). In this sense, the connection between practice and spiritual life can be a negative one, but perhaps here the interdependence is more clearly identified than when all is well.

In summary, there seems to be an underlying intuition that practice is important to the spiritual life, but the description of the relationship between them is most often seen as one in which effective practice is the consequence of spiritual understanding and depth. There are also hints that practice in some way influences and shapes spiritual experience, but this is not articulated with any precision. For an organisation that is characterised by, and prides itself upon, action, this is an important issue. One aim of this thesis is to begin to explore the process whereby this relationship can be made more explicit, in order that officers can not only sense, but also articulate, and gain benefit from, the ways in which practice and spiritual development influence each other.

## **Chapter 10**

### **Knowing, being and doing: a proposal for Salvation Army spiritual life development**

How then, can this research contribute to the development of policy and practice at the Centre for Spiritual life Development? This chapter will return to the conceptual framework and, drawing upon the discussion of the empirical research, will propose a framework within which specific practices can be developed and evaluated.

Christian spirituality is concerned with the conjunction of doctrinal understanding, personal connection with God, and Christian praxis. It is life lived in the presence of God. The notion of spiritual life development assumes that the Christian life is not a static entity, but a dynamic process of formation. It is a living relationship in which growth is organic rather than mechanical, individual rather than conforming to a prescribed pattern. It is deeply personal, but can also be experienced through participation in company with other believers. For each individual there will be moments of revelation, 'God's acts of self disclosure, given as a gift' (Fowler 1995:303), which cannot be written into the policies and practices of any centre, but there is also room for an intentional process which prepares the believer to appropriate and interpret the encounter in conjunction with other aspects of their lives. Without encounter, faith will be incomplete, but without interpretation and reflection, encounter can sometimes be perplexing and confusing. Interpretation must be both critical and faithful, securely embedded within the tradition, yet able to critique it in interaction with the experience, so that reflection may lead to creative new understanding, which in turn facilitates new encounter. It would therefore seem logical to assume that the role of the CSLD is to provide an environment in which that intentional process can be taught and practised, and to develop resources which facilitate this, either in person or at a distance. Of necessity, the CSLD must be a place of encounter with the divine, and a place of discerning, and learning, what this means, personally, corporately and in ministerial practice.

During the course of this research, insights from theological and vocational education, in interaction with definitions of spirituality, the empirical research, and my professional practice, have provided inspiration for a model which provides a broad perspective, a framework within which specific practices can evolve. I have concluded that spiritual life development may be facilitated by intentional focus upon

the interaction between knowledge and understanding, personal encounter with God, and Christian practice in order to generate deeper understanding of the spiritual life and its expression within The Salvation Army. It is a process in which the believer's whole life 'in Christ' is examined, evaluated, affirmed and challenged in order that growth may occur.

This formal definition finds expression in a succinct working statement - *spiritual life development is concerned with understanding and facilitating the interaction between knowing, being and doing in the life of Salvationists*. Drawing on the work of Kenneth Boa (2001:300), who states that 'a full orb'd spirituality involves grounding in biblical truth and sound doctrine (knowing), growing character and personal experience with God (being), and developing gifts and skills in the service of others (doing)', this statement provides a starting point for discussion which is easily accessible and memorable. A number of factors have contributed to its development:

### ***Habitus***

The notion of *habitus* in ministerial education is significant. It implies more than acquiring academic knowledge or a process of skills development, it is also concerned with a wider perspective, described variously as an orientation of the soul (Farley 1983:35), theological wisdom (Chopp:1995:15), and a way of being in the world (Roberts 2007:33). It is primarily concerned with the development of practical wisdom, or *phronesis*, as a foundation for ministry. Although there is difference of opinion regarding the means by which this is achieved, the assumption is that the minister becomes a particular kind of individual who, through shaping by knowledge, skills and the tradition responds and acts in ways that are consistent with this character. *Habitus* therefore assumes that development is multi-faceted and is concerned with the formation of the individual for the role. Dykstra's (2008:52) concept of the pastoral imagination which is 'received as a gift' also contributes to understanding. Ultimately, the development of *habitus* cannot be guaranteed if given optimum conditions, nor can it be measured against a scale of achievement; it can only be sought in intentional and faithful discipleship and ministry. Thus, for Salvation Army officers, spiritual life development is concerned with the continual formation of authentic being, *habitus*, in which growth in the inner life is deeply intertwined with the development of cognitive understanding, and with praxis. 'To be a clergyperson - no matter what denomination - is to enter into a commitment that involves a continuous and open process of formation that involves each stage of life,

each fresh encounter, each new prompting of the Spirit' (Percy 2006:176). With this in mind, the policies and practices of the CSLD, as they relate to officers, should be focused upon those things which will foster this formational process.

### **A three-faceted approach**

It has been argued above that Salvation Army orders and regulations assume a form of *habitus* that is rooted in and shaped by the inner life but is also dynamic and missional. It allows for faithfulness to the past and ongoing improvisation, so that practice can be constantly reviewed in order to facilitate relevant connections with the lives of individuals and the structures of society. It has also been shown that this is fostered by a training model which, although not prescriptive in terms of actual curriculum content or college practices, requires that officer cadets receive training in three broad areas; spiritual development, education and 'field operations' - practical skills.

Although the terminology varies, discussion concerning the relationship between these three elements is encountered in definitions of spirituality and vocational education. Spirituality is variously described as the concurrence of doctrine which is prayed, experienced and lived (Gordon 1991:3,6); 'the conjunction of theology, prayer and practical Christianity' (Sheldrake 1991:60); prayer, study and service (Charry 1997:242); knowing, being and doing (Boa 2001:300); and head heart and hands (Hollinger 2005:16). The same concepts are to be encountered in definitions of vocational education which speak of knowledge, psychological and spiritual maturity and skills development (Heywood 1997:46); cognitive apprenticeship, apprenticeship of identity formation, and apprenticeship of skill (Forster *et al* 2006: 5); and what is true, who I am, and the way it works in practice (Bunting 2009:12).

The literature of vocational education makes explicit the necessity for connectedness and interaction between the various elements, by some form of theological reflection or reflective practice. This is lacking in Salvation Army literature, leading to some instances of compartmentalised learning and development, and a fragmented understanding of ministry. In real terms, there is need for a process and a practice which makes explicit the links between spiritual formation (being), education (knowing) and field operations (doing), not only in initial officer education but also in ongoing ministry. This call for integration effects a distancing from competitive prioritising of the three elements by promoting synergy between them in order to develop *habitus* in the ministerial role.

The thesis of this work is that resonance between definitions of vocational education, descriptions of holistic spirituality, and the Salvationist approach to training and development allow for a synthesis which can shape the future policies and practices of the CSLD. Thus a major outcome of this research is the proposal that the CSLD should make explicit the connections between knowing, being and doing through a process of reflective practice, in order to foster an integrated and whole-life approach to the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers. Furthermore, it contends that the programmes of the CSLD should reflect this integration both in the overall provision of the centre and within events and resources. This proposal is a faithful improvisation that is consistent with past tradition, but also critiques and builds on it in order to seek a holistic and integrated approach to Salvationist spirituality which is applicable in a wide range of contexts.

*Knowing: understanding our faith*

Salvation Army spirituality concurs with the evangelical claim that although spirituality relates to the whole person it has not always paid attention to the whole (George 2003:4). Salvationist spirituality is primarily experiential, and has always assumed the necessity of foundational understanding, yet has sometimes lacked deep cognitive engagement. This has been described by Raymond (2005:12) as 'a subtle, yet anti-intellectualist bias', which some fear, if not addressed, will lead to degeneration, gross error or the death of the movement as depth of meaning is lost (Burke 2005:42).

It is true that Salvation Army history records a hermeneutic of suspicion in relation to academic theology, particularly in the training of officers (Murdoch 1994:21, Hill 2006:88), with the primary emphasis being placed upon spiritual formation and practice. But this is not to say that the early leaders were not interested in theology. Rather that they were wary of an isolated intellectualism that was divorced from the realities of spiritual life and practice. Booth's vision of a University of Humanity (Booth W. 1903) projected a combined programme which encompassed spiritual development, academic learning and practical training, demonstrating a pragmatic approach to learning that would subsequently be dismissed by some as purely functional, lacking in academic rigour. It is true that academic learning has often been the least valued category of officer development, both in initial training and during ministry, yet this thesis has demonstrated a move towards a greater appreciation of knowledge in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.



Nevertheless, the self-reported experience of the research population indicates that almost half of the officers who responded did not view study as a contributing factor in their spiritual development (see p.114-115).

The proposed model, in which knowing, being and doing interact, relies upon an understanding of knowledge as not only providing information but as having the potential to be formational and transformational. Knowledge is valued because it informs the learner, but also because it has the potential to contribute to, and shape, their practice and their spiritual life. The result of this may be transformation, not only of the individual, but also of the structures with which they interact. John Coutts (1977:17) commented eloquently 'articles of faith are but dry bones, unless they are clothed in the living flesh of inward perception and active love'. But this will only take place if there is a deliberate process of allowing what is learned to challenge, affirm and develop the learner. The notion of 'deep' learning contends that new knowledge must be connected, by a process of mutual critical conversation, with existing knowledge and life experiences in order to form a coherent whole. This in turn will result in commitment to the outcome (Prosser and Trigwell 1999:3,14). The will to make space for new knowledge is a necessary part of the process. Through this process of risk and openness to new insight spiritual life development may be facilitated and encouraged.

Ellen Charry (1997:vii) stresses the formative nature of Christian doctrine. 'Christian doctrines aim to be good for us by forming or re-forming our character; they aim to be salutary. They seek to form us as excellent persons with God as the model...'. From this perspective, theology 'seeks to draw readers into understanding God and interpreting themselves on that basis' (Charry 2000:xvii). Thus by drawing upon an understanding of knowing as having both objective and subjective elements, so that doctrine becomes a means by which individuals are enabled to interpret reality in terms of God, so that both the mind and the inner life are nurtured. Similarly, McGrath (2003a:15) argues 'theology excites, informs, and challenges the mind, inviting us to discover the full riches of the Christian revelation...'. It is therefore transformative and spiritually forming. For McGrath (2003a:15) the challenge for evangelicalism is to avoid the emergence of 'arid evangelical rationalism'; for The Salvation Army the challenge is to avoid failing to engage at depth with the life of the mind by an over-emphasis upon activism, which at worst, will be unreflective and unconsidered.

Thus a vital aspect of spiritual life development for officers is to encourage a positive attitude to learning so that 'knowing' does not merely consist of the residue of training college courses, but is a lifelong project in which faithful discipleship is pursued. Although this section has primarily discussed the relationship of The Salvation Army to theology, learning will not necessarily be limited to this field, but will encompass the range of disciplines that can contribute to the formation of the individual as a Salvation Army officer. For some officers this will be achieved by the pursuit of formal academic qualifications, but for others through short courses or personal reading. In each case there is the possibility that to learn will also be to become and to do.

*Being: who we are in connection with God*

The research has shown that no specific definition of spiritual life development was articulated in the establishment of the CSLD. The results of the empirical research demonstrated that Salvation Army officers hold a variety of opinions and beliefs regarding the nature of the spiritual life development, but that it is most commonly defined with reference to an inner life, a central 'place' or 'part' of the individual in which their relationship with God is sustained and nurtured. In contrast, the report of International Spiritual Life Commission (1998) which began the process leading to the establishment of the CSLD, and the subsequent book *Called to be God's People* (Street 1999, 2008), assume a more inclusive focus, in which the inner life, spiritual disciplines and Christian practice are contributory factors. In effect, although a deeply personal aspect of the spiritual life is acknowledged, it forms part of a larger whole in the spiritual life of the organisation. In contrast to knowing, there is a strong Salvation Army tradition of encouraging the 'consistent cultivation of the inner life' (Street 2008:49), through worship, communal activities and encouragement to private devotion through prayer and Bible reading. Similarly, the normative priority of spiritual formation is clearly documented (TSA 2005; General Order, TSA 1997 1.1.1.2).

However alongside this, this research has concluded that, for delegates to the ICO April-December 2010, the traditional evangelical means of grace, epitomised by the daily 'quiet time', are now being supplemented by a range of other spiritual disciplines and practices in officer spiritual life development (see p.113-118). Moreover, there is no consistent pattern of access to resources or teaching throughout the world.

Two major issues may be implied from this. The inequity of provision in the international context is a major issue and is part of a much larger picture of funding and allocation of priorities. This macro issue is outside the scope of the CSLD, although some tentative suggestions might be made to redress the balance. Secondly, The Salvation Army shares the current evangelical openness to insights and practices from other traditions, but needs to learn to understand and appropriate them in the light of its own heritage and story (Gillett 1993:2; Tidball 1994:214). It would therefore seem logical that the CSLD should be aware of these trends, evaluate them and, where appropriate, make provision for resources and training.

Being explores who we are, our relationship with God, and what we have the potential to become. It is the outworking of the central theme of evangelical spirituality - the necessity of a personal relationship with Christ (Randall 2005: 23). Salvationist writing and hymnody tends to prioritise an individualistic spirituality, concentrating upon personal formation, often in the context of growth in holiness.

O that in me the mind of Christ  
A fixed abiding place may find,  
That I may know the will of God,  
And live in him for lost mankind (Joy in TSA 1986: 451).

This resonates with the nineteenth century evangelical emphasis upon the individual, and is a reflection of the structures and priorities of the culture in which movement began.

But being is also communal. It is expressed and communicated *in* the fellowship, and in part, is also nurtured through participation in the public means of grace. The Salvation Army is, for Salvationists including officers, the locus for a corporate expression and outworking of this personal relationship. It is 'the fellowship within which they experience their connectedness with the Body of Christ' (Street 2008:ix).. A song of William Booth, which has been revived and re-worked by the contemporary Church, demonstrates the point:

Thou Christ of burning cleansing flame,  
Send the fire!  
Thy blood-bought gift today we claim,  
Send the fire!  
Look down and see this waiting host,  
Give us the promised Holy Ghost,  
We want another Pentecost,  
Send the fire! (Booth in TSA 1986:203)

Here the imagery is resolutely corporate, as the Spirit is invited to visit and renew. It may be that there is a need to reclaim a sense of the individual in community, not only as a Salvationist, sharing in common practices, but as part of the Body of Christ sharing responsibility for others in mutual accountability. Salvation Army structure has enabled the growth of a wide fellowship of individuals with common interests and motivation; The International Spiritual Life Commission highlighted the need for this to be a *spiritual* enterprise as well as one based upon shared interests.

The vitality of our spiritual life is also enhanced by our accountability to one another, and when we practise the discipline of accountability our spiritual vision becomes objective, our decisions more balanced, and we gain the wisdom of the fellowship and the means to clarify and test our own thinking (Street 2008:59)

In order for the CSLD to aid this transition it is necessary to facilitate the development of strategies and education which enable the believers to move from a largely privatised faith, practised in parallel with other believers, to a position of mutual accountability, and also mutual enrichment. If this does not happen, there is a danger that the community will be impoverished. Reflection upon the interaction of knowing, being and doing may provide a way forward, with attention given to how, not only as individuals, but as the people of God together, lives are enriched in the sharing of common practices.

#### *Doing: the practical implications*

The relationship of Christian practice to the spiritual life is complex, but often presented as simple. The empirical research showed that when officers were asked to describe the relationship between their personal spiritual life and their practical ministry the responses indicated a strong tendency towards an applicationist linear model. This implies or states that motivation for action, and commitment in action, is in some way generated and sustained by the inner life. Rooted in evangelical expressions of Christian piety, Salvationist spirituality embodies commitment to personal holiness which results in engagement with the world. In effect, that works of piety inevitably lead to works of mercy (Yrigoyen 1996:36). Publications resulting from the International Spiritual Life Commission demonstrate a deeply embedded espoused and normative self-understanding that spiritual experience is completed by action 'God in love reaches out through his people to a suffering and needy world' (Street 2008:7). Wider Salvationist writing also supports this viewpoint: 'Our

mission, our outward activity and service for God must be fuelled and energised by our spiritual life' (Burrows in Faragher 2010:vii).

Some of the formal theology of evangelicalism also sees Christian activism as a corollary of personal experience: 'the evangelical instinct to use all possible means to communicate the message' (Randall 2005:147). This traditional formulation holds within it the truth that, for the Christian, the inner life must find its expression in action. But Tidball (1994:207) notes a more reciprocal process 'evangelicalism cannot separate action from spiritual growth. Rather, growth is both manifest in action and takes place through action'.

In the empirical research it was clear that some respondents showed little evidence of having moved beyond 'instinct' to a more reflective understanding of the dynamics between spiritual experience and action. This tends to result in a dichotomy between the spiritual life and practice which, in extreme forms, results in as form of dualism in which there is no real connection between the inner and outer lives. However, this is not consistent with the definitions of spirituality explored in this thesis which argue that it is not solely concerned with interiority, but integrates 'all aspects of human life and experience in the light of a relationship with God' (Sheldrake 2010:6).

The unfailingly activist mindset of Salvationism is both a strength and a danger. It is, when properly understood, an embodiment of the *missio dei*. Salvationists not only speak about salvation, they do it, by proclamation, through presence and in provision for the marginalised. But it can also become unreflective activity, in which the activity becomes all-encompassing and tyrannical, so that the connection with the inner life is forgotten or damaged. Similarly, unreflective, or unconsidered activism will fail to draw on academic knowledge, or learned processes, that might bring clarity and effectiveness. There is therefore need for a model of reflection that will identify these connections, make them explicit and show how they can lead to growth and development.

In a similar way to the articulation of the relationship between the spiritual life and practice, it is often argued that knowledge, or theory, is prior to practice. Thus practice is a way of applying theory but not of generating it. For example, Miroslav Volf argues that belief is normative, and inherent within it are the practices that make sense of the belief in everyday life, which can themselves lead to 'acceptance

and deeper understanding of these beliefs' (Volf:2002:258). This is not the same as saying that practices create beliefs, and for Volf belief has priority.

Others argue for a more dialogical relationship suggesting that it is unwise to separate thought and action because ultimately, 'they are interdependent, each one necessary to enrich and correct the other ... Separated thought withers and action decays. Thought becomes inaccessible, divorced from life. Action without continuous re-evaluation is easily corrupted' (Charry 2000:xxviii). This is consistent with the contemporary ecumenical consensus in practical theology. For example, Terry Veling (2005:142) argues that, in practical theology, theory and practice are 'partners that belong together... Action requires reflection. Reflection requires action'.

### **Integration and blending - a whole life perspective**

As the work has developed it has become evident that the extent and nature of integration between knowing, being and doing are vital in both training and spiritual life development. There is need for a method which can help to make explicit the connections and illustrate the mutual dependence between the three elements. Despite the calls by former William Booth College Principals for balance (see p.219), and Court's (2011) suggestion that attention to each must be carefully regulated on a numerical basis, a mechanistic approach will not suffice. 'Balance' will not be achieved by equality of time or resources. 'Balance is not so much a matter of staying in perfect equilibrium as it is a matter of finding the right rhythm for our lives' (Weaver 2002:181). The notion of 'blending' provides an alternative metaphor. In effect, this is the conviction that knowing, being and doing are blended into the whole of an individual's life, in varying quantities, throughout life, in order that the right rhythm for the individual, the stage of life and the context may be achieved.

### *Reflective practice*

Although allowing for flexibility and difference in the lives of individuals, it can appear that the idea of blending is too nebulous and therefore unable to be of practical use. The concept of reflective practice offers a way forward. By encouraging officers to pay attention to the trajectory of the three foci - knowing, being and doing - during a specified timescale, and to make specific links between them, identifying connections, gaps, over-emphases, and resolutions it is possible to identify when development is taking place, and when some adjustment is necessary.

The process is both reflexive, which Julie Lunn (2009:222) describes as a process of 'attending to ourselves and listening to the voices of our own feelings', and theologically reflective, attending to the voices of situations, circumstances, knowledge and other people. These two would also blend in order to generate new insight and new action. It is also a process in which there must be space to encounter God, and so must be undertaken prayerfully and with reference to the traditions of faith.

The actual practice could be modified according to the actual circumstances of use but each instance would include some common elements; a detailed description of the individual's life over a specified period of time, an analysis of events and priorities in terms of knowing, being and doing, an exploration of the interactions between the three, attention to theology and the inner life, a judgement concerning coherence and integration, and a plan for future development. Questions would direct the participant to understanding how each of the three parts is shaping and being shaped by the other two in order that they may identify areas for further development. This allows for a personal and unique assessment of the interaction between knowing, being and doing in the individual's life at a given time. The officers' honesty about the present situation and openness to development is vital. It is a process which involves both witness to a believed truth and risk-taking that leads to a willingness to envisage, and enter, a future which is not just a recapitulation of the past but is marked by new insights and faithful discipleship (c.f. Bennett 2007:53).

This is essentially a personal diagnostic exercise which might be further strengthened by adding support and accountability. Possibilities include an informal process in which reflections are shared and the officer is held accountable by a friend or small group, or to include the reflections as part of a formal process of mentoring or spiritual direction.

It is an invitation to consider human life at depth, finding connections which will enhance future living. This may present challenges in some cultures where reflection and reflexivity are not part of the educational philosophy and it may be that supplementary teaching resources will be necessary in order to encourage reflection to take place. The scope for diversity avoids the danger of a 'one-size-fits-all' model which is applied without reference to context, level or culture and allows a flexible approach. It offers a global framework that can be shaped in locally appropriate

ways, thus holding in tension The Salvation Army's commitment to both unity and diversity. It is therefore 'pedagogically apt' (Cameron 2011) in that it is able to work on a number of levels, individual, communal, simple and complex, and in a variety of cultures and contexts, in order to facilitate faithful living.

### *Practical considerations*

An important factor is the cultural diversity of the constituency. While understanding and facilitating the interaction of knowing, being and doing in the life of Salvationists is, on the surface, a simple statement, it allows for complexities of understanding and variety of use. It does not rely for implementation upon access to written or electronic resources that would place unrealistic demands upon the resources of grant aided territories, nor does it preclude their use. The empirical work has showed that access to resources is a contributory factor in spiritual life development. To some extent, although the CSLD is international, the need is less sharply defined in those contexts where resources for spiritual life development can be sourced in other ways. This may include participation in the wider church context, or the ability, and funding, to generate what is needed within The Salvation Army. Responses to the empirical research disclosed the diversity of provision that is already available. Where there is already good provision, although the CSLD forms a central reference point for interaction with International Headquarters on spiritual life matters, the need is more for collegial support and expertise rather than central provision. However, more specific resourcing may be necessary for territories and commands who do not have the financial means or the personnel to develop what they need.

### **A benchmark for policy and practice**

The interaction between knowing, being and doing can provide a framework for the CSLD in three distinct ways, which have relevance to the CSLD mission to offer events, provide resource and to encourage the implementation of intentional and systematic spiritual growth (see above p 3).

It is envisaged that the concept, with the accompanying reflective cycle, will be produced as a resource which can be used either by individuals or in groups, at the CSLD as part of an organised event, or in the local setting. Work has begun to develop and refine the tool, thus providing a simple diagnostic process for spiritual life development (Appendix I pp.292-294). This process will offer a resource to territories and commands which can be adopted and adapted for use, either at a



specific occasion, or as part of an ongoing systematic programme of spiritual growth.

The model facilitates careful consideration of the content of occasional courses and events, ensuring a holistic approach to spiritual growth. Evaluation of an early CSLD course showed that it had paid little attention to doing in relation to the other two elements. This could potentially mean that the course, which was designed to equip leaders, could be personally beneficial, but offer little resource for future ministry. Personal benefit is valuable, but in this case did not fully satisfy the aim in convening the event. In a subsequent event additional workshops redressed the balance, contributing to a greater overall appreciation of the event. While the temptation to always include and name all elements in each session, or to assume that they are always necessary or beneficial, must be avoided, the model gives a perspective from which to work in order to achieve a holistic approach.

By adopting knowing, being and doing as an overall framework in which to locate spiritual life development, it also provides one basis for evaluating the work of the CSLD. Although a strict division of time, energy, personnel time and finance is neither practical nor desirable, an overall assessment of programmes and resources could suggest where there is need for further investment and disclose radical imbalance in the programmes, events and development of resources. It may be that at times intentional attention must be given to one aspect in order to redress imbalance, or to encourage new practice, but it would generally be assumed that each of the three components should be present. So far as possible, all provision should work towards integration of the three rather than the facilitation or fostering of one aspect.

Intentional reflection upon knowing, being and doing is, in effect, a process of generating a sacred form of *phronesis*, that practical wisdom which enables the Christian to engage with the world in meaningful ways. It does not rely solely upon any one aspect but upon the symbiotic relationship between them which shapes lives, engenders growth and fosters *habitus*, a way of being in the world. The same reflective process can also be applied to the development of the CSLD, and as the model is applied to policies and practices and the results evaluated, the wisdom that is required to facilitate spiritual life in The Salvation Army will emerge.

## **Conclusion**

This research was designed to generate new understanding of the ongoing spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers by bringing the findings of empirical research into dialogue with theological and theoretical perspectives, and to develop a foundation which can shape and enhance the policy and provision of the CSLD. This has been achieved; the evolution of my professional practice demonstrates that the foundations of a holistic policy and new practices, which have emerged from this work, are taking shape.

### **Review of the empirical research process**

The empirical research, conducted with three sessions of ICO delegates between April and December 2010, produced a highly diffused data set which clearly indicated difference in understanding, priorities and practices. The response rate of 72%, gender balance of respondents and zonal distribution indicate that the results are a valid representative group of the total research population.

The diversity of nationality, language and culture contributed to the breadth of understanding and, to some extent, reflected the overall demographic of the international Salvation Army, but also presented some challenges in both written and oral communication. It was evident that some delegates struggled to achieve the level of sophistication required to articulate their responses either orally or in writing. A more sophisticated process of investigation could commission research in a variety of languages, followed by a process of translation and interpretation but that is beyond the scope of this Professional Doctorate.

An unanticipated finding was the evident relationship between the financial status of territories and the reporting of spiritual life practices and provision. The practices of officers from grant aided territories are more likely to rely upon those means of grace which do not have financial costs attached to them, and the provision of events and resources is generally much reduced compared to those of financially independent territories. This difference has influenced the recommendations for a way forward, in that I have made an intentional decision to avoid the need for sophisticated resources in my proposals.

The data pointed to some patterns and trends and illustrated diversity of understanding and practice in the ways in which Salvation Army officers sustain and

develop their spiritual lives. Although no findings were completely unanticipated, the overall diversity was broader and some statistics more clearly defined than expected. As a qualitative research project it has clearly demonstrated the complexity of lived experience, and has resulted in an interpretation that is both provisional and shaped by my choices as a researcher, working from a context of education and spiritual life development. It is not the only possible interpretation, and more, or different, data could lead to other conclusions. Nevertheless, it is a valid interpretation of the data and offers a salient contribution to the shape of the constructive work.

### **Summary of findings**

The results were analysed in three major categories; definitions and understanding of spiritual life development; the 'means of grace'; and the relationship between the spiritual life and ministerial practice.

#### *Definitions and development*

The results showed no clear consensus relating to specific definitions of spiritual life development, its facilitation, or evidence of it taking place. However an emergent theme was that of a dynamic process, which is facilitated by personal devotional exercises, learning and action, and evidenced in character, interpersonal relationships and active participation in ministry. It is clear that if the CSLD is to be effective, there is need for a model which helps to clarify understanding.

#### *The means of grace*

The findings relating to the means of grace, or those factors which facilitate spiritual experience and growth, were the most clearly defined and also the most unexpected. Statistical analysis showed clear trends and connections. The results showed a wide diversification of means of grace, with a clear trend away from reliance upon the traditional evangelical, and Salvationist, practice of a daily 'quiet time' in which prayer and Bible reading form the main components. Although still important to the respondents, they are the most important factors in spiritual life development for only a small proportion, almost all of whom are from grant aided territories. Although reasons for this can be offered, the sharpness of the trend suggests the need for further investigation.

The Salvation Army's activist nature was clearly shown in the responses relating to organisational practice and provision. The high incidence of events and low

incidence of personnel in respondents' answers relating to their experience of territorial provision showed a clear contrast with significant factors in the training experience, where personnel were highly valued alongside study and personal and corporate spiritual formation.

#### *Spiritual life and practical ministry*

The findings were dominated by the traditional evangelical and Salvationist framework of the priority of the inner life, with Christian living, including officer practice, as both a corollary to spiritual life and energised by it. In some responses an instrumental approach was suggested, with the suggestion that spiritual life development directly resources practice. Interviewees suggested that the institutional emphasis upon activism can be detrimental to the spiritual life, and that busyness or challenges in ministry can impede growth and stunt development. The lack of sophistication in the responses indicates need for a more nuanced understanding and exploration of the relationship between spiritual life and ministerial practice.

#### **Answering the research questions**

The research began with two questions:

*How do Salvation Army officers sustain and develop their personal spiritual life in the context of an activist, missional organisation? In what ways can the Centre for Spiritual Life Development facilitate and support this practice?*

The research has shown the lack of a universal or consistent model for spiritual life development within The Salvation Army. The resultant diversity is valuable in demonstrating that individuals find their own way forward, but does not reflect the normative spirituality of the denomination. The relationship between the activist missional ethos and spiritual life is complex and in need of more intentional attention, both in terms of theological and theoretical understanding, and in the lives of individuals. Thus the CSLD must shape its policies and practices in ways which facilitate this. The major outcome of this work is the proposal of a broad framework which can act to shape the growing programme and processes of the CSLD and function as a model for theological reflection for individuals. This is provided by a holistic approach to spiritual life development which mines the interaction and mutual influence between lifelong learning (knowing), the inner life (being) and Christian practice (doing). The concept of 'blending' offers a more helpful metaphor than that of balance, although care must be taken not to assume that what is

required is equal quantities or that the blending will result in the original identities being lost. This is a faithful improvisation of the pedagogical tradition of officer training in The Salvation Army. As such it both critiques the status quo and builds upon it.

### **Reflections on my intellectual journey**

Two years into the research process I reflected upon my intellectual journey, (see pp.228-230), drawing on Gillian Rose's use of the image of 'torn halves' that cannot be reconciled in the relationship between ethics and metaphysics, and her claim that wisdom, both theoretical and practical 'works with equivocation' (Rose 1996:9, 2), so that it develops from the explorations of uncertainty and the revision of ideas and policies. At the time my focus was upon the practice of initial officer training in The Salvation Army, specifically within the United Kingdom Territory. There were 'torn halves' that needed to be held in tension; faithfulness to a theological heritage and ethos and the need to critique and challenge the status quo; the sometimes competing emphases between understanding ministerial education as the development of a disposition or character, *habitus*, or as the development of a competent, skilled professional; the need to balance theory with practice and to understand the interpenetrating relationship between them.

Following my change of appointment to the Centre for Spiritual Life Development, some of these tensions faded into the background, but were replaced by new questions, new 'torn halves'; the sometimes ambivalent portrayal of the spiritual life as the inner life, or as the whole of life lived in relationship with God; the complex mutually shaping interrelationship between spiritual life and practice, sometimes described as contemplation and action; the role of academic practice in relation to spiritual life development; the strongly evangelical emphasis of Salvation Army literature and tradition and the broadening range of means of grace employed by officers in their personal search for spiritual life development.

Gradually, as empirical research interacted with theological and theoretical perspectives, a 'torn triad' emerged. In The Salvation Army the traditional claim is that the inner life is foundational and that practice emerges from it. Academic learning is useful as a means to understand and articulate spiritual experience and to inform practice, but there is no requirement for ongoing academic development in officer ministry. New insight was discerned in a synthesis of definitions of spirituality - as the juxtaposition of understanding of doctrine, an internally experienced

relationship with the divine and Christian living (Gordon 1991:3,6; Sheldrake 1991:60; Boa 2001:300; Hollinger 2005:16) - and vocational education or professional apprenticeship - as a three faceted learning experience which encompasses academic, normative, and skills based learning (Heywood 1997:46; Foster *et al* 2006:5).

A growing conviction that the CSLD must take a broad and holistic approach to the spiritual life led to emerging wisdom born of equivocation and the development of a model in which the 'torn triad' can be held together by a process of theological reflective practice which allows each a place in the overall concept of spiritual life development. True to my activist roots, new understanding led to changing practice, which in turn created further clarification and refinement of the model.

### **Developments in my professional practice**

*Orders and Regulations for the Training of Salvation Army officers* clearly indicate that the training programme should consist of spiritual development, education and field operations. The relationship between them is not made explicit except to say that an aim of practice is 'spiritual growth enlarged' and that there should be 'balance' between theory and practice (TSA 2005: 3.3.2f). As I began to consider the interactions between the three elements a number of invitations to speak at conferences allowed for both dissemination and development of the concept of knowing, being and doing as a holistic and integrated model, not only for officer training, but for officer spiritual life development. During the course of the research visits to Europe, North America, Africa and India have allowed interaction with individuals and groups from a range of contexts and have enlarged my understanding of the cultural differences embedded within Salvation Army internationalism. The most recent visits have enabled me to test the model in practice in order to gauge the response of practitioners.

A few events have been seminal as the concept has emerged. In January 2010 I introduced the image of a simple trefoil figure, which was formed by a single continuous line, as an analogy of the three facets of training, to the European Training Leaders' Network (ETLN). Realising that changing the size of one segment will affect at least one of the others proved to be a defining moment, a '*kairos*-like epiphany' (Miller-McLemore 2008:5), which was a catalyst in my search for a way forward. Following fruitful discussion in 2010, the 2011 ETLN was entitled '*Knowing, being and doing*' and I was asked to present further research and generate

discussion, particularly giving attention given to the relationship between the three. One delegate brought diagrams of plaits to illustrate his reflections during the year; three stands making a coherent whole. It was at the 2011 ETLN that the concept of balance was supplemented by that of blending as a metaphor for mutual interrelationship. The image of the angel cake with its three equal and clearly defined sections gave way to that of the marble cake, in which each colour is evident, but the pattern is not regular, with changes of the most dominant colour sometimes giving a random effect. Yet each is contributing to the unified whole. An invitation to be the main speaker at the Nordic Study weekend (April 2011), specifically to introduce the concept of knowing, being and doing to officer cadets and others in lay ministry, afforded the opportunity to both present ideas and model them in my own teaching. The design of the sessions ensured that knowing, being and doing as an overarching concept was explored from a variety of perspectives. Participants responded with enthusiasm, quickly understanding the application of the concept to their life and their ministerial development. At a leadership development weekend in Germany (June 2011) delegates were encouraged to complete a personal reflective exercise as a diagnostic procedure. These opportunities have been invaluable in shaping ideas and practice. Further dissemination has resulted from the publication of a short article in *The Officer* (2010), and from my practice at the CSLD in introducing the concept to subsequent sessions of ICO delegates. At the time of writing a conference is being planned at the CSLD for September 2012 with the request from the international leadership that the framework for the programme will be knowing, being and doing.

Although there is much that is positive in these developments, care must be taken to ensure that the essential element of interaction and mutuality is preserved and that the three words do not just become a shorthand version of the officer training mandate which allows the existing status quo to be transferred into the CSLD.

As I write the final words of my thesis I have learned of another change in my professional practice. The SALT (Salvation Army Leadership Training) College, is a small distance learning institution based in Nairobi, Kenya, but serving the whole of Africa. My appointment as Principal will bring new opportunities to test my thesis and discover its potential in the African, grant aided, context. There will be challenges associated with teaching by distance learning and the dominant pedagogical models already in place, but there will also be opportunities for interaction with a different culture, and with individuals and leaders. All of this will

add insight and new understanding and give opportunities for further development of the framework.

### **The way forward for Centre for Spiritual Life Development**

‘The whole thrust of the Professional Doctorate is to examine values, practices and performances in order to yield better performance’ (Bennett Z. 2009:338). This has been achieved. The research process has generated understanding that has enabled me to develop my professional practice in new and creative ways. The academic part of the research leads to an end and a beginning. It offers a model which can shape policy and practice, but more work will be needed to evaluate progress as it is used to shape the CSLD programme in terms of resources and events.

Work is beginning to test and refine the reflective tool that will give attention to each aspect of knowing, being and doing in relationship with the other two. From July 2011 it has been introduced to ICO delegates, initially as a personal exercise, with no requirement for feedback of content to staff, but with the request that delegates complete a short questionnaire relating to their response to the broad concept and to the reflective exercise. It is anticipated that these responses will aid the development process so that, in due course, an electronic document or short book can be produced as a resource and a guide to the process.

### **Contribution to knowledge**

The aim of this research was to generate new understanding, and therefore close a gap in understanding the spiritual life of Salvation Army officers. The choice of qualitative empirical research with human subjects was counter-cultural in a hierarchical organisation in which policies and programmes are often introduced with little reference to their intended users.

By placing the self-reported experience of the research subjects alongside theological and theoretical research it has produced an original and unique understanding of the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers, highlighting practices and understanding, acknowledging strengths and exposing gaps in both individual understanding and structural procedures. As practical theology it has sought to make sense of, and make provision for, a series of practices in a complex global organisation, whilst also acknowledging the importance of the local. It also contributes to The Salvation Army’s self



understanding about its internationalism and demonstrates the disconnections and gaps between those who have access to resources and those who do not. The framework which is proposed is relevant to both the global organisation and the local context.

It therefore contributes to the existing body of academic writing about The Salvation Army which is primarily historical or doctrinal. It roots The Salvation Army, and Salvationist spirituality within the evangelical context, identifying syntheses which are in themselves contributions to knowledge. As the first academic writing to explore the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers it offers new perspective, as Salvationist authors in the field of spirituality invariably write for congregational use, focusing upon the experiential dimensions of spirituality .

A further contribution can be seen in the conversation between vocational education and spirituality which, when placed alongside the empirical work, leads to the claim that spiritual life development in The Salvation Army must encompass the interrelationship between knowing, being and doing in a process of reflective practice; that while the importance of the inner life must not be neglected, there is need for an integrative process which encourages the understanding of the relationship between it, education and praxis. In presenting Salvation Army officership as the development of *habitus* which is marked by the ongoing symbiotic interactions between knowing, being and doing, it offers a new holistic understanding of Salvation Army officership in which practice cannot be separated from the inner life, but is not merely the outcome of it.

Finally, it also contributes to the wider understanding of the development of the spiritual life in evangelical Christianity in the twenty-first century, showing clearly that the diversification in means of grace noted by scholars is a reality, at least in the West. There is need for a holistic approach to spiritual life development which does not deny or decry the experiences of the past, but is a faithful improvisation for the present time. It can therefore contribute to understanding in other Christian denominations, which may also be exploring the need to make provision for continual ministerial attention to the spiritual life.

### **Limitations**

Although the CSLD does not only exist for officers, the empirical work was limited in scope to a small percentage of the total officer population which is a tiny proportion

of the total number of Salvationists. Qualitative research inevitably leads to an interpretation of a particular situation which is high in validity, rather than a replicable set of results which are generalisable. Nevertheless, it has been possible to generate a rich description which is a faithful interpretation of the situation according to the norms of the communities which have shaped my voice as a researcher. This suggests that it may be limited in its application and in its relevance to the immediate context, or to the population of Salvation Army officers. Although it could be argued that the resultant conclusions and framework have relevance for non-officers, and Christians who are not Salvationists, further research may be needed to highlight differences of emphasis which should be acknowledged.

Thus the context is narrow. Any application in a different context can only be partial and will inevitably require revision. When placed in the global context of the Christian Church it is evident that it is concerned with the development of spiritual life in a small proportion of a tiny Christian denomination. Although there is common ground, the distinctive nature of the Salvationist spiritual heritage is undeniable and may result in further limitations to the applicability of the research to other parts of the Church. Nevertheless, some insights may generate further thought, reflection and research in the wider context.

The research is also a 'first step' in understanding, making its own contribution to knowledge, but also opening up new possibilities for research as the CSLD continues to explore the contours of Salvationist spiritual life.

### **Possibilities for further research**

As the research progressed it became clear that this is a necessary preliminary piece of work which has the potential to lead to more specific studies in the future. It is anticipated that it will lead to a cyclical pattern of research, reflection and review of practice as the concept becomes established and specific practices are developed. My appointment to SALT College will allow opportunities to test the relevance of the framework based upon knowing, being and doing to the African context. In addition, related issues emerged during the research process, each of which, if explored more deeply, would provide valuable insight into the ways in which Salvation Army officers sustain and develop their spiritual lives, and the processes and provision of the organisation. These include the following:

In investigating the means of grace used by officers to develop their spiritual life there was some indication that there may be gender preferences (see p.116). It appeared that men were more likely to rate study and ministerial practice more highly than women, and that women would more often value a mentoring relationship. Although the sample was too small to draw any conclusions, a further study may provide useful clarification. In addition, a widening in the valued means of grace, and a possible trend away from the 'quiet time' as foundational, suggests that to undertake similar research with a different generation of officers, or with Salvation Army soldiers, would almost certainly bring new insight (see pp.116-117).

The findings indicated that many of the respondents would value a form of mentoring relationship in their personal spiritual development (see pp.119-121). A simple response would be to suggest that a possible future function of the CSLD might be the train and resource mentors, particularly from the GA territories, but it is possible that the concept would be counter-cultural in some non-Western concepts and therefore any initiative would require sensitivity and careful teaching. Further research is required before action can be taken.

A third area is related to the structure of the organisation. Where a line manager is responsible for the spiritual welfare of an officer, tension between a monitoring and evaluation process and a pastoral, mentoring, resourcing role is common. This can lead to confusion, and sometimes defensiveness, if it is felt that one person is assuming a role that rightly belongs to another. A valuable piece of work for the organisation would be to clarify this expectation, ensuring that both functions are in place, but not necessarily requiring that the line manager fulfil both.

As the Centre for Spiritual life Development continues to enlarge its horizons and to gain momentum, this research has provided a valuable contribution to understanding how Salvation Army officers sustain and develop their spiritual lives and has facilitated the development of a framework which can be applied to the policies and practices of the centre, and to individuals. The Salvation Army International Spiritual Life Commission was appointed in 1996 'to review the ways in which The Salvation Army cultivates and sustains the spiritual life of its people' (Street 2008:ix). This work is a contribution to the debate.

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## **Appendix A**

**SID Number: 9600480**

### **Stage 1 Unit 1 Literature Review: Context, competencies and theological education.**

**July 2007**

## **Abstract**

**Karen Shakespeare**

### **Stage 1 Unit 1**

#### **Literature Review: Context, competencies and theological education. July 2007**

In September 2007, core competencies for officers of The Salvation Army will be introduced as a means of monitoring Officer selection, training, development and appraisal. The aim of this research will be to explore the implications of this policy for William Booth College, which is The Salvation Army's sole provider of initial officer training in the United Kingdom.

The practical theological task is to engage in critical theological reflection on the practices of the college so that it may faithfully participate in God's purposes in the world. This will require listening to, and learning from, the practices of the world which may be relevant to this enquiry. Therefore this literature review attends to three "conversation partners" and begins to explore the ways in which they can, in interaction, inform the debate. These are the historical experience and ethos of The Salvation Army; the literature which surrounds the adoption of a competence based approach to education and training in the field of social work, and its relationship to adult education theory; and, beginning from the work of Edward Farley, the theology of ministerial education.

For the Salvation Army, a strongly pragmatic and functional ethos is complemented by commitment to personal and spiritual formation in officer training, with academic education as an important, but historically less significant, component. This might suggest that, at least for some training functions, competence could be a useful concept. However, there is need for careful definition. An instrumental, skills based, definition of competence might seem to lead to training for a task, allowing little room for creativity. But, following the experience of social work and some theological educators, if competence is re-cast as capacity, it is possible to envisage the development of the competent professional; a reflective practitioner who is both creative and efficient.

In contrast to the development of professionals, Edward Farley argues that the primary aim of clergy education should be *theologia*, which is marked by a settled cognitive disposition, *habitus*. This notion remains a major theme of the debate concerning ministerial education, although writers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century move beyond the cognitive boundaries and, echoing the work of social scientist Pierre Bourdieu, suggest that *habitus* as disposition and intuitive knowledge allows for genuine, improvised, creative and professional engagement with the world.

Both competence and *habitus* imply a theology of theological education; this paper introduces some major themes in preparation for later, in depth, exploration.

It is evident that the introduction of core competencies affords the opportunity for William Booth College to review its approach to offer training, developing a theology, policy and practice that ensures its ongoing faithful participation in God's mission for The Salvation Army.



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## Appendix

## **1.0 Introduction**

In exploring the implications of the introduction of core competencies for Salvation Army officers for the theology, policy and practice of Salvation Army officer training, a number of fields of literature are relevant. These include the use of competencies for professional development and the theology of theological education as well as those relating to the context of my research.

### **1.1 Aim**

The aims of the literature review are:

- To define briefly the context, including the nature and ethos of The Salvation Army.
- To highlight the debate surrounding the use of competencies for professional development and education in social work and in ministerial education and their relationship to theories of adult learning.
- To outline the discussion relating to the theology of theological education, with particular reference to the work of Edward Farley.
- Beginning from the relevant literature, to suggest how a critical conversation between these subjects may inform the adoption of a competence framework in Salvation Army officer training.

### **1.2 Rationale**

The introduction of core competencies for Salvation Army officers in the United Kingdom requires a response from its training institution, William Booth College. The task has theological as well as educational implications. John Swinton and Harriet Mowat (2006:25) define the task of practical theology as

“critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world with a view to ensuring faithful participation in the continuing mission of the triune God.”

The mission statement of William Booth College reflects an institutional belief that we are empowering and equipping people to share in the mission of God as reflected in The Salvation Army (Appendix p.203). In aiming to develop a policy and practice for initial officer training at William Booth College that seeks to respond to the denominational strategy in ways that are educationally valid and reliable whilst continuing to prepare Salvation Army officers for “faithful participation” in God’s mission in the world, this research will satisfy the definition of practical theology outlined above.

### **1.3 Method**

James and Evelyn Whitehead's (1995:5) method of theological reflection for pastoral ministry describes the dynamic conversation which moves from "listening to assertion to pastoral response" as the voices of experience, the Christian tradition and culture each contribute to the making of pastoral decisions.

This literature review will attend to the three major sources of information outlined above, exploring salient issues which may inform the competence debate. The conclusion will begin to explore how the conversation between them may proceed with each voice being heard, so that a response may be discerned which enables William Booth College to be faithful to its mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **1.4 My personal context**

As a third generation Salvationist and second generation Salvation Army officer, my understanding of the context is shaped by both heritage and personal commitment. In my appointment as Training Programme Director at William Booth College I am the course leader of the Diploma of Higher Education in Salvation Army Officer Training and consequently responsible for the academic content of initial officer training in the United Kingdom. Although I am able to discern trends and tensions from within the organisation, my personal involvement may also blind me to possible critiques. My academic background in education and pastoral theology facilitates understanding of pedagogical implications and theological debate, but the exploration of social work competence based education and training takes me into new and unexplored territory. I am committed to conversation between the disciplines in order to generate new insight that is consistent with my personal conviction to privilege the need for faithfulness to the "God given plot of the gospel" (Whitehead and Whitehead 1995:5).

### **1.5 Definition of competencies**

Definitions of competencies are diverse and wide ranging. An instrumental perspective defines competence as the capacity to perform a work related task to a given standard (Ollin and Tucker 1997:188; Weightman 1994:2). This has been criticised as encouraging a "good enough" standard (Hyland 1994:19) and as providing a static benchmark which does not allow for personal initiative or flexibility (Hodkinson and Issitt 1995a:148). However, a distinction between competence as a disposition, that is task related, and competence as a capacity of persons is helpful in providing a way forward (Mitchell 1992:2; Hyland 1994: 21; Whiddett and

Hollyforde 1999:5). The latter allows for a more holistic definition which encompasses the ability to perform in a variety of contexts, using skills, knowledge and values (Horwath and Morrison quoting DOE1991 Guidance Note 8; Mitchell 1992:2; O Hagan 1996:8; Rychen and Tiana 2004:21).

## **2.0 The Experience of The Salvation Army**

### **2.1 Competencies and The Salvation Army**

The 2001 International Training Principals' Conference recommended that "each territory and command establish a process to identify the core values and core competencies (skills) required of Officers and that these be foundational to the development of the training programme." Ian and Sonja Southwell (2007: 4) write that "from a Salvation Army standpoint, passionate spirituality is of prime importance..." but argue for a functional understanding of competency based training in which learning outcomes, content and assessment are designed in order to close the "training gap" (Southwell 2006:1). This should take into account cultural needs and allow for flexibility and development (Southwell and Southwell 2007: 7-8). The adoption of core competencies as a basis for Officer training appears to have been a pragmatic decision, focusing on a perceived need for efficiency.

In response to the Conference recommendation, the 2005 preface to the Orders and Regulations for the Training of Officers states "the primacy of establishing and regularly reviewing agreed competencies in knowledge, skill, attitude and spirituality as a valid basis for the training programme and the minimum requirement for commissioning." However, the design of the Vocation Development Pathway in the United Kingdom allows for ongoing development and does not require competence in all fields at the conclusion of initial officer training.

### **2.2 The Vocation Development Pathway.**

In 2003 Territorial Leaders' Conference of the Salvation Army in the United Kingdom presented recommendations which acknowledge that the Officers' covenant relationship with The Salvation Army is different from the contractual relationship of the employee, but also state that the organisation has responsibility

"to ensure that officers are effectively trained for ministry, encouraged in their personal development, fulfilled in their particular vocation, assured of their role and challenged by the demands of their mission" (TSA Vocation Development Path Project 2004:4).

The recommendations are linked to personal development, appraisal and accountability, equal opportunities and strategic planning at the institutional level.

### **2.3 The Vocational Path: core competencies**

Recommendation 3 has specific implications for William Booth College;

"that core competencies for officers be developed to underpin Officer selection, development, appraisal and training and development programmes" (TSA Vocation Development Path Project 2004:8).

The publication of competencies in September 2007 will impact upon the initial officer training provided by William Booth College in terms of policy, educational provision and theological focus. Although college staff contributed to the discussion, the competencies were developed by the Personnel Unit and concentrate upon the officer task rather than upon educational criteria for the training process.

### **2.4 Ethos and characteristics of The Salvation Army**

A number of features of the ethos and characteristics of The Salvation Army have relevance to the adoption of competencies in education and training. It is evident that contrasts and tensions pervade both identity and models of leadership and organisation. Whilst claiming to be a mission, The Salvation Army also functions as a denomination. The hierarchical order and precision of the military structure is coupled with a claim of pragmatism and adaptability. Officers are defined by function and yet some claim special status. Training for mission is combined with education for congregational leadership as officers respond to the dual focus. Hough and Cobb (1985:20) suggest that the quality of education for the professional leadership of the church depends upon a sound understanding of the church's identity. This would suggest that each of these factors has implications for officer training and can inform the competence debate.

#### **2.4.1 Theological Focus: mission or church denomination?**

When converts from the Christian Mission failed to settle in the churches, despite Booth's intentions not to found a new "sect," (i.e. a denomination - Begbie 1.1920:375), discipleship programmes and organizational structures soon developed. Hill (2006:39) notes ambiguity in claims to denominational status, which although implied from the 1870s, only became explicit in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This journey of self identity is evidenced in the contrast between the writings of international leaders Orsborn (1954:74) "we are... a permanent mission to the

unconverted... but not... a sect, not a Church” and Clifton (2007:3)”...we are a church and it is simply impossible to sustain any argument to the contrary.”

Two theological themes; holistic outreach and holiness, suggest that the concepts of both mission and church are foundational to the self image of the movement.

Booth's theology was rooted in Wesleyan Methodism (Begbie 1 1920:87; Murdoch 1994:21; Green 2005:21-36), revivalism and the 19<sup>th</sup> century holiness movement (Murdoch 1994:21; Walker 2001:23). His commitment to the salvation of the marginalized (Begbie 1 1920:357; Murdoch 1994; Green 2005:166) was eventually supplemented with provision for “the relief of temporal misery,” (Booth 1890:preface) in order to facilitate spiritual salvation. Whether this was a pragmatic decision (Begbie 2 1920:83; Murdoch 1994:169) or a corollary to Booth's theology of redemption (Green 2005:179) is unclear, but it has shaped the movement's focus on holistic mission, linking the temporal and the spiritual (see above p.2; Ferguson 2006:7; Morgan 2006:12).

Evangelistic fervour was complemented by belief in the possibility of holy living (Booth 1902:8). This is enshrined in the Articles of Faith, (Appendix F 270-271) and reflected in Salvationist writing, music and practice (Barr 1999:12,4; Clifton 2004).

The report of the Spiritual Life Commission, convened in 1996 to “review the ways in which The Salvation Army cultivates and sustains the spiritual life of its people,” (Street 1999:vii) summarises the reality; it is both a mission and the spiritual home of its people.

“The vitality of our spiritual life as a Movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in evangelism and service, but the springs of our spiritual life are to be found in our turning to God in worship, in the disciplines of life in the Spirit, and in the study of God's word” (Street 1999:7).

Can a competence framework provide a sufficient basis for the education and training of leaders in this movement?

#### **2.4.2 A military movement: fighting for territory or efficient order?**

The distinctive military metaphor, described by Seaman (1973:309-310) as “....in the best sense of the word, a brilliant form of religious vulgarization,” functioned as a metaphorical device, but also reflected belief in a real battle for territory with unwholesome aspects of popular culture (Walker 2001:182-184).

Almost immediately this image was supplemented by the hierarchy and efficiency of military organization. Mission evangelists became “officers” and members became “soldiers.” Orders and Regulations (Sandall 1950:31-37) for Christian living and

ministry were developed with Booth (1895:6), aware of criticisms directed at the developing militarism, claiming that they signified "...the best way known up to date." Advantages of this form of government include "missionary effectiveness" (Needham 1987:73), a clear chain of command, organized accountability and clarity of direction (Satterlee 2004:21-22). But it may also lack flexibility and relevance to the contemporary situation (Needham 1987:73), discourage innovation, isolate leaders and lead to "group think" by stifling criticism and debate (Satterlee 2004:21-22).

Ryan (2001: 37, 47) suggests that the organization has "grown old," comfortable and conformist and calls for a return to radical Salvationism; "a guerilla war." In contrast, Robinson (2006:44-45) questions the ability of the military metaphor "to help us address and cope with the most pressing needs of our day." In a world where militant religion may be linked to fundamentalism she identifies a need to "seek a meaning which speaks to the terrible sorrows and brokenness of our time."

Robinson (2006:43) detects an "ambiguous embrace" which allows for the "simultaneous affirmation of uniformity and originality, of innovation and obedience." Booth advocated the principle of adaptation (Booth: 1895:4 see also Carpenter 1993:140, 146), although changes that were construed as rebellion were not tolerated (Sandall 1950:64-65). The claim to "pragmatic adaptability" (Morgan 2006:12) remains part of the mythos of the movement.

Nevertheless it might be argued that the military culture has led to a commitment to order and duty which does not allow for easy adaptability. At times uniformed excellence and musical precision have replaced the *ad hoc* approaches of former generations. Open air "battles" have been replaced by stylized outdoor services and in worship, "praise meetings" have sometimes been supplanted by "musical festivals." But if conformity becomes more important than flexibility and inclusivity, there is danger that the medium will displace the mission.

In a hierarchical organisational climate which privileges efficiency and order, the introduction of a competence framework as functional tool for personnel development facilitates maintenance of standards, but may also stifle the creativity and adaptability which the institution claims.

#### **2.4.3 Salvation Army Officers: functional ministry or clerical status?**

Hill (2006) traces the clericalisation of the Officer role. Initially, Officers were defined in terms of function and motivation (2006:39) and this established a "cultural mythology, even when the reality has drifted from that ideal," (2006:79) where the

reality is a *de facto* claim to clerical status (2006:191). This results in ambiguity in Officer identity.

Although Hill (2006:119) provides the first sustained study of the subject, he notes the emergence of interest in the exact nature of officership since the 1960s in articles appearing primarily in *The Officer* magazine, coinciding with a deepening awareness of theological issues and the wider church and developing questioning of the received wisdom.

Larsson (1965:97) detects a shift from emphasis upon missional need, mediated by the organisation, to personal calling which is then confirmed and accepted by the institution. This is evidenced in Hinton's (2004:1) statement that officership is "a *specific* calling from God and a specific vocation" (emphasis original).

Examples of those who define officership in terms of function include Boardman (1972:516), Clifton (1974:410), Yuill (1985:62), but Guy (1986:18) notes difficulties in discerning exact functions. Stone (1986: 366) suggests "to prepare God's people for works of service" whereas Ashworth (1996:5) posits a representative function which focuses the ministry of the whole people of God. Needham (1998a: 24-25 ) points to a functional understanding of servant leadership which is rooted in mission needs, whilst not ignoring the needs of the local congregation, whilst Barr (1998:27) maintains that officership is a mode of being and self-perception, a function defined by the Officers' Covenant and a lifestyle of availability for mission needs. The latter has been suggested to be *the* distinguishing feature (Needham 1998a:27-30). However this is now less evident due to diversification of options within officership and consultation before appointment.

A further step towards clericalisation occurred when the concept of ordination was introduced into the Commissioning Ceremony for officers in 1978 (Brown in Hill 2006:161). Considerable debate followed with support from Keanie (1986), Robinson (1993:223), Pickard (1995) and others and dissenting voices including Yuill (1985) and Barr (1996). Needham (1998a:23-24) argues that ordination and commissioning is one act, commissioning to a function.

Whilst it is true to say that the dominant understanding of offership remains linked to function, Hill's case for clericalisation highlights the ambiguity of the officer role and cannot be ignored in the assessment of the suitability of competencies for officer training.



#### 2.4.4 Training for war or educating for a profession?

Two significant issues shaped the beginnings of Salvation Army officer training. Firstly, the organisational need for mission orientated evangelists; activists for “the war.” Significantly, the current Orders and Regulations for the Training of Salvation Army Officers (2005 Section 1) record that “The supreme aim of training shall be to develop officers of such Blood and Fire spirit that they will be enabled to sustain and advance the purposes of The Salvation Army.” Secondly, Railton articulated fear of “a college sort of thing which... can never produce anything but parsons” (in Sandall 1947:224). Booth feared that ministerial education would lead to loss of zeal, (Murdoch 1994:21; Hill 2006:88) writing that “in the training of cadets the spiritual effect is above all considered, we do not profess to give education. The only thing we care to teach as to theological questions is, that they are to be avoided as much as possible” (Booth 1882:165). Railton’s comment “we want to train men to be like us” (Sandall 1947:224) and Catherine Booth’s (1925:106) accent upon the example of the leader, suggest a process of enculturation consistent with the military focus upon conformity and obedience. The primacy of “training of the heart” (Booth B 1914:42) has remained, and is evident in the requirement to produce Officers who “know God, know themselves and know their mission” (O & R 2005 Section 1). However, the adoption of contemporary educational practices and more flexible denominational self-understanding can sometimes lead to tension between the aims of personal formation and enculturation into organisational norms.

Booth’s unrealised dream to develop a “University of Humanity” (Booth n.d.), illustrates his pragmatic and utilitarian approach to learning. In order to enable effective work, courses with academic and practical components would allow education in “practical godliness” to be combined with training in skills for mission. This idea influenced ongoing approaches to officer training and resonates with contemporary competence based approaches to development.

There has been gradual acceptance of the need for Officers to have an academic foundation that enables intelligent engagement with society and individuals (AGC 1928:194; Coutts 1978:39). Orders and Regulations require “an acceptable level of academic achievement, providing a foundation of understanding and tools for learning” (O & R 2000, Section 1). In the United Kingdom, the development and validation of the Diploma of Higher Education in Salvation Army Officer Training (1998) responded to contemporary expectations that ministerial education should result in appropriate qualifications and enabled the functional training ethos to be

supplemented, but not supplanted, by that of vocational education. This may also have resulted from changes in the demographics of the membership of the movement and of officer candidates, who are now more likely to have prior academic or professional qualifications.

Nevertheless Burke (2005:42) argues that The Salvation Army will not survive as a distinctive denomination if it does not engage “seriously in thoughtful systematic reflection” and address the tendency to rely upon non-Salvationist scholarship. Similarly Raymond (2005:12) notes ambivalence which has privileged training over higher education. Identifying education with “underpinning knowledge” and training with “developing skills and achieving tasks,” Cairns (2007:18) notes the activist tendency “to diminish the importance of education and promote training as the ‘sleeves rolled up’ part of who The Salvation Army is.”

## **2.5 Summary**

A pervasive and dominant functional ethos might suggest that competence provides a suitable foundation for education and training in The Salvation Army. However factors including the importance of formation, the need to acknowledge denominational responsibilities, the clericalisation of the officer role and a growing call for theological education and debate, indicate the need for further investigation. In order to explore the challenges and possibilities presented by competence based education and training in this context, two further conversation partners will be consulted, beginning with a discussion of the nature of competencies in other Christian denominations in the United Kingdom and their use in social work education.

## **3.0 Competence Based Education and Training**

### **3.1 Competencies in theological education**

In the Church of England, the report of the *Working Party on Assessment* (1987), identified a need to discern the nature of ordained ministry required by the church, the shape of a suitable educational programme and appropriate means of assessment. In response, a fundamental review of ordination training resulted in the report *Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church* (2003). Noting the “rising expectation for ministerial and professional competence in the clergy” (2003:36) in addition to the need for personal discipleship, this report sets out a framework for ministerial education based upon being, knowing and doing, which facilitates formation by the Spirit of God and conformity to the public role. These reviews have

led to a climate in which competence based education and training has been debated, and sometimes adopted, as a way forward.

Riem (2003) evaluated the usefulness of competencies in practical ministerial development in the Southern Theological Education and Training Scheme. Arguing that competencies can lead to a mechanistic, consumer centred view of ministerial work rather than a theological understanding of growth into a pattern of responsibility, he concludes that they are of “limited usefulness” in ministerial education. Alternatively, he suggests the development of “capacities,” qualities of being rather than doing, with the capacity to be faithful to calling and openness to *metanoia*, a change of mind and heart, as central to ministerial development.

In response, Bryant (2004:29) argues that competencies offer learners “a focused way of integrating cognitive, practical and spiritual elements in their formation as ministers.” The Newcastle Diocese’s development of competence based education for Ordained Local Ministry and Continuing Ministerial Education courses has enabled a learner-centred pedagogy in which integration of action and theory in a praxis approach to theology lead to transformative learning experiences. This supports a model of education as “leading people out”, which in turn resonates with the Christian call to growth in discipleship and holiness, whilst allowing exploration of the full range of ministerial skills.

In addition, the Scottish Episcopal Church Ministry Development Review Group (2003), concluded that the adoption of a competence framework for ministerial development has encouraged deep learning. Fuller and Fleming (2005) argue that it provides integration between the academy and the church, bringing together the elements of education, practical training and formation. The development of “soft” competencies, describing characteristics or attributes, provides the basis for the assessment of formative elements. This reflects Riem’s suggestion of “capacities” for ministerial development.

Allen (2004) found that the congregations of Baptist churches tend to evaluate their minister on the basis of personal qualities and competence in ministerial tasks. This led to the development of competencies for ministry and a call for a balanced programme of formation, knowledge and leadership skills in the theological colleges of the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

### **3.2 Competencies and the caring professions**

The debate in ministerial education is paralleled in social work training. The discussion which followed the introduction of competence based training during the 1990s is well documented and the pastoral nature of the work (see Hodkinson and

Issitt 1995 “the caring professions”) offers an analogy to some aspects of ministerial training and particularly to the holistic mission of the Salvation Army. The “voice” of social work will thus contribute to the present discussion.

Following the establishment in 1986 of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications with a mandate to design and implement a framework for assessing and defining standards for all occupations, the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work responded by maintaining that “social work training was to be competence-led, competence dominated, and always competence seeking” (O Hagan 1996:2). The Requirements and Regulations for the Diploma in Social Work (1989:8; 1995:17) record that “CCETSW will concentrate on ensuring that students are assessed in the knowledge, skills and values needed to achieve competence in social work,” and that competent practice is “founded on values, carried out in a skilled manner and informed by knowledge, critical analysis and reflection.” This decision was not accepted without criticism, intellectual debate and difficulties for trainers in adjusting to new policy (O’Hagan 1996:3).

Hodkinson and Issitt (1995a:1) trace this development to the evolution of the new managerialism in the public sector which requires measurable demonstrations of quality of service, thus reducing the influence of professional codes of practice. Competence is defined by the employer, and is linked to the ideal of the market in which the practitioner is a technician whose performance can be measured against fixed, value free criteria (Hodkinson and Issitt 1995a:5,7,67; O Hagan 1996:7; Pattison 1996:28 ). Similarly, Dominelli (1997:172) argues that employers control the curriculum and, through reductionism, effectively replace academics with workplace training and in a scathing critique of competence based social work dismisses it entirely.

“Competency-based social work has little need for autonomous critical professionals whose central skill is to make sense of the disjointed set of facts distressed people present for assessment” (1997:174).

O’Hagan (1996:21) contends that the focus of assessment in social work is not competence, but the knowledge, skills and values on which it is based, whereas Horwath and Morrison (1999:58) suggest that more sophisticated understandings of the term “competence” will facilitate equally sophisticated understandings of professionalism. This appears to resonate with Riem’s suggestion of capacities, or the “soft” competencies of Fuller and Fleming.

Hodkinson and Issitt (1995a:7) propose a holistic notion of competence which allows for the development professional expertise. This is tested against best practice and includes critical reflection (Hodkinson and Issitt 1995b:149). Similarly, Hyland

(1995:54) calls for competencies which are “educational criteria derived from the elaborated theory of the reflective practitioner,” and Horwath and Morrison (1997:59) suggest that reflective practice forms the most appropriate model for contemporary social work practice. Jones and Joss (1995:29) note that according to this model “competence cannot be distinguished in principle from the knowledge base, values and attitudes and philosophy of the occupation.”

Arguing that a competence based, technically rational process for social work training ignores the ideological views of practitioners, particularly in regard to the necessary dialectical process in working with people, Hodkinson (1995:60) makes use of Bourdieu’s concept of *habitus*, suggesting that norms and values for action are socially constructed and are both individually subjective and formed by objective social networks and cultural traditions, including their power within the system. So then, the performance of the professional cannot be reified into a particular competence but is shaped by their *habitus*, and the *habitus* of those with whom they interact, becoming a series of regulated improvisations (Bourdieu 1992) which enable genuine engagement with the individual and context.

### **3.3 Competencies and education**

Competence based education and training (CBET) is influenced by behavioural learning theories, in which a stimulus is associated with a particular response, (Hyland 1995:49; O’ Hagan 1996:6) so that the assessment of learning is defined by outcomes (Wolf 1995:1).

Pattison (1996:28) argues that this is a military model which views the learner as a performer whose conformity to institutionally defined, hierarchical standards is more important than the development of wisdom and understanding. Collins (1991:4) suggests that it is rooted in a cult of efficiency and fixation on technique which privileges technical rationality and calls for a focus upon vocational practice “which will eschew the restrictive determinism of competency-based practice” (1991: 47).

Similarly Hyland argues that CBET leads to an impoverished conception of human thought and action which does not account for human reasoning and implies that competence is a single achievement. Furthermore, this behaviouristic foundation can lead to loss of theoretical framework, de-skilling and inhibition of reflective practice (Hyland 1995:50-52). Horwath and Morrison (1999:44) maintain that behaviouralism, which relies upon the prescriptive power of the teacher and positive reinforcement, has a valid place for training in routine tasks, but is not sufficient for situations in which prescribed actions are not necessarily appropriate. They argue for a model of experiential learning in which knowledge is transformed into the

attributes required by the competent professional (1999:55). Drawing on the work of Kolb (1993) they suggest that the process of reflective learning is of central relevance to professional development, where competence will require complex judgements involving knowledge, skills and values in changing contexts. In particular, Kolb (1993:144) challenges the notion of defining learning in terms of outcomes, which, he suggests, can become a definition of non-learning.

Horwath and Morrison (1999: 58, 61) affirm the possibility of interaction between theory and practice, and following Eraut (1994), suggest that the professional learns most readily through problem-solving, which enables the development of theories of practice. Schon's (1987:22) theory of professional artistry is relevant here; he argues that through reflection-in-action the professional learns to move beyond the competence of technical rationality in responding to complex situations by "constructing and testing new categories of understanding, strategies of action and ways of framing problems" (1987: 39).

This also resonates with Heywood's (1997:46) definition of vocational education in ministerial training, and with a sophisticated definition of competence as capacity.

"skills and competencies ...psychological and spiritual maturity ...and necessary background knowledge...linked by the habit of thinking (and acting) theologically - the facility of *applying* the required body of understanding in a mature and sensitive way to underpin the exercise of appropriate skills and competencies" (emphasis original).

### **3.4 Summary**

It would seem, then, that the debate in social work training highlights the need for a definition of competence that is adequate for the complex needs of professional training and that this resonates with the experience of the Church of England (2003:36,41). Salvation Army Orders and Regulations for Officer Training call for "agreed competencies *in* knowledge, skill, attitude and spirituality" (see 2.1 above, emphasis added). This implies discrete tasks to be achieved rather than a holistic view of competence as capacity. However, the complexity of the Officer task suggests that a solely function-centred understanding of competencies would not provide a sufficient foundation for officer training and therefore the exploration of a more nuanced model is required.

### **4.00 Theological Education (Initial Ministerial Education)**

A third "voice" in the discussion is located in writings which explore the nature of theological education.

#### 4.1 Edward Farley

Edward Farley's *Theologia* (1983) and *The Fragility of Knowledge* (1988) began a discussion about theological education which was sustained through the 1990s and is still echoed in current publications. *Theologia* focuses primarily upon ministerial education. Arguing that complaints about theological education are symptomatic of a loss of direction, he calls for a shift from a theory-to-practice model of theological education which trains students "for the activities of ministry viewed as tasks of an institutionally defined profession"(1983:19), to ministerial education defined by *theologia*, "a state and disposition of the soul which has the character of knowledge" (1983:35).

Critiquing the dominant four-fold pattern of Biblical studies, dogmatics, church history and practical theology as a functionalist paradigm, defined by strategic know-how and a technological orientation to pedagogy (1983:156), Farley argues that it allows a sociologically defined description of ministry to set the agenda for training (1983:127). Individual disciplines are defined by their usefulness to professional functions rather than their theological character. In contrast, *Theologia*, allows for the primacy of theological paradigms in which personal, sapiential knowledge and understanding is developed when faith "opens itself to reflection and inquiry" (1983:156). Although a somewhat nebulous concept, *theologia* is marked by a settled disposition, *habitus*. However this appears to be achieved cognitively through the growth of wisdom and dialectical understanding in which hermeneutical skills are developed (1983:183). Farley concludes with a proposal "to restore the *habitus* of theological understanding" to clergy education, arguing that the recovery of *theologia* would reform not only educational systems but the church itself (1983:195).

*The Fragility of Knowledge* (1988) defines theology as the "reflective wisdom" (1998: ix) which should "attend the believer's existence and action in the world "(1988:133), and therefore any theological education is essentially the development of modes of interpretation. Academic rigour should be provided by foundational studies in order to prevent anti-intellectualism and shallow interpretation. Farley's concept of a claim of faith as "an attested mystery" allows interrogation of historical claims and interpretation of present situations to contribute to the notion of a hermeneutic of truth.

#### 4.2 The post- Farley debate

Beginning from a perceived widening gap between academia and ecclesia, Groome (1987) builds on Farley's concept of *theologia* as the "subversive memory in the history of theology that can subvert the theory-to-practice paradigm" (1987:58), and, suggesting that the primary locus for theology is neither academia nor ecclesia, but human activity in the world, argues that each generation appropriates the truths of the tradition for present reality. Groome offers a mode of critical correlation, shared praxis, as a means of forming people in *habitus*, suggesting that it is necessary to hold theory and *praxis* in creative tension and therefore enable conversation between church and academy.

Heitink (1993) acknowledges Farley's thesis in conjunction with the historical development of the modern university, noting the shift in emphasis from a desire to know the truth to training for a profession. Following R.E. Palmer, he suggests that European theologians think primarily in encyclopaedic terms and therefore clarify difference, whilst North Americans are more likely to focus upon connections in hermeneutical discussion.

Although not identifying the same geographical divide, *Between Athens and Berlin* (Kelsey 1993) similarly identifies two major foci for theological education. Reflecting the *paideia* of Athens, one emphasis focuses upon the learner who appropriates faith in indirect ways, developing a particular character and acting in the world in appropriate manner. In contrast, "Berlin" focuses upon two distinct poles; *Wissenschaft*, or the development of knowledge through excellence in critical "scientific" enquiry, and the development of socially necessary practices for a given profession. Reflecting the values of modernity, Berlin develops academic excellence, rational thinking and intellectual values. God is apprehended cognitively and by this model, following Schleiermacher, theological education is rooted in an ecclesiastical understanding of the church rather than the believer's knowledge of God (Kelsey 1993:24). Although it might be suggested that Farley's concept of *theologia* resonates with the Athens model as an example of *paideia*, Kelsey (1993:128) argues that the cognitive dimension leads to a combination of *Wissenschaft* and *paideia*.

Kelsey identifies the professional school of Hough and Cobb (1985) as the antithesis of Farley, an example of the Berlin type of education, in which the minister, as leader of those who share a Christian identity, is developed as a reflective practical theologian and theological education is education for church leadership.

Kelsey (1993:221) maintains that Athens and Berlin are "ultimately unsynthesizable types of excellent education," suggesting that the best that can be hoped for is an



unstable truce. Ultimately they model incommensurable understandings of the *telos* of clergy education and the nature of the human subject.

Chopp (1995) notes the common themes of “fragmentation, validity claims in theology, theory and praxis and lack of integration” (1995:10) in both Farley and Kelsey and suggests the need for a second generation of conversations which investigate the “concrete reality” of theological education using feminist practices in order to identify the “struggles and desires for transformation” (1995:11). Advocating a change of process as well as curricula she advocates the notion of pragmatic critical theory which not only analyses the past but through justice, dialogue and imagination envisions the church in new spaces and with new opportunities. This, she suggests, is close to the *theologia* of Farley, although not to the notions of cognitive ordering which he envisages as the route to *habitus* (1995:103).

#### **4.3 A new model of *habitus*?**

A 2006 study, *Educating Clergy*, investigated the ways in which seminaries foster the development of the capacity described by Dykstra as “pastoral imagination.” This is the integration of “various cognitive, relational, spiritual and professional understandings and skills” (Foster *et al* 2006:12, 25). Defining seminaries as “professional schools” this work suggests that they are hybrid institutions; they share the academy’s tradition of cognitive rationality, the know-how of the practitioner and normative knowledge, which is attention to *habitus*, the forming of dispositions and intuitive knowledge (Foster *et al* 2006:23). In effect they “embrace the necessary interdependence” of *paideia* and *Wissenschaft* (Foster *et al* 2006:48).

Brittain (2007) in critiquing Foster *et al.* asks “which practices, whose *habitus*” and notes that although engagement with practice is required as well as the critical distance of the academy, no attempt is made to define the parameters of appropriate practices or of *habitus*. The limitations of the community or the authority by which these are decided are not explained.

Dismissing the “wretched competencies” of the first version of the Hind Report, and the development of professionals as a form of self-justification, Roberts suggests that *habitus*, as a form of instinct, “a default setting” which is learned by careful attention, is a basis for creative, flexible and genuine engagement with the world. Theological education is therefore not concerned with developing professionals, but with forming “God-centred people for people centred ministries, so that the people of God may be God centred” (Roberts 2007:33).

#### 4.4 Summary

The recurring theological emphasis upon *habitus* resonates with Hodgkinson's discussion of Bourdieu's work in social work practice although Graham (2002:101) suggests that Bourdieu's concept, in contrast to that of Farley, is "value-directed but not inflexibly determined" so that practices are creative responses which embody complex layers of meaning. Practice then becomes a response to individual circumstances and people rather than the performance of the tradition as in Farley. More recently Foster *et al*, (2006) and Roberts (2007) follow Farley in suggesting that *habitus* is derived from enactment of the tradition, but also incorporate that flexibility which enables a creative response in ministry.

However, whilst Roberts is critical of models of ministerial training that encourage professionalism, Foster *et al* argue for the interdependence of models, viewing *habitus* as contributing to the development of the professional.

It would seem then that whilst those following Farley would eschew any form of competence based theological education as symptomatic of the "failed" theory-to-practice model, when, as in Foster *et al*, ministerial education is viewed as professional education, the development of appropriate practice may allow for a broad definition of competence as appropriate capacities and skills for ministry are learned.

#### 5.0 Conclusion: Themes and Questions

"Training is not the bringing of all up to a certain level of competency. Standardization is not our aim...we must aim at growth and development proportionate to the capacity of the Cadet" (C Booth 1925:107-108).

How can the interweaving of The Salvation Army context, core competencies in social work training and the theology of theological education inform the development of a theology and practice for officer training so that the wisdom of Catherine Booth's words is not lost?

##### *Competence, professionalism and The Salvation Army*

A strong tendency towards adopting pragmatic solutions has led to the development of a functional ethos in The Salvation Army. Strategies which "work" are adopted, but not necessarily explored theologically (Street 2007:9), including a competence framework for officer training which may imply a technically rational approach to education. This also reflects evangelical tendencies towards a theology of activism, valuing efficient performance and the development of rules and norms

which ensure acceptance in the community. However, the tension in The Salvation Army between mission and congregational care coupled with a functional or clerical understanding of the officer role suggest that a wider view must be taken and that functional training alone is not sufficient for contemporary needs.

The debate in both social work and other Christian denominations moves towards the recasting of competence in terms of capacities, so that the development of the reflective practitioner, in whom the cognitive, practical and ideological or spiritual aspects are interwoven, is enabled. This leads to an understanding of the “professional” who respects the boundaries of the institution but is also creative and flexible in response to people and circumstances. It might be suggested that this model resonates well with the “professional school” (Hough and Cobb 1985, Forster et al 2006), although this focus is denounced by Farley (1983:176) as non-theological, and Roberts (2007:36) as a form of self-justification. Further work is required to discern whether this may prove to be a fruitful discussion for The Salvation Army, enabling a response to the requirement for competence based training that allows for creativity, difference and flexibility

#### *Competence, theology and habitus*

The decision to adopt a competence framework for officer development has theological implications, yet the lack of a sustained and comprehensive theology of Salvation Army Officer training means there is no substantial benchmark with which to compare it.

However, from the literature reviewed a number of issues can be discerned. The ongoing discussion of the nature of *habitus* in ministerial education and the importance of formation to The Salvation Army suggest the need for further theological exploration. It would appear that the notion of *habitus* contrasts with a competence based approach in that the development of ministerial character suggests a theology of being in which focus is upon the individual and who they become, but competence suggests a theology of doing, privileges efficiency and measures the skills that are acquired to satisfy the demands of the institution. *Habitus* advocates a personal understanding of God and the development of that wisdom and pastoral imagination which performs and transforms the tradition, whereas competencies suggest a more obviously mediated experience which is linked to denominational norms and organisational expectations. A similar contrast marks the understanding of the other as fellow traveller and disciple, or as client/convert who is the “object” in relation to which competence is displayed. A competence based model of ministry, suggesting the proficiency of the

professional, contrasts with that of the “wounded healer” (Nouwen 1994:42; Pattison 1988), whose vulnerability and weakness enables ministry to others and in community with others. If complete competence is required of the officer, this may influence how the ministry of the whole people of God is conceived and understood. The Salvationist tradition of holiness speaks of a process of growth and transformation in which growth towards perfection is ongoing and therefore seems to contrast with definitions of competence which imply a state of completion and proficiency; nevertheless issues of development, integrity and accountability are also a mark of holiness and these may resonate more comfortably with a call for competence and so provide another model of ministry for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In Part 2 of this research, theological questions will be explored and debated in conversation with practice and policy in order to ensure a practical *theological* response to the adoption of core competencies.

#### *Competence and the contemporary mission of The Salvation Army*

The competencies to be published by the United Kingdom territory in September 2007 have been endorsed by the leadership and therefore can be assumed to represent the organisational understanding of the key components of Salvation Army officership. It is vital to understand how these competencies will relate to the reality of ministry in the movement at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. If The Salvation Army is to ensure its ongoing “faithful participation in the continuing mission of the triune God” (Swinton and Mowat 2006:25), it needs to be able respond to contemporary culture, faithfully re-imagining its mission with freedom and creativity. Would a competence based Officer training be sufficient to enable this process? How might this be justified theologically and educationally? How would this relate to the priority of formation for ministry in officer training?

The response to these questions, in interaction with theory and the experience of significant conversation partners should enable the development of a theology, philosophy and practice of Officer training which responds appropriately to the adoption of core competencies for Officer development. In order to set this in historical context, the next paper will critically investigate the history of Salvation Army Officer Training in the United Kingdom, tracing the journey from “battle school” to higher education institution.

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## Appendix

### **William Booth College Mission Statement**

Empowering and equipping God's people to:

- Be disciples of Jesus Christ
- Lead people into faith in Jesus Christ
- Serve the community
- Fight for social justice

And developing leaders who

- Are passionate about this mission;
- Are equipped to deliver this mission;
- Will empower others to deliver this mission

## **Appendix B**

**SID Number: 9600480**

### **Stage 1 Unit 2 Presentation and Publication of Research**

**Training men to be like us: the aims and  
priorities of Salvation Army officer training,  
1978-2008.**

**July 2008**

## **Abstract**

**Karen Shakespeare**

**Stage 1 Unit 2  
Presentation and Publication of Research  
July 2008**

**Training men to be like us: the aims and priorities of Salvation Army officer training, 1978-2008.**

I am convinced that, if The Salvation Army is to thrive in the twenty-first century, it must continue to faithfully re-imagine its mission with freedom and creativity. Central to this process will be the training of officers who are able to interpret contemporary society to the Salvationist community, and The Salvation Army to the world.

This article explores the recent history of officer training in the United Kingdom, using qualitative research to investigate the context, ethos and direction of the training process from the perspective of Principals of William Booth College, the sole provider of Salvation Army officer training in the United Kingdom.

Using a quotation from an early Salvation Army officer, George Scott Railton, as a lens to focus the discussion, this work investigates major aspects of Salvation Army officer training, in order to discern whether, in the twenty-first century, it is different in essence and intention from that of the fledgling days of the movement.

A conversation between four themes which emerged from the research data, the general historical context, significant events in the evolution of William Booth College, and relevant texts, leads to a tentative conclusion that each new generation of Salvation Army officers is both like, and not like, their predecessors. The perceived importance of the balance between performing and transforming the tradition; the acknowledged contribution of an implicit pedagogy to student development; the relationship of the college to the mission of The Salvation Army; and expressed priorities for officer training, suggest that the essential values and intention of officer training have not changed. However the content and context of the training ensures that Salvation Army officers of the twenty-first century are very different from their Victorian forebears.

The context of Railton's statement is an expressed desire to develop leaders with a fundamental commitment to The Salvation Army's participation in the *missio dei*. This priority remains intact.



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## 1.0 Introduction

In November 1877, George Scott Railton, the secretary of The Christian Mission, wrote to William Booth suggesting that by acquiring a “drill hall” in London to train young men it would be possible to build a

“*good* organisation capable of all sorts of enterprises....No college, no book but the Bible, nothing but living teaching - no putting away anything of the rough natural - only the development of spiritual and natural power and willing to do our way and feel as we do about things.”

To Bramwell Booth he wrote

“I shall always I trust continue dead against any approach to a college sort of thing which... can never produce anything but parsons. We want to *train men to be like us.....*” (my italics, quoted in Sandall 1947:224).

These sentiments shaped the beginnings of Salvation Army officer training and have influenced its subsequent development, but do George Scott Railton’s words still apply? If The Salvation Army is still training individuals “to be like us” what might this mean?

This paper will trace developments and priorities in officer training in the United Kingdom, from 1878 to 2008, in order to provide a historical context for a major research project which is concerned with discerning the ways in which The Salvation Army can prepare officers for faithful participation in mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and evaluating the role of core competencies in this training. Research findings will be discussed in dialogue with relevant texts, including “*Educating Clergy*” (Foster *et al* 2006) which explores the interaction of the “three apprenticeships” of professional education- cognitive, practical and normative- in seminary education.

A tentative conclusion, based upon the research findings, suggests that faithful improvisation of the tradition, the influence of the theological educator, continued commitment to mission in the contemporary context, and emphasis on a vocational approach to education leads to each new generation of Salvation Army officers being both like, and not like, “us”.

## 1.1 Historical context

In 1878 The Christian Mission was re-named The Salvation Army. In a development of the military metaphor the term “officer” came to denote people in positions of leadership, including volunteers who retained their secular employment (local officers) and paid full time leaders (officers). Roles were defined purely in terms of function and seniority, and no formal training was offered at any level. The first systematic attempt to provide practical training for male officer candidates

was led by Ballington Booth in 1879. By 1880 training homes were established in London for both men and women, although Railton (1912:75) suggests that initially these were intended only for candidates who were borderline in suitability or ability. The National Training Barracks opened at Clapton in 1881. Training lasted a few weeks, but was subsequently extended to six months (1886), three of which were spent in the Training Home and the remainder in placements. By 1903 the period of training was nine months and a programme of instruction had been developed. In 1929 the college moved to the purpose-built International Training College campus at Denmark Hill. Eventually a two year course was established (1960). Administrative changes in 1990 resulted in the re-named William Booth Memorial Training College, with responsibility to the United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland. The first externally validated course, the Diploma of Higher Education in Salvation Army Officer Training was introduced in September 1998. Further re-structuring brought together the Candidates' Unit, the School for Officer Training, the School of Faith Education and the School for In-Service Training and Development as William Booth College (2000), which remains the sole provider of initial Salvation Army officer training in the United Kingdom.

## **1.2 Context of this research**

The conceptual framework for this research is shaped by my belief that the training of officers is central to The Salvation Army's continual task of faithfully re-imagining its mission with freedom and creativity. A conversation between the nature and ethos of The Salvation Army, competence based education and training in the caring professions, and theological education suggests that there is need for "the development of a theology, philosophy and practice of officer training which responds appropriately to the adoption of core competencies for officer development" and "relates to the reality of ministry in the movement at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (Shakespeare 2007:13).

In seeking to discern a way forward that is continuous with the distinctive story of officer training, an informed interpretation of the past will provide the historical context. Both continuity and discontinuity are important in the establishment of understanding which can lead to new insight. Drawing on the experience and memories of interviewees, key themes have emerged which indicate some priorities for officer training and will therefore inform the ongoing debate.

### 1.3 Methodology

In developing this as a qualitative research project I have been able to move beyond the scope of historical and archived data, and gain insight into the context, ethos and direction of the training process from the perspective of one group of key stakeholders, whose influence and invested authority was significant in the process. Using semi-structured interviews, I have drawn upon the memories, experience and views of Principals of William Booth College.

Between 1978 and 2007 seven individuals held the appointment for a period between three and six years; the current Principal was appointed in July 2007. Six subjects were interviewed using the same set of questions, which were provided in advance of the meeting, and a seventh provided an email response. Each of the group is white, male and a former student of the college. One possible interviewee declined the invitation to participate in this research.

Events and changes in college structure have been verified using official data, but ultimately I am not attempting to provide an objective or definitive history but to "generate data which give an authentic insight into people's experiences" (Silverman 1993:91), and in so doing, to provide a historical context, which is ultimately my redaction of the available data, for work which is focused on the future.

Reflection upon the interaction of the theoretical framework with the practical situation (Wengraf 2001:224), enabled me to develop a series of interview questions which addressed the relationship of the college to the mission and tradition of The Salvation Army, priorities in the training process and reflection on personal experience. In view of the fact that it is not possible to ensure anonymity for interviewees, they were invited to read and approve the transcription and the final article. Two suggested minor amendments.

The transcripts were analysed thematically using the ladder of analytical abstraction (Carney in Miles and Huberman 1994:92). Significant words and phrases, from which themes and trends were identified, were noted in each transcript. During the process relationships between the data were also recorded. Subsequently, major emphases were discerned and are explored below. Some themes were anticipated when designing the research, but others have emerged during the interview process.

### 1.4 Personal context

There are elements of my own story which are relevant to this work. I was trained at William Booth College during the time-frame of the research and have been a member of staff alongside three interviewees. Some of the group have been

influential in my development as a Salvation Army officer and theological educator. Therefore I am both researcher and involved participant in the life of the college, and my understanding and interpretation of the interview data could be influenced by personal experience and by prior knowledge of some of the opinions of a number of interviewees.

### **1.5 Memory and interpretation**

It is important to acknowledge that some of the responses relied upon the memory of the participants. Alessandro Portelli (1998:69) argues that “memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meanings” so is therefore always an interpretation which reveals the interviewee’s efforts to make sense of the past. Changes in personal circumstances and subsequent events, for example, elevation to the senior leadership of the organisation, may affect the presentation and selection of data, and contemporary values and thought process may “shape the informants’ interpretation of their own past and impose the subconscious historical structure of the narrative” (Lummis 1998:276).

Some interviewees showed awareness of these influences and suggested that they may not have remembered things that were important at the time. Others noted changes in their thinking in subsequent years.

## **2.0 Discussion emerging from research findings**

Analysis of the research findings led to the emergence of a number of significant issues for officer training in the United Kingdom during the time explored by the interviews. The general historical context highlighted the tension between the role of the college in performing and preserving the tradition and its function as a locus of innovation and transformation. Three major events in the evolution of William Booth College further enable the exploration of the research question; to what extent, if at all, is William Booth College training students “to be like us?”

In the following discussion the letters A to G indicate the responses of the college Principals (Appendix 1).

### **2.1.1 Developing a tradition**

“And the training of officers secures to The Army the uniformity which is so essential in its organized work. I do not mean by this that every officer is instructed to slavishly do the same thing, at the same time, and in the same way, for the very opposite to this is impressed upon the cadets; but in organizing and governing a large force, the Officers must be able to take up each other’s work without confusion” (Howard in anon 1915:xiii).

An initial reading of Railton's statement, "we want to train men to be like us," may suggest that it is arrogant and presumptuous. He continues "...without time for self, always at it, and yet always being fed and stoked up as they fly" (Railton in Watson 1970:38). It could be assumed, in view of Railton's personal history, is that this is the counsel of the workaholic; advocacy of an unreasonable work-life balance. But it was not so much an exercise in pride, or in placing unfair demands on people, as an expression of his passionate conviction that officers should be totally committed to the evangelistic cause, being motivated, developed and spiritually renewed by their work.

This activist tendency was balanced by the more reflective perspective of Bramwell Booth, who later wrote "it is perhaps less in the external activities of the War that the best work of the Training Home is accomplished than in the character-building that is done there" (Booth 1914:41). In addition to a demanding programme of practical involvement in the London mission stations, personal and spiritual formation shaped and dominated the training experience, so that by 1882 it was noted that "in all our thoughts about the training of cadets, the spiritual effect is above all considered" (The Salvation Army 1882:165). The curriculum was set by William and Bramwell Booth who "saw that the stability of the movement must largely depend upon the integrity, zeal and capacity of its leaders" (Booth 1933:132). From 1903 until the introduction of the two year course in 1960 the pattern of training changed little from "the one that Bramwell Booth had originated" (C). Spiritual formation and the development of practical skills, were supplemented by basic academic studies which remedied "glaring defects in their education" (The Salvation Army 1885:6), in a "battle-school atmosphere" (B).

The addition of a second year slowed the pace and led to the development of a curriculum in which most of the first year was concerned with laying theoretical foundations, but, according to A, had the effect of diminishing fervour for mission. Booth's fears that that formal theological training would lead to loss of zeal (Murdoch 1994:21; Hill 2006:88) seemed to have been well-founded. Training had become institutionalized, perhaps a little staid.

In addition, the position of the college in the organisation, with accountability to International Headquarters, appears to have led to a sense of detachment from contemporary needs. "Instead of facing the challenges of the day and becoming, therefore, the vanguard of innovation and lively initiatives, I think it would be true to say that the college began to represent the establishment" (A).

### 2.1.2 Performing and transforming the tradition

Should the training institution of any organisation be the guardian of tradition, ensuring that it is maintained in appropriate manner, or a leader of innovation, setting new trends and exploring new horizons? Charles Wood writes "there can be no theological education which is not, in some sense, an encounter with tradition" (Wood 1996:351). Education enables both the preservation of tradition and the process of critical reflection which leads to its extension and development in a new context. Salvation Army initial officer training is no exception. Managing the tension between faithfulness to a "cherished heritage" (A) and that faithful development which is "at the forefront of innovation" (G) is a constant challenge for the Principal of the college.

The importance of tradition and history as embodying a distinctive Salvation Army identity and the need of the organisation to remain "true to itself" permeated a number of responses (A,B,E,G). In terms of officer training, this was articulated by three Principals as developing "blood and fire officers" (A,B,C), that is people of a passionate, practical spirituality, with "a deep yearning to engage in The Salvation Army's evangelistic mission" (B).

F suggested that the college Earlier Principals (A,B,) also used the language of guardianship and preservation, suggesting that the college should be "the active and glad custodian of our history" (A) with a task "to capture the Salvationist ethos and preserve it" (B), building on past strength in positive ways. "To innovate in order to be effective" the college should "be thinking and praying and experimenting to move forward in ways that are consistent with our great history" (A). B restricted acceptable innovation to methods, thus continuing the tradition of Booth who distinguished methods which "must of necessity be always changing" (1895:4), from unchanging principles. The aim should be "to try to re-capture the dynamics of our tradition, the 19<sup>th</sup> century dynamics, but translate them into 21<sup>st</sup> century situations" (B).

E suggested that students should be equipped to understand tradition, which is rooted in "The Salvation Army's expression of its faith," and to communicate this in contemporary ways, whilst F called for an understanding of tradition and heritage that is supplemented by commitment to research and willingness to "do things differently". The current Principal, G, expressed the need to "maintain our essence, the things that birthed us" whilst "continually finding new ways of missional engagement."

is a “microcosm of that larger tension within the Army” between performing the tradition and acceptable innovation. One example is the extent to which Salvation Army identity is seen to include distinctive methods and the outworking of the military metaphor. If, as some would suggest, The Salvation Army is indistinguishable from its military metaphor and is to some extent defined by it, the preservation of this heritage will be more significant for the future of the movement than if it is viewed as negotiable.

At a structural level, a recurring theme was the frustration caused by the Principal's lack of autonomy. The location of the college as part of the establishment can facilitate the *status quo* and stifle innovation. In addition, as the sole provider of Salvation Army Officer Training in the United Kingdom, William Booth College occupies a unique, but sometimes frustrating, position. The challenges generated by assumptions that the college is, or should be, an unchanging edifice, or that the curricula and practices that were effective in former years are sufficient for current needs, are not insignificant. But the responses of the Principals suggest that training officers to replicate the ministry of their predecessors is neither appropriate nor adequate. They need to understand and relate to present generations, learning to interpret the future in the light of the past and responding in ways that are appropriate for the age.

Historically, identity in The Salvation Army has been transmitted through order and hierarchy. The training of Salvation Army Officers was seen as a process of socialisation into the received tradition of belief and a lifestyle marked by obedience to Orders and Regulations and senior officers. In the light of the hierarchical and authoritarian structure of the organisation, it might be suggested that the strong emphasis upon socialising the learner into the norms of the tradition is likely to have negative effects, so that they are not empowered but dominated, and that the practices of the college are not developing the individual but perpetuating institutional power and creating institutionalised people- in effect people who are “like us” not through choice, but by a process of subjugation.

However, in recent years, a more open and flexible approach to training has encouraged “a critical assessment of The Salvation Army within a loyalty to it and its leaders” (E). Students learn to approach the tradition in a process of critical openness which enables acceptance but also critique, expansion and, when appropriate, rejection. This process may be described as faithful improvisation (Wright 1992:143). Understanding of the past and careful judgement concerning the



parameters of acceptable innovation enables coherent development that demonstrates both innovation and consistency with what has gone before.

Faithful improvisation of college structures was advocated by E, who argued that understanding and appreciation of tradition should be balanced by commitment to viewing the college as "a place of innovation, where we start new things, rather than being the last place to change" (E). Believing that his responsibility as Principal was "to change whatever needed to be changed .... and to question everything - every time somebody said something couldn't be done," E is convinced that most change can be accomplished without confrontation. Many of these innovations resulted in a less regulated and more open college community. This policy was continued by F who aimed to give more personal responsibility to students and to encourage greater interaction in the wider Salvationist community. Consequently, much of the imposed, external discipline which was a strong feature of the "battle school" has been replaced by personal accountability, thus facilitating the individual and distinctive development of each student.

Foster *et al* (2006:43) describe the common goal of seminary teaching as "developing leaders responsible for maintaining and renewing - and sometimes transforming - the intent of their religious traditions for new situations and new circumstances," through a process of appropriation and improvisation in which "an implicit (and very powerful) 'script' still operates" (2006:169). The responses of the Principals suggest awareness of both script and potential for improvisation, although normative criteria and clear boundaries are not always evident. Nevertheless, the importance of innovation which supports the faithful improvisation of the tradition is vital. The challenge to "carve out a new mission strategy in a post-modern, post Christendom context" (G) cannot be ignored. The extent to which this will involve change, even "death and re-birth" (G), remains unknown.

The need for creative tension between performance of the tradition and appropriate innovation would suggest that students will be both "like" and "not like" us. They will not unthinkingly duplicate past strategies, but will faithfully improvise in order to be loyal inhabitants of their own tradition in the 21<sup>st</sup> century context.

### **2.2.1 "The one college concept"**

"Personal influences ...perhaps more than anything else, have made the Training Homes or Barracks ... so great a power for good...Contagion of their own thorough-going desperate devotion" (enables staff to) "turn out so many officers of the right stamp" (anon 1882:166-167) .

"It is good for them to feel that their Training Officers are heroes and heroines" (Catherine Bramwell Booth 1925:106).

Upon arrival in 1978, A's mandate included major structural change. Initially, men and women were trained at different locations but when both were situated on one campus, the development of the Men's Side and the Women's Side perpetuated the separation, although eventually academic classes were integrated. Two different staff teams were each responsible for their respective Sides under the leadership of one Principal. It is significant that the leaders of the Women's Side were almost always unmarried women. When married couples were accepted for training they were trained separately, but subsequently married women were enabled to train in partnership with their husbands on the Men's Side. A process of re-organisation and gradual change, described as implementing "the one college concept" (A), abolished the Sides and led to one staff team and fully integrated training. A significant impact was a reduction in the number of women leaders. Although there is no organisational reason, women have since been proportionally under-represented in college senior leadership positions. This raises an important concern. The research findings indicate that the staff are an important factor in the training process, not only as teachers and trainers, but as role-models. The dearth of either unmarried or married women as models of leadership may negatively influence the development of the women students in comparison with their male counterparts.

### **2.2.2 Implicit pedagogy**

The importance of the staff member as both trainer and role model emerged as a recurring theme of the interview responses in two distinct ways. Awareness that the quality of staff is vital to the effectiveness of the college was supplemented by acknowledgement of the significant personal influence of individuals for particular students.

A spoke of his conviction that all staff should be models of Salvationism, and committed to evangelism because "every officer on the Training College is really a role model." Similarly, D, describing the staff as a "fine team" noted that they "provided the near leadership, teaching and example on which effective formation for ministry depended." Personal qualities are important to E, who, whilst appreciating knowledge and teaching skills, advocated the appointment of "good people, good leaders, good examples." He also noted the potential for negative influence when staff "let their own agenda dominate." F recognised and appreciated the expertise and commitment of "quality" individuals who were willing to work as a team.

B, recalling his own days as a student, spoke of "interaction with people, with personalities on the staff that meant so much to me," and of the "profound influence"

of his Training Principal upon his personal development. Awareness of this possibility tempered the actions of E who acknowledged “a significant and sacred responsibility to pass on what I had learned” but was careful “not to impose my own personality and approaches,” thus recognising the value of each individual and their unique potential for development.

There were no responses that were common to the all interviewees when asked to describe the qualities they hoped to find in students, although most referred to personal integrity and spiritual maturity. Also included were passion for evangelism, (B) loyalty to the organisation, (A,D,E) a right attitude as defined in Philippians 2 (E), engagement in community (F,G) and potential for leadership,(B,C,E,F,G). It seems logical to suggest that Principals would seek to develop valued traits in students. Further research could investigate the extent to which these mirror Principals’ personal strengths and whether they become distinctive marks of the officership of the relevant students. In effect, do Principals train students in their own image?

Foster *et al* note the importance of an implicit pedagogy to clergy education and formation in all traditions. “When seminary educators model then coach students into the community of thinking, being and doing as clergy, they invite their participation in the practices that distinguish that community” (Foster *et al* 2006:372). In consequence the formation of the students is directly related to the ways in which the staff model the practices they teach. Ultimately, students are empowered to take their place within the community. However it is important to acknowledge the imbalance of power inherent in the relationship between staff and students and to ensure that this does not compromise growth (Jarvis 1997:84).

A number of factors at William Booth College are germane to this process. The size of the student cohort ensures that all students are known personally to faculty, each student has a pastoral support officer, a personal interview system allows for both monitoring of progress and the development of relationships, and many members of staff are Salvation Army officers who, therefore, both understand and share the vocation of the students. The influence of implicit pedagogy in the life of William Booth College ensures that becoming “like us,” in the sense of learning to participate in the community of practice, remains a major function of Salvation Army officer training.

### **2.3.1 The United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland**

“You must do it. You must go down among the perishing crowds. Your happiness now consists in sharing their misery; your ease in sharing their pain; your crown in bearing

their cross; and your heaven in going to the very jaws of hell to rescue them”  
(William Booth 1885:168).

In 1990, a seismic shift in the governance of The Salvation Army resulted in the United Kingdom attaining greater administrative independence from International Headquarters, thus reflecting the status of every other Salvation Army Territory. At the same time, the International Training College was re-named the William Booth Memorial Training College, and became part of the United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland for administrative purposes. In real terms this made little difference to training, the demographics of the student intake or daily life at the college. It was, however, a change in status and organisation. C was re-appointed as Principal with a directive to “introduce a training system which was based on mission rather than maintenance” thus reflecting a concern of leadership that The Salvation Army had entered maintenance mode, and needed to reclaim the mission focus of the early years (B, C).

Whilst recognising the unchanging nature of the training task to “enable spiritual leaders for spiritual mission,” C introduced a number of structural and programme changes, thus reducing the perception of the college as an outdated and unchanging institution. The introduction of missiology to the curriculum (1990) was an academic response to The Salvation Army's origins in, and consistent commitment to, mission. Whilst retaining the spirit expressed in Booth's 1885 letter, there is also openness to contemporary understanding and practice. The significance of this innovation is evident in the enduring influence of missiology in the life of the college and the incidence of officers studying the subject at postgraduate level. It would seem, then, that the perceived mission of the organisation is vital to the college ethos and agenda.

### **2.3.2 Interpretations of the mission of The Salvation Army**

When Principals were asked to define the mission of The Salvation Army, the imperative to “make Jesus known” (C) was the unifying factor in all responses, with four of the seven interviewees quoting John Gowans' statement “The Salvation Army was created by God to achieve three things – to save souls, to grow saints and to serve suffering humanity” (1999:3).

The trend towards defining this as holistic and integrated mission (F, G), rather than in terms of evangelism (A, B) and community response (A), reflects a shift towards understanding the nature of mission in The Salvation Army as the embodiment of the *missio dei* in a wounded world (Harris 2003:11).

The claim that this mission is not distinct from that of “any other part of the church called by Christ” (C) and that The Salvation Army is “an authentic part of the universal Christian church” (D), coupled with the suggestion that it models to the church “the simple clear expression of the Christian faith” (E), indicate a sense of self-identity that allows for both unity and diversity with other denominations.

This consistent sense of missional identity ensures a secure foundation for the work of William Booth College and provides a focus for both overt and implicit values. The college has no *raison d'être* except as a resource for the organisation and therefore the mission of The Salvation Army is both the source and end of training. This contrasts with many other seminaries and theological colleges, including those researched by Foster *et al* (2006), which either stand outside denominational boundaries, or are less defined by institutional norms. Nevertheless the history, development and ongoing function of William Booth College within the movement provides “a catalyst for a curricular commitment to teach an espoused mission” and supplies the “implicit values and commitments” of the faculty (Foster *et al* 2006:45-46) thereby confirming Railton’s overall strategy, if not its outworking.

#### **2.4.1 The Diploma of Higher Education in Salvation Army Officer Training**

“In the first place, the great aim of all out training is to fit our officers for the work they have to do. We abjure all mere learning for its own sake...just as in temporal things, the apprenticeship is intended to teach the apprentice the particular trade to which he is destined, so we think training for the work of God should be adapted to qualify its recipients for that work” (Catherine Booth quoted in Booth-Tucker 1893:88-89).

The decision to introduce the London University external Certificate of Proficiency in Religious Knowledge and the London Diploma in Theology (1964) provided an external benchmark for college courses in Bible and Doctrine. From 1979 this option was replaced by the Cambridge local examination syndicate’s Certificate/Diploma in Religious Studies. In each case, the external qualification accounted for less than half of the work required by the college study programme and only a small percentage of students studied for external awards.

Discussions exploring the possibility of validation through partnership with an independent degree-awarding body began in the late 1980s, but it was not until 1995/1996 that this was pursued. For D, who had been appointed Principal in 1994, this development complemented a personal “desire to see educational standards lifted at the college” and a conviction that The Salvation Army must find its role in a society that had “changed beyond all recognition from that within which it had been formed.” In 1998, the Diploma of Higher Education in Salvation Army Officer Training, validated by Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education

(since 2001, The University of Gloucestershire) and consisting of a holistic programme of spiritual formation, academic study and practical skills, was introduced as the standard route for all students. The first Distance Learners were also accepted in 1998, with validation for this mode of training secured in 2002. A corollary of this process is the requirement to ensure ongoing currency of the curriculum, thus ensuring that course content is regularly reviewed and updated.

#### **2.4.2 Priorities for training**

The current curriculum owes much to the influence of Catherine Booth (Booth-Tucker 1893:89-90), whose description of training priorities encompasses training the heart, that is the development of personal and spiritual character; the hands, by ensuring the growth of skills; and the head, through expansion of knowledge. This prefigures vocational definitions of ministerial education which focus upon formation, knowledge and skills (Heywood 1997:46; Tidball 2006:9). Although described as an apprenticeship by Booth, officer training may seem to differ in emphasis from the professional apprenticeships of Foster *et al* in which “the academic setting clearly tilts the balance toward the cognitive”. However, the relative importance of normative education for clergy, in that “social practices structured by shared meanings, purposes and loyalties” form the true area of expertise (Sullivan in Foster *et al* 2006: 5, 8), is consistent with the pattern of officer training.

During the interview process, Principals were invited to prioritise spiritual formation, knowledge and practical skills. Five of the respondents were reluctant to do so, believing that the three elements must be kept in balance. However, ultimately, five of the total group ranked spiritual formation as most important because “spiritual formation is what provides motivation and power” (B), “genuine discipleship promotes understanding of God’s grace ....enabling the student to face the challenges of ministry” (D), and “it is who you are that matters” (E). There were no other first priorities. This emphasis echoes the historical story and also the Orders and Regulations for Training Principals, which state that students “must know God, know themselves and know their mission” (The Salvation Army, 2005 Section 1).

An interesting development is reflected in responses relating to knowledge and practical skills. A suggested that in former times the balance was in favour of practical skills, but argued that, if imbalance was inevitable, this was justifiable because the future prospering of The Salvation Army depends upon the skill of its leaders. Others were unwilling to differentiate between knowledge and skill, with D suggesting that practical experience should be accompanied by “relevant instruction” and “over-sighting support and insightful follow up” thus blending

knowledge and skill into holistic reflective practice. The two interviewees with the most recent experience of the college, although both reluctant to prioritise, ultimately deemed practical skills as least important, because “practical skills can be learned on the field” (F), and “the practice element needs always to be a servant to the other two” so that training is viewed as developing the students “to *be* certain kinds of people” not just to “do things” (G). This marks a significant shift in thinking and a re-evaluation of the place of knowledge in officer training by key players in the process.

The introduction, in 2007, of core competencies as the standard for Salvation Army officer ministry in the United Kingdom brings its own challenges to the training programme. Definitions of competence as capacity suggest that a blend of values, knowledge and practical skill is essential to professional development. Similarly, Foster *et al* (2006) argue that the three apprenticeships of professional education allow for identity formation (normative), the acquisition of appropriate knowledge (cognitive), and the development of practical, skills. In each case, the development of practice is vital to the proper education of the professional, so any suggestion that it may have become a lesser priority in the life of the college is significant. It is possible that William Booth College needs to consider redressing the balance, not so that it simply replicates the former emphasis on activity, but in order to allow more scope for the development of competence through complex judgments involving knowledge, skills and values in a variety of contexts. If students of William Booth College are to become members of the community of practice, in effect to become “like us,” they will need to develop the relevant skills that enable them to function effectively in that community.

### **3.0 Conclusion- Missional leaders for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

This research has highlighted significant themes for officer training. Further exploration of these issues will contribute to the development of a theology, philosophy and practice of officer training which responds appropriately to the adoption of core competencies for officer development and the needs of the movement in contemporary society.

For Railton, training “men to be like us” was vital to securing the future of the fledgling Salvation Army. He believed that emphasis upon the mission, a distinctive revivalist style of evangelism, was essential if The Salvation Army was to continue

into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The need for officers who shared the commitment and motivation of the leaders formed a crucial part of the process.

Training has become part of the denominational establishment and “to be like us” could be construed as developing guardians of an unchanging tradition who replicate the strategies of the past. But the ethos of the movement in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century suggests that innovative mission is still the key focus. The findings of this research indicate that current students will be “like us” in motivation and commitment to the task. In contrast, that ongoing determination to engage with the contemporary context, and a continually developing curriculum, will also result in some discontinuity, and the development of officers who could also be described as unlike previous generations.

The influence of the theological educator should not be underestimated. Training takes place in relationship and the influence of the apprentice-master inevitably leads to some imitation. However, the research showed awareness of this possibility, and intentional management of its effects. It is unlikely that the contemporary training officer will wish to be viewed as a hero or heroine. A changing ethos and shift towards personal accountability would suggest that current students are more likely to regard staff as more experienced travelling companions, role models and guides who can teach, challenge and provide pastoral support, as they find their place in the community of practice.

Clear priorities for officer training remain. The relationship between spiritual formation, knowledge and practical skills is most often understood as that of equal components, in which each is necessary to, and balances, the other two. In interaction they provide a holistic vocational education, apprenticeship for a profession and the opportunity to become “like” others who share their calling.

Railton’s words do not resonate easily with contemporary expression. They could seem to suggest institutionalisation, control and lack of appreciation of individual character and ability. But essentially they are a statement of commitment to the *missio dei* in the work and life of The Salvation Army. In so far as William Booth College prepares students for participation in this work, despite changes to curricula and structures, and the need to find new methods of missional engagement in the contemporary world, it is still training students to become “like us.”



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## Appendix 1

### **Principals 1978-2008 who participated in the Research.**

A	Harry Read	1978-1981
B	John Larsson	1984-1988
C	Norman Howe	1988-1994
D	Nigel Mason	1994-1997
E	Robert Street	1997-2002
F	Melvyn Jones	2002-2007
G	Norman Ord	2007-

## **Time-line of key events relating to this research.**

- 1865 William Booth preaches at Mile End, The Christian Mission begins to develop.
- 1872 George Scott Railton writes to William Booth offering to join the mission.
- 1873 Railton, aged 24, leaves secular employment to become the Secretary of The Christian Mission. He quickly becomes an important ally for Booth and a key innovator in the development of the movement, describing himself as “your ever-to-be-faithful Lieutenant” in a letter to Booth, who, at the time, was known amongst the missionaries as “General,” an abbreviation of General Superintendent.
- 1874 George Scott Railton proposes a resolution, at the Christian Mission conference, that the Committee consider the possibility of giving instruction to evangelists.
- 1877 Railton writes to William and Bramwell Booth concerning training.
- 1878 Name change to The Salvation Army.
- 1879 Ballington Booth opens Manchester Temple Corps. It appears to have been a practical training placement for ten young men.
- 1880 May- Training Home for women is opened- Principal: Emma Booth.  
October- Training Home for men is opened- Principal: Ballington Booth.
- 1882 May- The National Training Barracks is opened in the former premises of the London Orphan Asylum at Clapton, London.
- 1886 Training is extended to six months- three months in the Training Home and three months on placements.
- 1903 The nine month training session is established.
- 1929 Training begins at the William Booth Memorial Training College, known as the International Training College, Denmark Hill.
- 1960 “Two year” training is introduced (21 months).
- 1978 The “one college concept.”
- 1990 The inauguration of The United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland. William Booth Memorial Training College is no longer responsible to International Headquarters.
- 1998 The Diploma of Higher Education in Salvation Army Officer Training is validated. Distance learning training commenced.

- 2000 The Candidates Unit and the School for In Service Training and Development move to the campus and become part of the re-named William Booth College.
- 2002 The Diploma of Higher Education in Salvation Army Officer Training (by Distance Learning) is validated.

## **Reflecting on my journey with the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology**

### **Summer 2008**

“Wisdom works with equivocation” (Rose 1996:2). If Gillian Rose’s claim that wisdom, both practical and theoretical, develops from the exploration of uncertainty and the revision of ideas and policies, reflects reality, my experience of the Professional Doctorate to this point has truly been a search for wisdom.

Initial explorations of practical theology focused on a quest to discover acceptable boundaries. Ken Leech describes theology as “a process of continuous reflection, questioning and rethinking. It is a movement, not a position” (Leech 2006:24). Theology that arises by induction from practice contains an element of provisionality (Graham 2002:209) that could sit uncomfortably with the theology of my inherited, and chosen, tradition. Whilst claiming dynamism and adaptability as key markers of the organisation, The Salvation Army also has a tendency to view theological principles as unchanging. However I have discovered that it is possible to initiate conversation between the practices of the church and those of the world, or between academic disciplines, allowing each to inform and critique the other, in the knowledge that faithfulness to theological heritage need not be compromised, but neither need a firm boundary line be drawn before the discussion begins. Such conversation can lead to new insight and can inform and shape the practice of the church so that it remains loyal to its purpose and calling.

The comparison of “Athens” and “Berlin” as models of theological education has enriched and shaped my understanding, so that I view my practice in a different way. I have become more aware of contrasting, and sometimes competing, emphases, marking difference between the ontological focus of the development of *habitus*, the settled disposition, or character of the minister, and the development of the professional, whose socialisation into the role is marked by academic study and the acquisition of practical skills. Salvation Army officer training has, in common with ministerial education in many denominations, tried to encompass both in its programmes and courses. A strong sense of “it is who you are that matters” sits uneasily alongside an academic and placement programme. Perhaps unusually, spiritual growth and personal development are accredited modules in the Diploma of Higher Education in Salvation Army Officer Training. Robust discussions with one member of the validating university concerning the appropriateness of this inclusion have brought to mind Kelsey’s contention that ultimately the models are unsynthesizable (Kelsey 1993:221). Rose calls on Adorno’s image of the “torn

halves” that cannot be reconciled and do not add up to describe the relationship between ethics and metaphysics (Rose 1996:9). It may be that this is also appropriate to the difference between *habitus* and professional education, which remain as uncomfortable, but effective, partners in the development of Salvation Army officers. Perhaps the example of the officer tutor who stands in the gap and models what it is to be a minister by both character and profession is relevant, and requires further exploration.

I have learned that the introduction of core competencies for Salvation Army officers, which initially shaped my research topic, is both more and less significant than I had anticipated. Initial concerns that the notion of competence automatically leads to instrumental and surface learning seem to have been unfounded. A “conversation” with the caring professions brought greater understanding of a definition of competence as a broad capacity that is the result of professional development and reflective and transformational learning.

However, the implications for the training process give rise to deeper questions about the nature of theological education in The Salvation Army. Definitions of vocational education, professional apprenticeship and the development of competence have in common a three faceted learning experience encompassing normative, academic and skills based learning (Heywood 1997:, Foster et al 2006, Requirements and Regulations for the Diploma in Social Work 1989:5). But historical research for Paper 2 has highlighted the shifting balance between theory and practice in the history of William Booth College. Although this reflects the changing practices of theological education in general, particularly the movement towards validated learning and professional qualifications, it marks a significant departure for a movement with an activist heritage. The advantages of a higher education programme must not be lost, but I have begun to wonder if they have been gained at the cost of the development of ministry skills and if this imbalance can, and should, be addressed. There would be no gain in returning to the old ways, when practice was no more than practising, but an active learning experience might redress the balance, as, with the development of reflective strategies, practical experience could lead to new praxis.

Nevertheless, tension between a theological understanding of the identity of the officer as rooted in covenant relationship with God and that of the competent professional satisfying the norms of the organisation requires more penetrating exploration than has been possible to date.

I have no doubt that “wisdom” is emerging, but it remains tentative and provisional.



The Salvation Army has a heritage of mission, pragmatism and response to the prevailing culture. It would claim to thrive on “faithful improvisation” (Wright 1992:143) within boundaries formed by core theology. Further research is required to discern whether the current pattern of Salvation Army officer training is sufficient to equip leaders for contemporary and future needs, what changes may be required and how these may interact with, or challenge, the parameters of our theological heritage.

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## **Appendix C**

**SID Number: 9600480**

**Stage 1 Unit 3**  
**Establishing advanced research practice in**  
**practical theology.**

**Investigating and facilitating the spiritual life**  
**development of Salvation Army officers.**

**December 2009**

## **Abstract**

**Karen Shakespeare**

### **Stage 1 Unit 3**

#### **Establishing advanced research practice in practical theology.**

##### **Investigating and facilitating the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers.**

This paper outlines a proposal for a research project that will investigate the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers and suggest ways in which the recently established Centre for Spiritual Life Development (CSLD) can ensure that its provision will facilitate this process. There is significant emphasis upon spiritual growth and maturity as the real and necessary foundation for Salvation Army officership. However, taking into account the internationalism of the movement, patterns of spiritual formation in initial officer training are diverse, and there is no standard pattern or provision for ongoing development during officership. By focusing upon the spiritual life development of a specific group of individuals, providing a rich description of their story, and bringing this into dialogue with models of theological education and adult learning, I believe it will be possible to discern a way forward for the CSLD. Significant influences in my own context, both professional and academic, place me in a unique position to conduct this research, which will enhance and strengthen my current professional practice in the CSLD.

The paper explores briefly the relationship of The Salvation Army to evangelicalism and evangelical spirituality in particular, concluding that The Salvation Army can be placed firmly within that context, both in terms of its historical roots and present practice. Two strong trends in the Salvationist ethos, activism and the life of holiness, result in a spirituality that is centred upon the believers' personal relationship with Christ and evidenced by faithful engagement with the world.

The interpretation generated by analysis of qualitative empirical research conducted with a particular group of Salvation Army officers will inform a dialogue between the ethos and practices of The Salvation Army and theoretical perspectives in order to bring understanding that will aid the ongoing provision of the CSLD. Thus models of theological education, which focus in the dichotomy between ontological and professional understandings of ministry, and theories of adult education, particularly in relation to experiential learning and reflective practice will each contribute to the conversation. It is envisaged that new understanding of the nature of Salvation Army officership will be generated, particularly in relation to the interrelationship between theory, practice and being in officer training and development.

This research will break new ground by examining how officers sustain and develop their spiritual life and then suggesting ways in which this can be facilitated by the CSLD. It will therefore close a gap in understanding the development of the spiritual life of Salvation Army officers and will set a precedent for further cycles of research and evaluation as the CSLD establishes its provision.

# **Investigating and facilitating the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers.**

## **Contents**

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## **Reference list**

## **1.0 Introduction**

My professional context and earlier research for the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology have enabled me to identify a significant issue in the development of Salvation Army officers and to formulate two research questions. An exploration of the current situation will form the starting point and foundation from which proposals to enhance and develop practice will emerge.

*How do Salvation Army officers sustain and develop their personal spiritual life in the context of an activist, missional organisation? In what ways can the Centre for Spiritual Life Development facilitate and support the process?*

The Centre for Spiritual Life Development (CSLD) was established by The Salvation Army in 2008 and is based at the International College for Officers (ICO) in London. The initial remit was to broaden the role of the ICO beyond its influence upon the individuals selected to attend one of its courses of eight weeks duration, held four times a year.

The CSLD mission statement states:

The Centre for Spiritual Life Development exists to facilitate the development of the spiritual lives of Salvationists by

- Offering conferences and events that are spiritually enriching and that help form people in Christlikeness;
- Providing resources to cultivate spiritual life development;
- Encouraging implementation of intentional and systematic spiritual growth throughout the international Salvation Army.

My professional context is concerned with developing the CSLD in the light of its mission.

## **2.0 The research problem**

The CSLD is a small centre with an international focus but with a limited budget. It needs to be strategic in using its resources and energy to provide the best possible outcome. The mission statement is three-fold (as above). Some of the work will necessarily be administrative - monitoring and offering support to Salvation Army Territories. For example, the Centre will have some responsibility for providing an

overall international view of strategies, plans and personnel. The other two areas are concerned more directly with spiritual development; 'providing conferences and events that are spiritually enriching and that help form people in Christlikeness' and 'providing resources to cultivate spiritual life development.' In reality, whilst not the same, these two overlap. However, in order to be effective, planning and policy needs to be relevant to the people who will benefit from the provision. It is therefore important that some understanding of the actual need is achieved by inductive research, before programmes and resources are developed. The Salvation Army works in 116 countries and 175 languages (The Salvation Army, 2009a:29, accurate to September 2008). It has in excess of one million soldiers (members) of which more than twenty six thousand are officers (ordained spiritual leaders). This does not include many thousands of people who have no formal membership, but would nevertheless regard The Salvation Army as their church. Clearly, in order for the CSLD to be effective, it must be selective in its target group.

This research will therefore focus upon a particular constituency, Salvation Army officers who are delegates to the ICO (reasons given 8.0 in below), and will seek to learn from their experience in order to generate policy and practice for the CSLD.

### **3.0 The context**

#### ***3.1 My context***

Two broad areas, officer training and development and spiritual life development in the Salvation Army, coalesce in my personal history and my professional practice. I am a Salvation Army officer, formerly a teacher. In 1998 I was appointed as a tutor to William Booth College, the sole provider for initial officer training in the United Kingdom, where I remained until December 2008, having been the Course Leader of the Diploma of Higher Education in Salvation Army Officer Training since June 2004. My MA studies in Pastoral Theology and Theological Education were complemented by a firm practical grounding in Salvation Army officer training as it relates to both theological education and higher education in the United Kingdom. Papers 1 and 2 of this Professional Doctorate were focused upon initial officer training. In Paper 1 a critical conversation between the Salvation Army context, theological education and competence based education and training led to exploration of the relationship between core competencies for Salvation Army officers and models of theological education. Historical research for Paper 2 identified recurring themes and significant changes in the initial training of officers in the United Kingdom 1978-2008. Particularly significant to the proposed research is

the importance of the relationship between three foci in training: spiritual formation, knowledge and practical skills. Priorities for officer training, as expressed by present and former Principals of William Booth College suggest that although there is need for balance between the three elements in the policy and practice of training, spiritual formation remains a constant first priority.

However, this trajectory was interrupted and deflected by my appointment in January 2009 to the International Headquarters of The Salvation Army, eventually becoming the Executive Assistant to the Secretary for Spiritual Life Development in August 2009. My task is to work with my line manager in establishing the CSLD and enabling it to achieve its mission. A significant element in my brief of appointment is that I should be 'engaging in research that will enhance spiritual development and your own contribution to ministry' (The Salvation Army 2009b). Thus I am uniquely placed to examine the development of spiritual life in The Salvation Army with reference to my personal understanding and experience of adult learning and theological education. This research will therefore draw upon previous research and experience in seeking to generate material that will inform and enhance my current practice.

### **3.2 The broad context of the research: officer development**

The broad context of this research is the development of officers within The Salvation Army. Officers are ordained and commissioned spiritual leaders, who fulfil a variety of roles within the movement. This is always a full-time occupation, with no provision for part-time or unpaid officership, except in exceptional circumstances. The Salvation Army developed from the East London Christian Mission established by William Booth in 1865 and was deeply influenced by the nineteenth century revivalist and holiness movements (Murdoch 1994:21; Walker 2001:23). It remains missional in focus, but also with a strong commitment to personal Christian discipleship. Leaders, who in response to the development of the military metaphor, became known as officers, were most often selected from the converts to the mission and initially were deployed with no formal training. Since its inception in 1879 officer training has developed from an *ad hoc* 'battle school' lasting a few weeks to a two-year full-time course which encompasses spiritual development, practical skills and education. Provision for continuing professional development varies in different contexts and cultures.

There has always been a significant emphasis upon spiritual development and spiritual maturity as the real and necessary foundation for acceptance as a Salvation Army officer, rather than any academic qualification or potential. William Booth wrote

'in all our thoughts about the training of cadets, the spiritual effect is above all considered' (The Salvation Army 1882:165). This focus remains a priority in the selection and training of Salvation Army officers, with Orders and Regulations for the Training of Salvation Army Officers requiring 'the primacy of spiritual growth and Salvationist identification over a predominantly academic approach to the training of officers' (The Salvation Army, 2005). This core principle was confirmed by research for paper 2 in which five of the seven interviewees ranked spiritual formation as the first priority of officer training. However, taking into account the internationalism of the movement, patterns of spiritual formation in officer training are diverse, and there is no standard pattern of provision for ongoing development during officership. In 1996, a Spiritual Life Commission was convened by General Paul A. Rader to 'review the ways in which The Salvation Army cultivates and sustains the spiritual life of its people.' At the first meeting he stated 'our mission is energised by our spirituality' (quoted in Street 2008 x). The report of the commission took the form of twelve 'calls' to Salvationists to sustain and guard aspects of the spiritual life. These encompass worship, the inner life, membership, life in the Salvationist community and mission. The calls, with their accompanying affirmations (Appendix D pp.256-268), were explored by the Chair of the commission, Robert Street, in *Called to be God's People* (1999, 2008). This material has been disseminated widely, translated into a number of languages, and promoted by individuals charged with responsibility to teach and resource and by the establishment of the CSLD. In terms of the development of the Centre, one short course has been convened (September 2009), work has begun to develop an international network of resources and to encourage Territories to facilitate spiritual growth in the local context, but at the time of writing much remains in embryonic form.

## **4.0 Theological perspectives**

### ***4.1 Why is this practical theology?***

Practical theology is 'dedicated to enabling the faithful performance of the gospel and to exploring and taking seriously the complex dynamics of the human encounter with God' (Swinton and Mowat 2006:4). The development of the spiritual life of any denomination, whilst rooted in 'human encounter with God,' might at first seem to have little or no relationship to 'faithful performance of the gospel'. However, this would be to misunderstand the nature of The Salvation Army and its self-understanding in relation to the spiritual life. For The Salvation Army the practices of



the inner life only make sense when they are counterbalanced by a commitment to activism and mission.

'In mission we express in word and deed and through the totality of our lives the compassion of God for the lost. Our identification with God in this outward movement of love for the world requires a corresponding inward movement from ourselves towards God.... The vitality of our spiritual life as a movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in evangelism and service, but the springs of our spiritual life are to be found in our turning to God in worship, in the disciplines of life in the Spirit, and in the study of God's word' (Street, 2008: 7).

This interrelationship is further illustrated in the 'calls' of the Spiritual Life Commission which look outward to life in the world as well as to the inner life of the community, and suggests that it is not possible to analyse or facilitate the spiritual development of Salvation Army officers in isolation from a wider understanding of the movement; for The Salvation Army, belief and action cannot be separated without doing violence to the whole.

Similarly, the requirement for officers who are able to 'sustain and advance the purposes of The Salvation Army' (The Salvation Army 2005) locates officer development within the mission of the movement to 'save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity' (Gowans 1999:3). The ultimate goal is therefore theological and missiological, officers must be equipped for faithful participation in the work of God as expressed by The Salvation Army. Thus this research, whilst concentrating upon the spiritual life, is firmly located within the boundaries of practical theology; faith for the Salvationist is inevitably bound up with practice in the world. This is consistent with the contemporary ecumenical consensus in practical theology. For example, Terry Veling, an Australian Roman Catholic theologian working in the international context argues that in practical theology theory and practice are 'partners that belong together... Action requires reflection. Reflection requires action' (Veling 2005 :142). It is anticipated that during the process of this research further theological insights into the relationship between belief and action in The Salvation Army will become evident.

Practical theology is located at the interface between belief and action, the church and the world. It is concerned with critical interaction between the practices of the church and society as each new generation seeks to make sense of faith in their context. James Whyte (1987:213) argues that 'practical theology is triadic,

concerned with the interrelationships of faith, practice and social reality,' so that each influences and critiques the other, leading to new insight and practice, in order that the church may be enabled and challenged to authentically perform the gospel in the present time. This research will explore interrelationships between the life of faith, theological education and theories of adult learning in order to discern a way forward to facilitate the spiritual development of Salvation Army officers. Critical dialogue between theology and other disciplines will lead to honest seeking for truth, so that new possibilities for practice can be explored and developed. However, this is not without its challenges. The assumptions upon which disciplines are based, including the understanding of human worth and ultimate purposes, may vary from those of practical theology which is set within the broader tradition of theology that gives it both a foundation and the limits of tolerance. The demands of the task are such that the practical theologian must be both 'committed and open, faithful and critical' (Ballard and Pritchard 1996:30). For example, using the metaphor of conversion Swinton and Mowat (2006:92-94) call for 'critical faithfulness' in which the constructivist autonomy of qualitative research is 'converted' to an epistemology which acknowledges the reality of God, whilst continuing to take seriously the interpreted nature of all human understanding (see also Section 6.0). My choice of a qualitative research methodology is informed and shaped by this concept, which acknowledges the interpretative nature of human experience as well as the 'centuries of tradition and reflection that have gone into establishing our understandings of divine revelation' (Swinton and Mowat 2006:93).

#### **4.2 Evangelicalism**

It is important to explore the ethos and characteristics of The Salvation Army and Salvationist spirituality in relation to its location in the wider church. David Bebbington's (1989) study, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, suggests that a common set of features are evident in the history of evangelical movements (1730s-mid twentieth century). Although The Salvation Army is an international movement, it emerged in London in the mid nineteenth century and is deeply influenced by the evangelical context of the time. Bebbington identifies four markers which identify difference in emphasis, rather than difference in systematic doctrine, in relation to the wider church. These were also evident in the evangelical approach to the holy life which 'had four fundamental parameters: it opened with conversion, it was sustained by the power of the cross, it was fed by reading the Bible, and it issued in vigorous activity' (Bebbington 2000:41). Each of these are fundamental to

Salvationist theology and lifestyle and together they place The Salvation Army, and the Salvationist approach to spirituality, firmly within the evangelical context.

### ***4.3 Evangelical spirituality***

Gillett (1993:4) defines spirituality as ‘the study of the inner reality of human existence in relation to the particular life purpose to which that religion or philosophy is committed.’ Christian spirituality is therefore ‘to do with how we articulate our relationship with God in Christ, and the particular practical ways which we find most helpful in developing this relationship from within the whole range of Christian tradition and experience.’ More specifically, evangelical spirituality is rooted in the personal relationship between the individual and God and growth will occur ‘naturally and uniquely in so far as the person remains open to the work of the Spirit of God within his or her life’ (Gillett 1993:2). Alister McGrath (1993:11) argued for the need for a distinctive evangelical spirituality that is not ‘spiritually derivative,’ borrowed from other traditions. He was later to define it as focused on Christ and the Bible, including both ‘understanding,’ that is ‘recognising the coherence of the Christian faith and gaining confidence in its intellectual credentials’ and ‘appreciation’ or ‘grasping the way in which the Christian faith changes our outlook on life, and our experience’ (McGrath 1995: 21-22).

These definitions may seem to imply that spirituality is purely individual, without connection with the work of the church in the world, although many evangelicals would claim that the motivation for activism is to be found in the spiritual life. Holt (1993:13) reflects a wider perspective, claiming that Christian spirituality ‘integrates relationships to God and creation with those to self and others,’ and similarly Cockerton (1995:3) defines it as ‘the whole life of the Christian as lived in the presence of God.’ In his analysis of evangelical spirituality, Ian Randall draws on the work of Philip Sheldrake who sees spirituality as ‘concerned with the conjunction of theology, communion with God and practical Christianity.’ Randall adds that evangelical spirituality takes as its central theme ‘a personal relationship with Christ’ (Randall 2005: 22,23). In the preface to Randall’s book, Sheldrake notes common sources of Christian spiritualities; they are rooted in the Bible; they are derived from Christian engagement with the world; and they are related to the wider Christian tradition (Sheldrake in Randall 2005:10). Spirituality is, therefore, integral to our praxis in the world which also provides the arena in which the spiritual life is developed.

#### **4.4 Holiness**

Alongside the missional focus of The Salvation Army, the priority of personal holiness, understood as a dynamic and deepening relationship with Christ which has implications for life in the world, stands as a key focus of self-understanding. The possibility of the holy life is enshrined in the articles of faith - 'we believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified' (The Salvation Army 2009a:12) - and has formed the core of much of Salvationist teaching and writing throughout the movement's history. It is most often described in terms of the individual's relationship to Christ, resulting in purity of motivation and life (Brengele 1896: iii, 2, 92, 8; Coutts 1958:24-25), which has a corporate and social dimension, and is evidenced by the believers' interaction in the world (Needham 2000: 11.14, Appendix p.18:10). Viewed as essential to the officer (Railton 1881, quoted in Larsson 1993:53) and 'necessary to the progress and prosperity of the Army' (Booth 1902:15), the belief that holy living is both a possibility and a requirement for the Christian is fundamental to Salvationist spirituality.

However, this must be held in tension with the activism of the movement. John Coutts (1977:50) writes 'Salvationist spirituality is active, rather than contemplative. It turns from the beatific vision to the nightmare of human need'. Salvationist spirituality therefore, reflecting the wider evangelical context, finds its expression and outworking in relationship and action. In examining the spiritual life development of officers I would anticipate finding that personal holiness, which is shaped within the Christian community and leads to engagement with life in the world, will be a significant factor.

#### **4.5 Faithfulness**

An emergent theme in papers 1 and 2 is the notion of faithfulness. The Salvation Army is uniquely shaped by its history, heritage and tradition, but is also prone to making pragmatic decisions about the present and future without reference to them. Recent writings in *The Officer* magazine have highlighted concerns that this tendency will ultimately lead to loss of the distinctive approach to mission which is viewed as both a mark of denominational identity and a key element in the *raison d'être*; it is not simply about what the Salvation Army *does*, but what it *is*. (Street 2007, Camsay 2008). This research will explore the significance of the tradition to identify ways in which this can be encouraged and safeguarded, as well as critiqued and challenged. Engagement with the traditions of the past is important in determining future practice, but faithfulness in the future will require new improvisations and new risks. A nuanced understanding of the notion of faithfulness

offers flexibility and movement, requiring not repetition but revision in the light of present need.

True faithfulness to the *missio dei* (Swinton and Mowat 2006: 9, 6) as expressed by faithful improvisation of the Biblical narrative (N.T. Wright 1992:142) and lived in risk-taking discipleship (Frances Ward 2005:4) inevitably leads in new directions. The Salvation Army is committed to mission in the contemporary context, seeking to find ways of expressing the Biblical narrative so that it addresses the deepest needs of the present generation. The deep commitment to the *missio dei* is being expressed in new strategies as well as the traditional ones; diversity and local contextualisation has become the norm. If Salvation Army mission is 'energised by our spirituality' (Street 2008:x) then attention to spirituality is a pre-requisite to faithful mission. The theological education, including the development of the spiritual life, of any denomination is 'in some sense, an encounter with tradition' (Wood 1996:351). Students are enculturated into the community of practice, and their personal norms are influenced by the norms of the community. Simultaneously, critical reflection upon that tradition allows for its development for new contexts. In exploring the spiritual development of Salvation Army officers, this research will investigate whether the accepted norms of past tradition in relation to the spiritual life are sufficient for the needs of the present time.

## **5.0 Theoretical and conceptual framework**

### **5.1 Theological education**

The work is located in the debate surrounding the nature and form of ministerial development. This inevitably includes both the formation of the individual and preparation for a task and role. Discussions centre on the relative importance of the two foci in the education of ministers and the resultant approach to development and learning.

Edward Farley (1983, 1988) critiqued a functionalist, technically rational approach to ministerial education which emphasises what the minister *does or knows*, arguing for a paradigm which centred on the development of the individual disposition, *habitus* - who the minister *is*. Calling for a shift from a theory-to-practice model of theological education, Farley (1983:85) advocated the development of programmes centred on *theologia*, 'a state and disposition of the soul which has the character of knowledge', in which *habitus* appears to be achieved cognitively through the growth of wisdom and dialectical understanding. A stark contrast with Farley is provided by the professional school of Hough and Cobb (1985) which prepares individuals for

functional church leadership of those who share a collective identity. David Kelsey (1993) suggested two models of theological education. The first reflects the *paideia* of Athens and is characterised by the indirect appropriation of faith, so that the learner develops a particular character which leads to appropriate action. In contrast, “Berlin” is marked by either excellence in academic enquiry, *Wissenschaft*, or the development of professional expertise. Kelsey argues that Athens and Berlin, in modelling incommensurable understandings of the *telos* of clergy education are ‘ultimately unsynthesizable’ (Kelsey 1993:221). Nevertheless, a combination of both is reflected in many patterns for clergy education, including the *theologia* of Farley, which, in emphasising the cognitive dimension, is actually a combination of *paideia* and *Wissenschaft* (Kelsey 1993:128). More recently, Foster *et al* define seminaries as professional schools, which are in effect hybrid institutions which ‘embrace the necessary interdependence’ of *paideia* and *Wissenschaft* (Foster *et al* 2006:48). This appears to be a pragmatic response to a perceived need for development which encompasses normative, academic and practical dimensions, but is not justified either theologically or philosophically.

In terms of the spiritual development of individuals, an initial reading might suggest resonance with the *paideia* and *habitus* models, both of which are concerned with an ontological approach to ministry - the concern is with the character of the minister, rather than ministerial behaviour or action. Initial officer training takes seriously the importance of personal growth and spiritual development and no student who was deemed to be unsuitable from a spiritual perspective would be considered for commissioning as a Salvation Army officer. By extension it would seem that continuing personal growth and spiritual development might be evaluated in the light of these models. However the importance of practice as a corollary to spirituality in The Salvation Army would suggest that models which are concerned with practice and professionalism cannot be discounted. The denominational tendency towards pragmatism and activism indicate that a functional approach to education and training may be appropriate, echoing an understanding of ministerial training as the development of the professional. If this is so, then the ongoing development of the spiritual life may need to be understood in terms of its contribution to effective practice. This would suggest that the spiritual development of Salvation Army officers cannot be understood in isolation from their professional identity. In the most basic terms, who they are ‘in Christ’ will both inform and shape their ministry. The exploration of this relationship will be informed by experiential theories of adult learning and their relationship to reflective practice.

## **5.2 Adult learning**

The notion of experiential and reflective learning is relevant to both the personal spiritual life and professional practice. The development of the spiritual life cannot be understood without reference to personal experience, but in order for real development to take place there must be some form of reflective assessment of that experience. David Kolb describes learning as 'the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience' (Kolb 1993:155). In addition, 'implicit in the notion of most experiential learning theory is also perpetuation' (Moon 1999:24), that is action leading to further experience and reflection. Context-based adult learning (Hansman 2001:44) recognises the importance of the 'real world experience of learning,' particularly in relation to professional development, so that people learn as they participate in a community of practice (see also Schön 1987:40; Foster *et al* 2006:5). Thus learning is neither abstract nor disconnected from the complexity of life experiences, but arises from them. Insights from this theory may help to inform the understanding of spiritual life development, showing how the interrelationship between experience, reflection and action leads to new cycles of growth.

In investigating the ways in which Salvation Army officers sustain and develop their personal spiritual life in the context of an activist, missional organisation, insight and understanding will be generated through a mutual critical conversation between the norms and values of The Salvation Army and models of theological education and theories of adult learning. The findings will then inform the constructive part of the research, leading to the conception and development of creative and relevant practices in the CSLD.

## **6.0 Methodology**

In seeking to understand the present situation from the perspective of individuals involved in the process, the empirical research will employ qualitative research methodology. This begins from the assumption that events and situations are interpreted by human beings in a complex process of seeking for meaning. Qualitative research, therefore, investigates experience, ideas, beliefs and values in order to interpret them and discern meaning(s). It then seeks to understand those meanings, the relationships between them and the consequences for action (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2000: 9). It is therefore essentially an inductive method which investigates reality in order to interpret and understand situations and phenomena, building a complex holistic picture from the analysis of the data.

A qualitative approach to this research will enable the development of a rich

description of the current situation, so that '(t)he story and findings become believable and realistic, accurately reflecting all the complexities that exist in real life' (Cresswell 1998:22). Key issues arising from this description will be brought into dialogue with the conceptual framework and theological perspectives. The understanding generated will contribute to the development of the practices of the CSLD. A qualitative approach to the research will enable me to discern patterns and trends which will inform the outcome of the whole project, so that it is 'earthed in realities rather than purely theoretical' (Deane-Drummond 1997:38) and will thus reflect a 'dialectic relationship between theory, practice, research questions and personal experience' (Marshall & Rossman 1999:25). A qualitative approach is therefore high in validity, because it is grounded in the reality of the situation, but is necessarily low in reliability because it is not possible to generalise using the results gained.

Using the image of jazz, Denzin and Lincoln (2003:6) suggest that all qualitative research is montage, in which the results and understandings blend, overlapping and forming a new composition, a new creation, within the boundaries of the genre. So, this research will be an emergent construction that will lead to improvisation, new patterns that fit the specifics of the complex situation, but with faithfulness to the interpretative community which shapes my voice as a researcher. The underlying constructivist approach to epistemology in qualitative research may appear to provide some challenges for practical theology. The notion that reality is 'open to a variety of different interpretations and can never be accessed in a pure, uninterpreted form' (Swinton and Mowat 2006:35) and which may each have validity can lead to the assumption that reality is therefore nothing but a social construction. However this is not a necessary corollary. Understandings of reality may differ as they are developed and interpreted through a 'grid of expectations, memories, stories, psychological states and so on' (Wright 1992:36) that forms the worldview of the knower, but they do not preclude the actual existence of the real. 'Critical realism' (Wright 1992:35, Swinton and Mowat 2006:37) allows for both the real and a constructed interpretation.

### ***6.1 My role as researcher***

As a researcher it is inevitable that I will shape and understand the research from a particular perspective and from within a distinctive interpretive community. 'Hermeneutical bias is shaped inescapably by the personal life experience of the individual, which is itself, of course, profoundly shaped by the wider cultural, social and political context within which the individual is situated' (Slee 1993:325).



As a Salvation Army officer, working in the field of spiritual life development, at the Centre where the subjects will be students, I will need to be aware of my position as an 'insider' researcher and its effect upon the validity of the work. Respondents and interviewees may be more open because of a prior, albeit short, relationship with me, or may be less 'forthcoming' for the same reasons. In addition, issues relating to my perceived or supposed power may adversely affect responses. My 'insider' knowledge could lead me to make assumptions or misinterpret answers, but may also help me to draw out relevant information from an interviewee. I will need to be aware of my own attitudes, biases and loyalties as I listen, analyse and interpret the information. At the same time, my 'insider' knowledge may also help me to use the data gathered effectively to come to a rich description of the situation. Ultimately, this work will not claim to be an objective evaluation of the situation, rather an interpretation which can aid understanding and in this sense it will be valid and worthwhile.

Complete objectivity is impossible as I am part of the context, but pure subjectivity would undermine the authenticity, trustworthiness and credibility of the work. Patton (2002:41) suggests that the aim must be balance, 'understanding and depicting the world authentically in all its complexity whilst being self-analytical, politically aware, and reflexive in consciousness'. In order to ensure that this awareness takes place, an important part of the research will be a reflexive journal which details my journey as a researcher and my changing understanding of the research task.

## **7.0 Research method**

The empirical research will have two major components. The first will take the form of a written questionnaire conducted at the ICO during 2010. This will encompass two sessions of delegates, each with twenty six individuals selected from around the world and representing the five zones of The Salvation Army. Delegates will be asked to give a brief definition of what they understand by spiritual life development and to describe how they understand this in relation to their ministry. A further question will ask respondents to identify those factors that have been formative for their spiritual journey since their commissioning as officers. Typically, this will represent a period of fifteen to twenty years, so it might be suggested that delegates to the ICO are in the middle years of their officer service. They will be asked to describe briefly the provision for ongoing spiritual development in their Territory and, finally, to suggest ways in which they hope to benefit from the CSLD. From this group, a small sample of five officers, one each from Europe, the Americas, Africa, South Asia and South Pacific and East Asia, will be invited to participate in a semi-

structured interview, which will explore issues of spiritual development in more depth. Responses will be treated as strictly confidential. A small pilot study of both methods will enable me to refine and clarify questions as necessary.

The data will be analysed thematically using a process of progressive abstraction. This is illustrated by the ladder of analytical abstraction (Carney in Miles and Huberman 1994:92). Initially significant words and phrases will be noted, then themes and trends and interrelationships between the data, and ultimately major emphases. These will provide a picture of patterns of spiritual development in a particular group of Salvation Army officers. Whereas it will not be possible to verify this with a much larger sample, it is hoped that there will be some consistency between the two groups of data.

A third area that will inform the research will be information relating to the provision for personal growth and spiritual development in initial officer training. My professional context provides occasional opportunities to meet training staff, including overseas visits and meetings in London. Whereas it is outside the scope of this research to interview staff from every college, opportunities for focused conversations will arise and I anticipate being able to speak with a representative from at least one college in each of the five zones of The Salvation Army within the timeframe of the research. My notes will be analysed thematically, noting similar trends and also differences in provision. Whilst not directly related to the research question, this will provide a context from which to interpret the data. For example, anecdotal evidence to date suggests that both the understanding of, and provision for, spiritual formation varies considerably.

These three sources will give a measure of triangulation and ensure that the story, which can only be an interpretation, is nevertheless a rich description of the responses of a specific group. This interpretation will not be seen as normative but will be used in conversation with the conceptual framework to inform the development of future policies and practices for the CSLD. It cannot be assumed that the experiences of a small group should necessarily shape the provision for the whole, nor that they will always be consistent with the needs and requirements of the organisation, but they can be used to both critique and confirm the present situation in order to provide a way forward for the future.

## **7.1 Ethical issues**

Subjects will be assured that responses will be treated confidentially and anonymised in the writing up process. They will each be asked to sign a consent form. If translation is necessary, permission will be sought from the respondent.

Data will be stored on a private drive on a networked, password protected computer and ethics permission is being sought.

## **7.2 Timetable**

I anticipate collecting the research data during 2010. Analysis and interpretation of findings will take place in 2011/12, as will further theoretical research and drafting of text.

## **8.0 Limitations**

Working in the international context poses a number of challenges and in order to make this project manageable the scope of the research has been limited to one group of possible subjects, Salvation Army officers. This is not for any elitist reason which assumes that the spiritual life of officers is more important than that of other people who are associated with The Salvation Army, either as members or as occasional worshippers. Officers are a particular category within Salvationists in general and therefore this gives some homogeneity to the group of research subjects. Worldwide they share some commonalities. They have a sense of vocation for ministry, they have been accepted and trained by The Salvation Army for this role, and they occupy positions of leadership within the denomination. Thus the provision of the CSLD has the potential to be disseminated further through their practice. A further factor is that I am officer whose professional practice and academic history is centred on officer training and development, so have an understanding of, and commitment to, the subject. Finally, the sample will be limited to Salvation Army officers who attend the ICO in a given time frame. This is a pragmatic decision, as the delegates to the ICO constitute an accessible pool of research subjects with a truly international flavour.

The research sample cannot encompass all of the countries where there is a Salvation Army presence, as it could be many years before each is represented at the ICO. The group will necessarily be a very small proportion of Salvation Army officers world-wide. However, they will be typical of a particular group within the broader constituency, in that selection as an ICO delegate is a mark of confidence and would normally indicate that the individual has potential as a future leader within their Territory. Language may be a challenge. Some sessions have an interpreter for six to eight delegates who share a common language; if translation is necessary I will need to be aware of the possibility of interpretation embedded in the translation. In addition, many delegates will be working in English as a second, third or fourth language. This too may pose some problems for the collection and interpretation of

data. It is likely that two other factors will need to be taken into account. The concept of personal spiritual development is likely to be understood differently according to the model of officer training. In some countries it may be seen as relating closely to suitability for ministry, and may therefore suggest a functional understanding of what is viewed as deeply personal, and therefore ontological, in other contexts. Finally, it is evident that not all will have begun from the same starting point. Whereas there are commonalities in officer training, in reality the provision differs greatly, and so what constitutes as development will also vary.

The work will be limited in its application to the CSLD and The Salvation Army. Practical theology's distinctive contribution arises from a concern with relevance to the contemporary context. This grounds the reflection in a particular situation and avoids an abstract, solely intellectual response, but inevitably leads to conclusions which have been described by Pattison (2000:143) as 'disposable and contextual'. Any application in another situation can only be partial and will inevitably require revision. A similar outcome is implied by the methodology of qualitative research which allows the development of an in-depth understanding of a situation, but is not an attempt to ensure objectivity or accuracy (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:8). In addition, the idiosyncratic nature of the denomination and of officership as a form of ministry will ensure that the conclusions have only limited relevance for other contexts. However, this is not to suggest that the work will be of no interest outside its limited environment, as it is anticipated that there will be resonances that are transferable to other forms of ministry and development.

## **9.0 Value, usefulness and originality.**

'The whole thrust of the Professional Doctorate is to examine values, practices and performances in order to yield better performance' (Bennett 2009:338). This research is rooted in my conviction that it is necessary to effective practice in my professional context. It is designed to begin from the examination of present practice so that it can inform future decision making. The self-reported experience of individuals in relation to their personal spiritual life and their perceptions of how the Centre could benefit them will give relevant contextual information as the provision is developed. Despite an espoused priority of, and focus upon, the spiritual life in Salvation Army officership, the CSLD is a new venture for The Salvation Army. Historically, officer training, whilst looking for spiritual maturity and development in students, has often not provided specifically for it. Although some colleges now do have formal spiritual formation programmes, this is not universally the case and will

certainly not have been so for all delegates to the ICO. Furthermore, there is no common provision for ongoing development after commissioning and ordination.

Whereas it is difficult to predict value and usefulness before the event a number of suggestions may be made. The primary purpose is to generate understanding that will enable me to develop my professional practice in appropriate ways. This research will break new ground by examining how officers sustain and develop their spiritual life and then suggesting ways in which this can be facilitated by the CSLD and will, therefore, close a gap in understanding the spiritual life of Salvation Army officers.

Envisaged secondary benefits include a report which will be disseminated to the Territories in order to help them discern the best way forward for the development of spiritual life in their context. In addition, it is possible that different understandings of the spiritual life, and spiritual life development, will emerge. Acknowledgement of this diversity could inform the policies and practices of officer training. For many years there has been discussion of the viability and desirability of a common curriculum for Salvation Army officer training colleges. The research may be able to contribute to the debate, particularly as it explores issues of adult learning and theological education in relation to the spiritual life. As I bring the data into dialogue with models from other disciplines, it is expected that new understanding of the nature of Salvation Army officership will be generated, particularly in relation to the interrelationship between theory, practice and being.

The method is also, to some extent, counter-cultural. The Salvation Army is a hierarchical organisation which has often made provision for development in a 'top-down' manner, without reference to those for whom it is intended. My brief of appointment is unusual, if not unique, in that it actually requires that I conduct research in order to enhance the effectiveness of the centre. The choice of qualitative, empirical research with human subjects will provide an inductive, original and unique understanding of how Salvation Army officers sustain and develop their spiritual life which draws upon relevant theory in the fields of theological education and adult learning. Future plans would include the evaluation of implementations made as a result of this research, so that a cyclical pattern of research, reflection and review of practice is established.

## **10.0 Conclusion**

The priority of the spiritual life of Salvation Army officers has remained a constant factor throughout Salvation Army history. It is noted as a primary focus of officer training and continues to be described as a measure of effectiveness throughout

officership. Yet no consistent provision for development exists and there is no formal information about those factors which are helpful to officers in the development of their spiritual life. By identifying these, and the current provision available, a rich description of the present situation will be created. This will inform a dialogue with models of theological education and adult learning and thus provide a foundation for the development of my professional practice at the CSLD. This research intends to close a gap in the knowledge relating to the spiritual life development of officers, and in so doing provide material which will enhance my professional practice by informing the strategic thinking of the CSLD and the design of courses and resources. It is also intended that this research should provide the impetus for further research work at the CSLD which will facilitate and encourage the ongoing provision for spiritual life development in The Salvation Army.

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## **Appendix D**

### **The report of the International Spiritual Life Commission:**

#### **Called to be God's People**

The Salvation Army has a God-given freedom in Christ which, if used to the full, could enrich the Army's spiritual life and total ministry in ways far beyond those already enjoyed.

This freedom should never be underestimated, undervalued, or neglected, but be warmly embraced and positively engaged to the glory of God and for the extension of his Kingdom. It is firmly rooted in the Army's tradition, has always been at the heart of its most inspiring and effective initiatives, and points the way ahead for what God has planned for his people.

This is the conviction of the International Spiritual Life Commission, convened by the General to examine and identify aspects of the Army's life which are essential or integral to the spiritual growth of individual Salvationists and the movement itself.

In its five week-long meetings the Commission became increasingly aware both of the rich cultural diversity possessed by the Army in the 104 countries in which it is working, and of the unifying power found in its shared universal beliefs and practices.

The commission also took note of the correspondence, papers, suggestions and support given by fellow Salvationists who took up the worldwide opportunity to share in this challenging and exciting task.

Among aspects Salvationists confirmed as integral to the Army's life were its ministry to the unchurched, the priesthood of all believers (total mobilisation), personal salvation, holiness of life, the use of the mercy seat, and social ministry (unreservedly given).

It was when giving consideration to practices of other churches that the value of the Army's freedom in Christ was particularly evident. The setting of fixed forms of words or acts is not part of Salvationist tradition, though the value placed upon them by some other denominations is recognised.

A great deal of time, prayer and consultation was given to examining the value of introducing or reintroducing a form of holy communion. In addition to considering the large amount of correspondence on the subject, the Commission held a number of Bible studies, gave time to further prayer and also arranged for the visit of a former chairman of the Church of England's Doctrine Commission. Many points of view of various persuasions and convictions were considered, and the members of the Commission itself helpfully reflected those differences. Although such differences still exist, the Commission has been able to present its recommendations in a spirit of unity and harmony, recognising the vast potential for innovative worship and ministry within the freedom which the Army already enjoys in Christ.

### **Sacraments**

It was recognised that the forms of worship used by Christians of the early Church (including the common meal) were not known as sacraments, yet the importance of keeping Christ's atoning sacrifice at the centre of its corporate worship has always been vital to the spiritual life of the Army. Recognising the freedom to celebrate Christ's real presence at all meals and in all meetings, the Commission's statement on Holy Communion encourages Salvationists to use the opportunity to explore together the significance of the simple meals shared by Jesus and his friends, and by the first Christians. It also encourages the development of resources for such events, which would vary according to culture, without ritualising particular words or actions.

The Army's long-held beliefs that no particular outward observance is necessary to inward grace, and that God's grace is freely and readily accessible to all people at all times and in all places were unanimously reaffirmed, as was every Salvationist's freedom to share in communion services conducted in other Christian gatherings.

When considering the subject of baptism the Commission recognised the scriptural truth that there is one body and one Spirit . . . 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all' (Ephesians 4:5-6). All who are in Christ are baptised into the one body by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:12-13).

### **Swearing-in**

There are many ways in which Christians publicly witness to having been baptised into Christ's body. Water baptism is one of them, but the ceremony, like that of the

swearing-in of a Salvation Army soldier, is essentially a witness to the life-changing encounter with Christ which has already happened. The ceremony itself is not the encounter and should not be confused with the act of becoming a Christian. Bearing this in mind, the Commission recommends that the Soldier's Covenant, signed by new soldiers, should incorporate reference to each soldier's baptism into Christ by the Holy Spirit at the moment of conversion.

Specific recommendations made by the Commission to the General highlight ways in which preaching and teaching of the word of God should be given prominence. They encourage cultural expressions of worship and give special emphasis to Bible study, education and training. The importance of Salvationists being better informed and more adequately educated on matters of faith was frequently highlighted in the Commission's deliberations.

There is also a strong recommendation that Army leadership at every level should conform to the biblical model of servant leadership. To assist with this, a re-evaluation of structures, ranks and systems is urged, as is the need to make spirituality an essential quality and qualification for leadership in the movement. Training and development of officers and local officers to assist their spiritual development is also regarded as a priority.

## **Study**

In addition to making recommendations at the General's request for his consideration (together with the Army's international leaders), the Commission makes a Call to Salvationists worldwide to recognise that any outward movement of love for the world requires first of all an inward movement from each Christian towards God. The vitality of our spiritual life as a movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in evangelism and service, but the springs of our spiritual life are to be found in our turning to God in worship, in the disciplines of life in the Spirit, and in the study of God's word, it says. Twelve specific calls are made, together with complementary affirmations I

n the Call, the Commission expresses its belief that each Salvationist's equipping for spiritual warfare must come from God and be rooted in the conviction of the triumph of Christ. The living out of the Christian life in all its dimensions, personal, relational, social and political, can only be achieved by embracing Christ's lordship and the Holy Spirit's enabling.

The Commission has recognised the impossibility of providing (and the foolishness of attempting to provide) guidelines and strategies that would suit all countries and cultures in which the Army operates. One of the Army's greatest strengths is its diversity of culture, methods and resources.

Nevertheless, the Commission is ready to assist with relevant resourcing by providing material that can be used for teaching, clarifying and supporting fellow Salvationists as they respond to a new and revitalised recognition of what God can do in and through his Army by his Spirit and in the freedom which Christ gives.

### ***Members of the International Spiritual life Commission***

The following officers and soldiers were appointed by the General to serve as members of the International Spiritual Life Commission:

Lieut-Colonel Robert Street (Chairman), Lieut-Colonel Earl Robinson (Secretary), Lieut-Colonel Linda Bond, Captain Teofilo Chagas, Commissioner Doreen Edwards, Dr Roger Green, Lieut-Colonel Margaret Hay, Miss Susan Harris, CSM Warren Johnson, Lieut-Colonel David Löfgren, Colonel Emmanuel Miaglia, Lieut-Colonel Stuart Mungate, Colonel Phil Needham, Major Lyell Rader, Captain John Read, Captain Oscar Sanchez, and Major N. M. Vijayalakshmi.

Corresponding members who also attended some of the Commission's deliberations were:

Commissioner Ian Cutmore (former Chairman), Colonel Shaw Clifton, Major Ian Barr and Envoy William van Graan.

Other corresponding members who assisted:

Lieut-Colonel David Kim, Chong-won, Colonel Douglas Davis, Commissioner Peter Chang and Recruiting Sergeant John Bayliss.

The Commission met for five separate weeks.

### **A Statement on Baptism**

After full and careful consideration of The Salvation Army's understanding of, and approach to, the sacrament of water baptism, the International Spiritual Life Commission sets out the following points regarding the relationship between our soldier enrolment and water baptism.

1. Only those who confess Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord may be considered for soldiership in The Salvation Army.
2. Such a confession is confirmed by the gracious presence of God the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and includes the call to discipleship.
3. In accepting the call to discipleship Salvationists promise to continue to be responsive to the Holy Spirit and to seek to grow in grace.
4. They also express publicly their desire to fulfil membership of Christ's Church on earth as soldiers of The Salvation Army.
5. The Salvation Army rejoices in the truth that all who are in Christ are baptised into the one body by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13).
6. It believes, in accordance with Scripture, that there 'is one body and one Spirit ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all' (Ephesians 4:5-6).
7. The swearing-in of a soldier of The Salvation Army beneath the trinitarian sign of the Army's flag acknowledges this truth.
8. It is a public response and witness to a life-changing encounter with Christ which has already taken place, as is the water baptism practised by some other Christians.
9. The Salvation Army acknowledges that there are many worthy ways of publicly witnessing to having been baptised into Christ's body by the Holy Spirit and expressing a desire to be his disciple.
10. The swearing-in of a soldier should be followed by a lifetime of continued obedient faith in Christ.

### **A Statement on Holy Communion**

After full and careful consideration of The Salvation Army's understanding of, and approach to, the sacrament of Holy Communion\*, the International Spiritual Life Commission sets out the following points:

1. God's grace is freely and readily accessible to all people at all times and in all places.
2. No particular outward observance is necessary to inward grace.
3. The Salvation Army believes that unity of the Spirit exists within diversity and rejoices in the freedom of the Spirit in expressions of worship.
4. When Salvationists attend other Christian gatherings in which a form of Holy Communion is included, they may partake if they choose to do so and if the host Church allows.
5. Christ is the one true Sacrament, and sacramental living – Christ living in us and through us – is at the heart of Christian holiness and discipleship.
6. Throughout its history The Salvation Army has kept Christ's atoning sacrifice at the centre of its corporate worship.
7. The Salvation Army rejoices in its freedom to celebrate Christ's real presence at all meals and in all meetings, and in its opportunity to explore in life together the significance of the simple meals shared by Jesus and his friends and by the first Christians.
8. Salvationists are encouraged to use the love feast and develop creative means of hallowing meals in home and corps with remembrance of the Lord's sacrificial love.
9. The Salvation Army encourages the development of resources for fellowship meals, which will vary according to culture, without ritualising particular words or actions.
10. In accordance with normal Salvation Army practice, such remembrances and celebrations, where observed, will not become established rituals, nor will frequency be prescribed.

\*Terminology varies according to culture and denomination, and is not always interchangeable.



## **A Call to Salvationists**

1. We call Salvationists worldwide to worship and proclaim the living God, and to seek in every meeting a vital encounter with the Lord of life, using relevant cultural forms and languages.
2. We call Salvationists worldwide to a renewed and relevant proclamation of and close attention to the word of God, and to a quick and steady obedience to the radical demands of the word upon Salvationists personally, and upon our movement corporately.
3. We call Salvationists worldwide to recognise the wide understanding of the mercy seat that God has given to the Army; to rejoice that Christ uses this means of grace to confirm his presence; and to ensure that its spiritual benefits are fully explored in every corps and Army centre.
4. We call Salvationists worldwide to rejoice in our freedom to celebrate Christ's real presence at all our meals and in all our meetings, and to seize the opportunity to explore in our life together the significance of the simple meals shared by Jesus and his friends and by the first Christians.
5. We call Salvationists worldwide to recognise that the swearing-in of soldiers is a public witness to Christ's command to make disciples and that soldiership demands ongoing radical obedience.
6. We call Salvationists worldwide to enter the new millennium with a renewal of faithful, disciplined and persistent prayer; to study God's word consistently and to seek God's will earnestly; to deny self and to live a lifestyle of simplicity in a spirit of trust and thankfulness.
7. We call Salvationists worldwide to rejoice in their unique fellowship; to be open to support, guidance, nurture, affirmation and challenge from each other as members together of the body of Christ; and to participate actively and regularly in the life, membership and mission of a particular corps.
8. We call Salvationists worldwide to commit themselves and their gifts to the salvation of the world, and to embrace servanthood, expressing it through the joy of self-giving and the discipline of Christ-like living.

9. We call Salvationists worldwide to explore new ways to recruit and train people who are both spiritually mature and educationally competent; to develop learning programmes and events that are biblically informed, culturally relevant, and educationally sound; and to create learning environments which encourage exploration, creativity, and diversity.
10. We call Salvationists worldwide to restate and live out the doctrine of holiness in all its dimensions personal, relational, social and political in the context of our cultures and in the idioms of our day while allowing for and indeed prizing such diversity of experience and expression as is in accord with the Scriptures.
11. We call Salvationists worldwide to join in the spiritual battle on the grounds of a sober reading of Scripture, a conviction of the triumph of Christ, the inviolable freedom and dignity of persons, and a commitment to the redemption of the world in all its dimensions physical, spiritual, social, economic and political.
12. We call Salvationists worldwide to restore the family to its central position in passing on the faith, to generate resources to help parents grow together in faithful love and to lead their children into wholeness, with hearts on fire for God and his mission.

The Founders of The Salvation Army declared their belief that God raised up our movement to enter partnership with him in his great business of saving the world. We call upon Salvationists worldwide to reaffirm our shared calling to this great purpose, as signified in our name.

Salvation begins with conversion to Christ, but it does not end there. The transformation of an individual leads to a transformation of relationships, of families, of communities, of nations. We long for and anticipate with joy the new creation of all things in Christ.

Our mission is God's mission. God in love reaches out through his people to a suffering and needy world, a world that he loves. In mission we express in word and deed and through the totality of our lives the compassion of God for the lost.

Our identification with God in this outward movement of love for the world requires a corresponding inward movement from ourselves towards God. Christ says 'come to me' before he says 'go into the world'. These two movements are in relation to each

other like breathing in and breathing out. To engage in one movement to the exclusion of the other is the way of death. To engage in both is the way of life.

The vitality of our spiritual life as a movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in evangelism and service, but the springs of our spiritual life are to be found in our turning to God in worship, in the disciplines of life in the Spirit, and in the study of God's word.

## **Affirmations**

### **Worship**

#### ***1. The Meeting***

We affirm that God invites us to a meeting in which God is present, God speaks, and God acts. In our meetings we celebrate and experience the promised presence of Christ with his people. Christ crucified, risen and glorified is the focal point, the epicentre of our worship. We offer worship to the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit, in our own words, in acts which engage our whole being: body, soul and mind. We sing the ancient song of creation to its Creator, we sing the new song of the redeemed to their Redeemer. We hear proclaimed the word of redemption, the call to mission, and the promise of life in the Spirit.

#### ***2. Preaching***

We affirm that when the gospel is preached God speaks. The Bible is the written word of God. Preaching is that same word opened, read, proclaimed, and explained. When in our human weakness and foolishness we faithfully proclaim and explain the word, the world may hear and see a new thing; God speaks and God acts. To respond in obedient faith results in a decisive encounter with God. We affirm that God speaks profound truth in simple words, common language, and potent metaphor, and we confess that at times our words, too often shallow, obscure, archaic or irrelevant, have veiled, not revealed, our God.

#### ***3. The Mercy Seat***

We affirm that the mercy seat in our meetings symbolises God's unrelenting call to his people to meet with him. It is not only a place for repentance and forgiveness, but also a place for communion and commitment. Here we may experience a deep awareness of God's abundant grace and claim his boundless salvation. The mercy

seat may be used by anyone, at any time, and particularly in Army meetings when, in response to the proclaimed word, all are invited to share loving and humble communion with the Lord.

#### ***4. The Hallowing of Meals***

We affirm that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one true sacrament of God. His incarnation and continuing gracious presence with his people by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit is the mystery at the heart of our faith. We hear our Lord's command to remember his broken body and his outpoured blood as in our families and in our faith communities we eat and drink together. We affirm that our meals and love feasts are an anticipation of the feasts of eternity, and a participation in that fellowship which is the Body of Christ on earth.

#### ***5. Soldiership***

We affirm that Jesus Christ still calls men and women to take up their Cross and follow him. This wholehearted and absolute acceptance of Christ as Lord is a costly discipleship. We hear our Lord's command to make disciples, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We believe that soldiership is discipleship and that the public swearing-in of a soldier of The Salvation Army beneath the Army's trinitarian flag fulfills this command. It is a public response and witness to the life-changing encounter with Christ which has already taken place, as is the believers' water baptism practised by some other Christians.

#### **The disciplines of life in the Spirit**

#### ***6. The Disciplines of the Inner Life***

We affirm that the consistent cultivation of the inner life is essential for our faith-life and for our fighting fitness. The disciplines of the inner life include solitude, prayer and meditation, study, and self-denial. Practising solitude, spending time alone with God, we discover the importance of silence, learn to listen to God, and discover our true selves. Praying, we engage in a unique dialogue that encompasses adoration and confession, petition and intercession. As we meditate we attend to God's transforming word. As we study we train our minds towards Christlikeness, allowing the word of God to shape our thinking. Practising self-denial, we focus on God and grow in spiritual perception. We expose how our appetites can control us, and draw

closer in experience, empathy and action to those who live with deprivation and scarcity.

### ***7. The Disciplines of our Life Together***

We affirm the unique fellowship of Salvationists worldwide. Our unity in the Holy Spirit is characterised by our shared vision, mission and joyful service. In our life together we share responsibility for one another's spiritual well-being. The vitality of our spiritual life is also enhanced by our accountability to one another, and when we practise the discipline of accountability our spiritual vision becomes objective, our decisions more balanced, and we gain the wisdom of the fellowship and the means to clarify and test our own thinking. Such spiritual direction may be provided effectively through a group or by an individual. Mutual accountability also provides the opportunity to confess failure or sin and receive the assurance of forgiveness and hope in Christ.

### ***8. The Disciplines of our Life in the World***

We affirm that commitment to Christ requires the offering of our lives in simplicity, submission and service. Practising simplicity we become people whose witness to the world is expressed by the values we live by, as well as by the message we proclaim. This leads to service which is a self-giving for the salvation and healing of a hurting world, as well as a prophetic witness in the face of social injustice.

## **Training in God's Word**

### ***9. Cultivating Faith***

We affirm that our mission demands the formation of a soldiery which is maturing, and is being equipped for faithful life and ministry in the world. In strategic and supportive partnership with the family, the Christian community has a duty to provide opportunities for growth into maturity by means of preaching and teaching, through worship and fellowship, and by healing and helping.

### ***10. Teaching Holiness***

We affirm that God continues to desire and to command that his people be holy. For this Christ died, for this Christ rose again, for this the Spirit was given. We therefore determine to claim as God's gracious gift that holiness which is ours in Christ. We confess that at times we have failed to realise the practical consequences of the call

to holiness within our relationships, within our communities and within our movement. We resolve to make every effort to embrace holiness of life, knowing that this is only possible by means of the power of the Holy Spirit producing his fruit in us.

### ***11. Equipping for War***

We affirm that Christ our Lord calls us to join him in holy war against evil in all its forms and against every power that stands against the reign of God. We fight in the power of the Spirit in the assurance of ultimate and absolute victory through Christ's redemptive work. We reject extreme attitudes towards the demonic: on the one hand, denial; on the other, obsession. We affirm that the Body of Christ is equipped for warfare and service through the gifts of the Spirit. By these we are strengthened and empowered. We heed the injunction of Scripture to value all God's gifts, and rejoice in their diversity.

### ***12. Helping the Family***

We affirm that the family plays a central role in passing on the faith. We also recognise that families everywhere are subject to dysfunction and disintegration in an increasingly urbanised world in which depersonalisation, insignificance, loneliness and alienation are widespread. We believe that in the home where Christ's Lordship is acknowledged, and the family is trained in God's word, a spiritually enriching and strengthening environment is provided.

### **Fellowship Meals**

Recognising that every meal may be hallowed, whether in the home or with a congregation, there are strategic occasions when the planning of a fellowship meal may especially enrich corporate spiritual life. Such occasions could include the following:

- \* In preparation for and during the Easter period.
- \* At the beginning of a mission or spiritual campaign.
- \* At a corps celebration such as an anniversary, a New Year's Eve watchnight service, or the opening of a new building.
- \* At a soldiers' meeting.

- \* For the census board or corps council, particularly when important decisions need to be made.
- \* For the launching of the Annual Appeal when the significance of work/service being undertaken in Christ's name could be emphasised.
- \* Harvest thanksgiving.
- \* Between meetings when a meal is required and members of the congregation are unable to travel home to eat because of distance.
- \* When there has been a breakdown in relationships and healing is sought by reflecting on Christ's great act of reconciliation through the Cross.
- \* Whenever it is thought that such a gathering would strengthen the spiritual life and wider fellowship of the corps or centre.
- \* Small group meetings, especially house groups, mid-week meetings or (for example) at the conclusion of a recruits' preparation for soldiership course.
- \* Corps camps, fellowship weekends or retreats.

Two features of the common fellowship meal in the early New Testament Church were the scope for spontaneity and the element of charity, with the poor being included. These elements are also worth noting.

## **Appendix E**

### **The Salvation Army Spiritual Life Development – Annual Report**

*To be completed by all Territories and Commands and sent to IHQ as an annex to the last quarterly report of each year*

#### **A. Conferences and events to help form people in Christlikeness:**

- How often do you hold a territorial/regional congress? How do you ensure that spiritual formation is a key priority for the event?
- How often and in what context (territorial, divisional) do you hold officers'/local officers'/musicians' councils?
- Does your territory hold Brengle Institutes or other events which encourage the development of the spiritual life? Are these for officers or soldiers? How often are they held, and what are your expectations of the outcomes?

#### **B. Provision of resources:**

- What territorial publications (books, magazines, circular letters, audio-visual aids etc) are used to promote the spiritual development of officers and soldiers?
- Does your territory recommend specific resources for encouraging the development of spiritual life e.g. Advent or Lent resources?
- Does your territory have any formal arrangements for the one-to-one mentoring of officers?

#### **C. Policy and planning for the implementation of intentional and systematic opportunities for Spiritual growth:**

- What arrangements are made in the territory to focus prayer on the need for officers/soldiers to develop spiritually?
- What does your territory expect from leaders at all levels with regard to the spiritual formation of the Salvationists for whom they are responsible?
- What arrangements are made in the territory to involve officers and soldiers intentionally in the development of the spiritual life?



## **Appendix F**

### **The Doctrines of The Salvation Army**

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and that they only constitute the divine rule of Christian faith and practice.

We believe that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, The Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.

We believe that there are three persons in the Godhead - the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.

We believe that in the person of Jesus Christ the divine and human natures are united, so that he is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.

We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocence, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness, and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has by his suffering and death made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.

We believe that repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, are necessary to salvation.

We believe that we are justified by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and that he that believeth hath the witness in himself.

We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.

We believe that It is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgement at the end of the world, In the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.

## Appendix G

### Centre for Spiritual Life Development

1. Please identify factors which have been significant in your spiritual development since your commissioning.

Prayer		Study		Retreats	
Bible reading/study		Small Groups		Mentor	
Solitude		Silence		Accountability	
Fasting		Practical ministry		Other (please specify)	

2. Choose the two of these that have made the most significant impact. Describe what you do and how this influences your ministry.

3. As you remember your officer training, identify three or four of the most important factors that were significant to your spiritual growth.

4. List the things (events, resources, personnel etc) that have been provided by your Territory which have assisted in your spiritual growth.

5. How do you expect your ICO experience to help develop your spiritual life?

6. If you are seeking resources to aid in your spiritual life development, which of the following would you choose

Books		SA Mentor		Non SA mentor	
Video/DVD		Friends/Family		Website	
Music		Other (please specify)			

7. Name one book (other than the Bible) which has had a significant impact upon your spiritual development.

8. Before coming to the ICO had you read *Called to be God's People*? Yes/ No

If yes, have you used it

- As a personal resource? Yes/No
- In what ways?

- In your ministry? Yes/No
- In what ways?

9. If you were asked by a candidate for officership to explain the phrase 'spiritual life development' what would you say?

10. What would you recommend to help them develop their own spiritual life?

11. What, in your opinion, is evidence of a developing spiritual life?

12. How is your spiritual life related to your ministry as an officer?

Please add any other relevant comments.

Would you be prepared to discuss these issues in more detail in conversation with Karen Shakespeare? Yes/No

Please return your completed questionnaire to Karen Shakespeare by

Thank you for your participation.

Karen Shakespeare  
Lieut. Colonel

Name (optional):

Territory:

Are you male ☐ female ☐

Years of officership:

# The Salvation Army

## INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE FOR OFFICERS & CENTRE FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE DEVELOPMENT



A registered Charity

The Cedars  
34 Sydenham Hill  
London SE26 6LS  
Telephone: 020 8299 8450  
Fax: 020 7192 3056

### ***PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM***

#### **NAME OF PARTICIPANT:**

**Title of the project:** Investigating and facilitating the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers.

#### **Researcher contact details:**

Karen Shakespeare.  
The International College for Officers and Centre for Spiritual Life Development,  
The Cedars, 34 Sydenham Hill, London SE26 6LS.  
Telephone 0208 299 8477  
Email Karen\_Shakespeare@salvationarmy.org

1. I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet which is attached to this form. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.
3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded.
4. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.
5. I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.
6. I agree to the publication of data arising from this research, provided that confidentiality is maintained.

Data Protection: I agree to the University<sup>4</sup> processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me\*

Name of participant (print).....Signed.....Date.....

Name of witness (print).....Signed.....Date.....

<sup>4</sup> "The University" includes Anglia Ruskin University and its partner colleges

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP

***If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return to the main investigator named above.***

Title of Project:

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Fax: 020 7192 3056

### ***PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET A***

#### **Section A: The Research Project**

**Title of the project:** Investigating and facilitating the spiritual life development of Salvation Army officers.

I am currently researching for a Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology with Anglia Ruskin University. This will explore how Salvation Army officers sustain and develop their personal spiritual life in the context of an activist, missional organisation. It will then suggest ways in which the Centre for Spiritual Life Development may facilitate and support this process.

The results of this research will be reported in and inform my doctoral thesis as well as enabling me to contribute with understanding to the future development of the Centre for Spiritual Life Development.

This research has the support of my line managers and is funded by The Salvation Army. Should you require further information, I can be contacted in person at the above address or by email at [Karen\\_Shakespeare@salvationarmy.org](mailto:Karen_Shakespeare@salvationarmy.org)

#### **Section B: Your Participation in the Research Project**

I am inviting you to take part in this research because you are a delegate to the International College for Officers (ICO) between March and October 2010. My aim is to ask all delegates in the given time period to complete the questionnaire, in order to provide a broad, yet manageable sample of opinion and attitude. All responses will be treated confidentially and will be stored in a locked cupboard. The questionnaires will be analysed and broad conclusions drawn in order to inform the future policies and practice of the Centre for Spiritual Life Development. No individual will be identified in the final text.

If you are happy to participate in this research, please sign the attached consent forms, keeping one copy for yourself and returning one to me with the questionnaire.

Should you not wish to participate in this research for any reason, I would be grateful if you would let me know. In addition, if you do agree to participate, you also have the right of withdrawal from the research at any stage in the process.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP,  
TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM

# The Salvation Army

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### ***PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET B***

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This research has the support of my line managers and is funded by The Salvation Army. Should you require further information, I can be contacted in person at the above address or by email at [Karen\\_Shakespeare@salvationarmy.org](mailto:Karen_Shakespeare@salvationarmy.org)

#### **Section B: Your Participation in the Research Project**

I am inviting you to take part in this research because you are a delegate to the International College for Officers (ICO) between March and October 2010. My aim is interview a small group of delegates in the given time period in order to gain an in-depth understanding of their spiritual journey since their commissioning and ordination as Salvation Army officers, including the provision made for their development by The Salvation Army and their understanding of the ways in which the Centre for Spiritual Life Development can facilitate their personal growth and their ministry. All responses will be treated confidentially. I would like to record the interview, but you will not be identified on the recording. It will be stored electronically on a password protected computer and once my analysis is complete it will be erased. The interviews will be analysed and broad conclusions drawn in order to inform the future policies and practice of the Centre for Spiritual Life Development. No individual will be identified in the final text.

If you are happy to participate in this research, please sign the attached consent forms, keeping one copy for yourself and returning one to me with the questionnaire.

Should you not wish to participate in this research for any reason, I would be grateful if you would let me know. In addition, if you do agree to participate, you also have the right of withdrawal from the research at any stage in the process.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP,  
TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM



## Appendix H

### Summary of Questionnaire Analysis

#### General issues

- The total number of responses received was 52 (possible total number 72), a response rate of 72%.
- Each of the five Salvation Army zones were represented, but not in equal proportion. Delegates for the ICO are selected on a numerical ratio relating to the size on the zone, rather than 20% of places allocated to each zone.
- Zone and Gender

The overall gender relationship for the three sessions was 54.2% male, 45.8% female. The percentage ratio for questionnaire responses was 53.8% male, 46.2% female.

	Africa	Americas	Europe	SPEA	South Asia	Total
Male	3	10	4	5	6	28
Female	6	6	5	5	2	24
Total	9	16	9	10	8	52

- The average number of years of officership, calculated on 44 responses was 20.4 years. 8 delegates did not respond to the question asking for years of service.

Years of officership	Africa	Americas	Europe	SPEA	South Asia	Total
0-10	0	1	0	0	0	1
10-15	1	2	4	1	2	10
16-20	2	2	1	7	2	14
21-25	2	2	2	2	1	9
26-30	0	4	1	0	2	7
30-35	1	1	1	0	0	3
Total	6	12	9	10	7	44

- English is a second or third language for a considerable proportion of the delegates. There were 20 respondents from UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand; English language skills varied considerably amongst the remainder, with 11 responses translated by official translators (2 Mizo, 6 Indonesian and 3 Spanish). This affected the responses in a number of ways. Some responses were short or occasionally unclear as a result of limited competence in written English; some misunderstanding of questions was evident, translation inevitably adds a layer of interpretation

- The extent to which responses were open is difficult to judge. Some delegates mentioned in conversation that they were finding it difficult to put personal thoughts into words, although these comments often preceded the most full and detailed submissions. Others may have been wary of putting their thoughts on paper, seeing the questionnaire as some sort of 'official' document, despite careful explanations and written permission forms. The necessity of translators may have added an extra dimension, as this would effectively add a third party.
- Financially Independent Territories 22 and Grant Aided Territories (i.e. funding from IHQ) 30 (non respondents FIT 11, GAT9 ) both translation groups were exclusively GAT, this may have skewed the overall statistics for these three sessions. The financial status of the Territory would not be a factor in the balancing of sessions. The financial status of the territory, whilst initially seemingly irrelevant, may be a factor in some of the trends that are evident in the responses.

### Question 1

#### 1. Please identify factors which have been significant in your spiritual development since your commissioning. (selections from a grid)

Bible Reading	46
Prayer	46
Practical Ministry	37
Retreats	32
Study	29
Small Groups	25
Accountability	23
Solitude	20
Mentor	20
Fasting	19
Silence	15
Other	7

- Highest results – Prayer and Bible reading 88.4%, Practical ministry 71.1%, Retreats 61.5%, Study 55.8%
- Is this proportion a reflection of the evangelical tradition of the 'quiet time', and also the *Orders and Regulations for Officers* which emphasises the importance of a daily devotional life characterised by prayer and Bible reading?
- Many delegates ticked a range of factors, suggesting that for each individual spiritual development can be facilitated in many ways.

- The relatively high incidence of 'practical ministry' suggests an integral link between the spiritual life and action.
- Study is also important; understanding of our faith is significant in its development.
- Only one response added corporate worship under 'other' and that no one listed this under question 2- is this a failure of the questionnaire or a realistic reflection of SA concepts of the spiritual life as something that is personal and individualistic rather than corporate?

## Question 2

**Choose the two of these that have made the most significant impact. Describe what you do and how this influences your ministry.**

Prayer	28
Bible Reading	20
Practical ministry	11
Fasting	8
Mentor	8
Study	8
Retreats	7
Accountability	4
Solitude	3
Small Groups	2
Silence	0

- Whereas the response to question 1 indicate that prayer and Bible reading are factors in the spiritual development of the majority of respondents, this question indicated that they are the *most significant* factors for a significantly lower proportion of delegates - Prayer (53.8%) and Bible reading (34.5%). This suggests that whilst they are the highest recorded factors, there is a trend towards seeking spiritual development in a wider range of areas.
- The 21.1% incidence of practical ministry may to some extent be explained by the pragmatic nature of some officers, who link activism closely with their spiritual life. Comments included 'being personally reflective on my ministry' (6); 'I need to be among people. Then I see myself useful to God, I can influence people to be transformed.(9)'; 'my practical ministry challenged me and questioned my spiritual life. (27)'; 'In practical matters I have listened and learned and often applied spiritual principles to my life (42)'.

- The low incidence of silence and solitude is consistent with their relatively low importance in the historical tradition in which The Salvation Army is located.
- The very low incidence of the importance of small groups is a possible indication of the way in which The Salvation Army in the twentieth century did not prioritise this part of its Methodist heritage.
- There were no significant trends relating to individual practices and years of officership.
- Three gender differences were evident – Mentor (2 male and 6 female- relational thinking ?), practical ministry (8 men, 3 women), study (6 men, 2 women)
- The rationales for choice were often ministry related- 55.7% of respondents mentioned their ministry.

Does this suggest identification with the role, so that spiritual life is intrinsically connected with vocation? 'I am my work'. Comments included 'my practical ministry challenged me and questioned my spiritual life (27)'; the mentorship of older, more experienced ministers/leaders has helped me to grow in my leadership (30); 'I need to know that my decisions are a response to this time alone with God. (33)'

Or is it an indication of an instrumental focus in spiritual development? Practices are valued because they are useful to work. 'I pray before performing any duty....any time I am tempted to perform without prayer I become confused and all does not go well (28)'; 'Bible studies have been the way to be instructed for service (16)'; 'reading spiritual books to build my faith and there is something new for my ministry. (43)'

Ministry related responses	
Accountability	2
Bible Reading	14
Fasting	4
Mentor/spiritual director	4
Practical ministry	8
Prayer	15
Retreats	2
Silence	0
Small Groups	1
Solitude	2
Study	4
Total of ministry related responses	29

• **Question 2, combination of significant factors**

	Accountability	Bible Reading	Fasting	Mentor	Practice	Prayer	Retreats	Silence	Small Groups	Solitude	Study
Accountability	4	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Bible Reading	1	20	2	1	2	12	2	0	0	1	1
Fasting	0	2	8	1	1	4	1	0	0	0	0

Mentor/spiritual director	0	1	1	8	0	3	0	0	0	1	1
Practical ministry	0	2	1	0	11	2	1	0	0	0	3
Prayer	3	12	4	3	2	28	1	0	1	1	1
Retreats	0	2	1	0	1	1	7	0	0	0	1
Silence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Small Groups	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	1
Solitude	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	0
Study	0	1	0	1	3	1	1	0	1	0	8

- Highest combination is prayer and Bible reading 23%. There is no other significant trend.

	Africa	Americas	Europe	SPEA	South Asia	Totals
Bible Reading	3	9	1	2	5	20
Prayer	8	7	2	7	4	28
Prayer and Bible Reading	3	4	0	2	3	12

- Of the 12 delegates who named the 'classic' evangelical combination of prayer and Bible reading, 11 were from GA Territories. There may be a relationship between financial status and reliance upon traditional devotional exercises, which involve little or no extra cost.
- This relationship may also be indicated by the fact that, of the 19 other delegates from GA Territories, prayer was important for 13. Of the 19, only two delegates mentioned anything that would require resources over and above the normal provision of officers' retreats - both were study, one specifically referred to reading books, the other was external study - an officer appointed to the training college and financed for further education.
- In contrast, of the 22 delegates from FI territories, 11 mentioned things that indicated that there had been funding from the Territory over and above the provision of officers' retreats.
- Another possible explanation may be the ethos of the Territories concerned. Although The Salvation Army has certain common features world-wide and often was initially established on the pattern of the parent body in London, individual territories have developed in different ways, with some retaining a greater emphasis upon traditional evangelical methods than others.

### Question 3

**As you remember your officer training, identify three or four of the most important factors that were significant to your spiritual growth.**

Study	28
Personal Spiritual Formation	21
Practice	19
Staff	19
Corporate Spiritual Formation	16
Other	13
Peer	12

- Study (53.8%) was listed as most important- higher than personal spiritual devotions, yet in ministry only 8 (15.3%) respondents mentioned study as one of the two most significant factors in ongoing development.
- Staff and peers together make people the most significant factor (59.6%).
- 36.5% noted the value of practice in training; 71% said it is a factor in ministry, but only 21.1% that it was one of the two most significant factors. Comments and conversations suggest that it is often also one of the most likely factors to be detrimental to the spiritual life.

### Question 4

**List the things (events, resources, personnel etc) that have been provided by your Territory which have assisted in your spiritual growth.**

Events	40						
Resources	17						
Funding	8						
Personnel	8						
Appointments	4						
	Appointments	Events	Brengle	Councils	Funding	Personnel	Resources
Africa	0	7	1	4	0	2	2
Americas	2	13	5	9	1	1	7
Europe	0	6	4	5	2	1	4
SPEA	0	7	7	8	4	1	2
South Asia	2	7	2	4	1	3	2

- The provision of events is the single most significant factor in this question (76.9%). Most often mentioned were officers' retreats and councils, with Brengle Holiness institutes also specified (36.5%).

- Resources included books, DVD etc.
- Only one officer from the 2/3 world mentioned the provision of funds for further study.
- Significantly low percentage of officers (15.3%) note the availability of personnel (either in terms of appointment or a specific individual) – this in stark contrast to the training experience. Is this because more support is necessary at the training stage, or is this a gap in the system? Should officers who are established in ministry be more self-sufficient? Is this an indication of the emphasis upon function and activism that characterises The Salvation Army? Is this accompanied by a lack of emphasis upon relational aspects? How does the hierarchical emphasis on the governance of the Army affect this?
- There were only 4 respondents who noted any link between the appointments they were given and spiritual life, this was most often related to growth in maturity.

#### **Question 5.**

**How do you expect your ICO experience to help develop your spiritual life?**

Devotional	35
Time	18
Vocational	18
Staff and Delegates	11
Resources	8
Study	8
Internationalism	4

- Although the questionnaire was introduced to the delegates within a few days of their arrival, the responses were often written after about three to four weeks at the ICO. This means that some delegates have noted experience as well as expectation. e.g. 'this has been a time of spiritual renewal'(3); 'the various methods of prayer and the fellowship has enriched my spiritual life' (27); 'lectures on spiritual development have helped (29)'.
- 46 of the 49 responses were located in some way in the first three categories. They show a general attitude of appreciation for personal time and space to be intentionally reflective, both about the inner life and ministry. 'Alone time' (23); 'I can fully enjoy the time to pray, meditate on the Word...' (26); ' 'time-read, reflect, listen' (11); 'By providing me time and space to re-ignite my spiritual disciplines' (8); 'Time to rest, relax, pray and read scripture' (6).

- There is also a sense of reclaiming lost ground, or that which has been obscured by the demands of daily life 'This winter/spring has been very busy and I have not managed to have the private devotion life that I want. I hope to be back in the good routine, get time to read, benefit from spiritual benefit and teaching...' (5); 'it is an extended time away that over time is helping to chip away at any defences I have erected over the years' (20); 'Refreshment/refilling, renewal/healing' (12); 'I am expecting to have a holy awakening and a re-discovering of who I was born to be' (24); 'need to nurture and heal my soul, feeling tired and wounded after many years of frontline ministry' (12)
- Another related but distinct theme is the renewal of vocation 'a boost that will give me the impulse to maintain God's calling afresh and alive'; 'It reminds me of my calling and covenant' (27); 'I feel motivated, proud to be a Salvationist, an officer (33)'; 'help me to continue growing in God to fulfil my commitment and calling as officer'(17); 'A time for rediscovery of my identity as a SA officer' (19); 'Seek and gain a vision of what God wants to do in me and through me in the days ahead. Establish some foundational principles that will guide me and lead me in the next part of my journey in ministry' (51)
- The general indication is that the ICO provides a significant mid-ministry 'health check' for many delegates. This is often expressed in terms that suggest a lack of time and space for reflection in daily life.
- There is also a sense of appreciation for new experiences, being moved out of one's comfort zone as a stimulus to development or being challenged by the interaction with other delegates. 'Becoming comfortable with "quiet times" and different ways of praying' (42); 'exposure to others who challenge and inspire me'(20); 'enrich me with knowledge of the Salvation Army ministry across the world' (52);

## Question 6

**If you are seeking resources to aid in your spiritual life development, which of the following would you choose. (Choice from list)**

Books	40
Friends family	19
Music	31
Non SA mentor	16
Other	13
SA mentor	21
Video DVD	28
Website	13



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	Books	Friends family	Music	Non SA mentor	Other	SA mentor	Video DVD	Website
Africa	7	4	4	2	1	4	5	1
Americas	12	8	11	4	5	8	8	4
Europe	7	3	4	6	2	3	4	1
SPEA	10	3	7	4	1	4	7	6
South Asia	4	1	5	0	4	2	4	1

- The relatively high numbers who would seek a mentor seems to indicate an expressed need for a relationship with a specific person in order to aid spiritual life development. 7 respondents had ticked both SA mentor and non SA mentor, suggesting no particular preference. 30 had only indicated one or the other with a slight preference for an in-house relationship. See question 2 - Although only a relatively small number of people noted a one to one relationship (mentoring or spiritual direction) as one of the two most significant factors in their spiritual development, the comments indicated a high level of importance placed on the relationship - 'vital to my officership' (10); 'a profound impact on my life and ministry' (11); 'helped me to integrate all the elements of my faith' (4); 'my mentor helps me to see who I am and have' (26).
- There is no distinctive pattern relating to the use of electronic media, although there is general knowledge within The Salvation Army that officers in Africa and South Asia are less likely to have personal access, with a resultant practice that official letters and communications will be sent via the territorial headquarters rather than to the individual concerned.
- The high incidence of music is interesting - no-one had added this to the list in question 1, yet they clearly feel that music is a possible factor in spiritual development- thus reflecting the SA (and evangelical) ethos and emphasis on music as a vital part of Christian worship.
- 'Other' includes opportunities for practical service, tele-evangelists, quality supervision, praying in community, spiritual retreats, short courses,

#### Question 7.

**Name one book (other than the Bible) which has had a significant impact upon your spiritual development.**

No response	6
SA	14
Non SA	32

- There were no trends, prominent authors or significant themes, but it is interesting that a majority seek Christian resources outside the denomination

#### **Question 8.**

**Before coming to the ICO had you read *Called to be God's People*?**

No	29
Yes	20

	No	Yes
Africa	6	3
Americas	8	8
Europe	5	4
SPEA	7	2
South Asia	3	3

- Although a number of the 'no' responses can be accounted for by the lack of a translation in a relevant language e.g. Indonesian (6 responses), it was also evident that the book has not been promoted or read in large parts of the English speaking Army world, especially North America.
- 18 of those who had read the book prior to coming to the ICO had used it as a resource for ministry, with 13 of the 18 indicating that it had also been a personal resource. This might suggest that officers are seeking SA resources for ministry and are willing to use them when provided. Issues of translation are highlighted- although IHQ will provide funding for translation for GA territories, there are significant obstacles - Who chooses the texts to be translated? The availability of suitable skilled translators. The limitations of printed resources in contexts where literacy is low.

#### **Question 9.**

**If you were asked by a candidate for officership to explain the phrase 'spiritual life development' what would you say?**

Personal prayer and Bible reading	16
Growth	14
Lifestyle	13
Relationship	12
Holiness or Christ-likeness	12

Inner life	10
Process	7
SA Activity	6
Self	6
Nurture	5
Journey	2
No response	2
Formation	1
Belief	1

- Responses showed a strong focus upon a dynamic process which nurtures or grows the inner life. 'Cultivating and nurturing the spiritual life through a strong relationship with God.' (17); 'nurturing and developing the spiritual man or inner soul' (8); 'the developing and nurturing of our inner life' (19); 'the growth of the inner believer' (20); the development of the internal for the life of ministry/journey ahead' (23). There is a sense of dualism here which separates the 'spiritual life' from 'physical life'.
- The resulting change is demonstrated in holiness or Christ-likeness. 'Nurturing their personal holiness for them to see life in God's view/dimension.'(28); 'Growing in faith and holiness' (36); 'It is a process of becoming more and more like Jesus and allow his beauty and holiness to radiate in us' (41). The Salvationist tradition of personal holiness as the measure of the spiritual life whilst not particularly strong, was evident in some responses.
- Perhaps the most interesting factor is the diversity of responses and lack of any shared definition.

#### **Question 10.**

**What would you recommend to help them develop their own spiritual life?**

Bible	36
Prayer	35
Study and reading	21
Practice	11
Retreats      Spiritual Disciplines	10
Accountability	8
Mentor	7
Lifestyle	6

- A definite trend towards the traditional corporate response - perhaps this is surprising in view of the fact that so few of the respondents actually believe

prayer and/or Bible reading to be one of the two major factors in their own spiritual development. Does this indicate an unreflective response to the question or an institutionalised theoretical response?

- Study and reading - is this seen as more necessary for the development of an officer candidate than ongoing development for officers?  
'Never stop learning. Learning from the Bible, learning from other people, learning from life experiences, read more spiritual books and do more listening to the spiritual leader. Get involved actively in the ministry and if there is opportunity given, take it seriously and do the best as you can' (52)
- Practice and lifestyle - training in habits of godliness- *habitus*. What is the relationship between spiritual experience and practice? What needs to accompany practice in order for it to lead to real development? 'engagement in mission' (11); 'active participation in the corps' (3); 'active in ministries'(44) 'Live the life of holiness out for people to see...' (29)
- Yet this is also a very individualistic picture - there is a relatively low incidence of corporate spiritual practices or life in community, although a few responses hint at this. 'identify another believer with whom to travel this journey for support and accountability ' (20); 'someone to share their spiritual journey with (19) ; 'seek God always in your day to day life' (48); 'attendance at worship, involvement in small groups' (12); 'service and worship' (6) ; 'diligent in attending services' (49)

### Question 11.

**What, in your opinion, is evidence of a developing spiritual life?**

Change in spiritual life	30
Lifestyle	18
Fruit of the Spirit	11
Attitude to People	11
Active participation in the church	10
Christ-likeness	7
Holiness	4

- The majority of the responses are a combination between a description of the inner life and the observable behaviour that results from that change. 'Behaviour and attitude- this is evidence of our spiritual life' (22); 'Simple answer would be a profound expression of love to Christ, others and even self.' 46); 'Mature in the way of thinking, have a good relationship with God and the other, trustable and sincere in showing God's love to others in what we do or say' (52)

- A wider perspective is seen in the following 'an openness to finding/seeing God in the everyday, and in our relationships with others. A sense of God's presence guiding the individual' (19)
- A strong theme is that maturity in the spiritual life will result in good interpersonal relationships. 'Inward and outward transformation evidenced in relationships' (11); 'the evidence of the fruit of the spirit in dealing with people or observing in interpersonal relationships with others' (8); 'love your fellow neighbour' (44)'; maturity in relationships and openness to learning from others' (1); 'respect and care (5); 'a person who is learning to love more, to judge less' (9)
- A emphasis on ministry related tasks is evident in some responses 'fruitful ministry' (11); 'passion for souls, involvement in serving the poor' (12); 'a passion for the word and for mission' (11); 'maintaining Christian community (29)'; 'serious in implementing tasks and ministries'(50); 'interested in the spiritual growth of others' (41).

## **Question12.**

### **How is your spiritual life related to your ministry as an officer?**

- Diverse answers but major themes are effectiveness and empowerment, connectedness and a necessary relationship.
- The comments were overwhelmingly in a linear direction from the spiritual life to practical ministry. There was little consideration that the practical ministry might also feed, challenge or damage the spiritual life, although some of the comments that were coded under 'connectedness' and 'necessary relationship' did allow for this, with use of phrases such as 'intertwined'(6), 'cross-cutting themes' (3), 'inextricably linked' (12), inseparable (51).

#### *Effectiveness and empowerment:*

- This is typically expressed as the spiritual life being the basis for effective ministry 'not sure how effective ministry would be without it' (i.e. spiritual life) (32); 'you need to grow spiritually or develop so that your ministry can go well.' (40); the 'health of one contributes to the other'. (6)
- The spiritual life is also seen as empowering ministry 'the confidence of operating out of his power and his will bears fruit' (11); 'my spiritual life determines my position in ministry' (28); 'it (spiritual life) I the source of power' (31); 'I have to feed myself so I can feed my people. (23)

### *Connectedness*

- Spiritual life as the source of ministry 'My own spiritual life is the source, the well. Officership is the channel, the tool, to practice or exercise this' (30); 'God is the foundation/source of ministry' (5); 'The two should be inextricably linked' (34); 'I am not just a leader by word. I am also a leader by deed and thought' (41) – interesting use of phrase inextricably linked by respondents in different sessions from different continents.

### *Necessary relationship*

- 'It is impossible to carry on with our ministry by our own efforts (2); 'they are cross-cutting themes that are united together. We could not separate them.' (3); 'deeply connected. It is what I live out of' (4); 'closely intertwined' (6); 'without intimacy with God, there is no ministry for me'(33)

### *Interesting single comments*

- 'only knowing by ear does not lead to real ministry, that leaves us like a profession' (14) – contrast between profession and vocation
- reasons for resignation of officership - 'I think many times that not managing to take time for private spiritual life is the "real reason", but I never hear that directly.' (5)
- 'my spiritual life should be better than the people I serve' (30) hierarchical spirituality?
- 'I enjoy my ministry among people. I love sharing with them what I have in showing my love to God and to people, to share God's words. But in other ways I learned also from them, how people overcome their situations how they depend on God in their hard time. I learned the process of transforming life and it does teach me many lessons of life, become inspiration in my ministry' (52).

February 2011

## Appendix I

### ***Knowing, being and doing: a reflective, diagnostic exercise***

*'A full orbbed spirituality involves grounding in biblical truth and sound doctrine (knowing), growing character and personal experience with God (being), and developing gifts and skills in the service of others (doing)...'*

*Kenneth Boa (2001) Conformed to his image: 300*

It is important for every officer to take time to intentionally focus upon our inner life; to nurture that which is our deeply personal connection with God, and for all of us there will be moments of revelation, insight, challenge and confirmation that cannot be anticipated, planned for or engineered.

However, there is also a wider understanding of the spiritual life. Roman Catholic author Philip Sheldrake (1991:60) says that spirituality is concerned with the 'whole of human life at depth'. We have one life, which has many dimensions. Our 'spiritual life' is not something separate but is simply our one life lived well in the presence of God and before God. A Salvation Army song makes the point well.

One life to live, O may I live for thee,  
Give me your spirit and I shall be free  
Free from desire my own way to pursue  
Free to obey your will, my whole life through.  
(Gwyneth Redhead)

It is important to pay attention to this holistic concept of the spiritual life. It is all too easy to separate our inner life from the rest of living, and all too easy to be so busy living that our inner life is neglected. A simple model which integrates knowing, being and doing is helpful.

'Knowing, being and doing' is a framework for reflecting holistically on our life. It assumes that our whole life is 'spiritual', that is that it is lived in the presence of God, and all that we do is shaped by our relationship with God.

**Knowing** - This includes what we believe and why we believe it, our understanding of the world in which we live and our understanding of people. Knowing is not only related to academic learning.

**Being** - This specifically relates to our personal relationship with God and includes how our inner life is shaped by Christ, our Christian character and who we have the potential to become.

**Doing** - The Christian life is never complete unless it results in a 'way of being in the world'. What should we do? How should we act? What choices do we make?

All three areas are important, both for mature spirituality, and in our Christian leadership. They have their place as areas of the curriculum in officer training, but it is in understanding and reflecting on the *interrelationship* between them that we can ensure that our spiritual life is holistic, grounded and dynamic. Each element influences the other two and our lives are diminished when they are not blended together. We need to habitually make deliberate connections between how we understand our faith, who we are in Christ and what we do.

We believe that our inner life is the centre, the root of our action, but reflection on action can also challenge and shape the inner life. For example, a pastoral encounter may touch us deeply, and lead to a new experience and understanding of who God is in relation to his people. Similarly, as we learn to understand our faith more, we may also be motivated to act, or to pray in a more focused way.

A personal reflective exercise, which prayerfully reviews our life and ministry, drawing upon our knowledge of God, our situation, and the world may be helpful. It can be adapted to fit a wide range of circumstances. The aim is not only to give a view of the current situation but to aid ongoing holistic spiritual development.

**Please review your life over the past week/month/year** – you may find it useful to make some notes or write an entry in your personal journal

- How well have you 'blended' knowing, being and doing in your life and in your ministry?



- Have you neglected, or over-emphasised, one area? Are there reasons why this has happened?
- Have you intentionally given attention to your inner life?
- How is your prayer life connected to your practical ministry? How is your inner life affected when your ministry is good/challenging?
- What have you learned? What, specifically, do you need to learn to enhance your life and ministry? How can you achieve this?
- How is your understanding and interpretation of God, the Bible and the world related to what you do and who you are?
- Do you pray before acting? Do you prayerfully review your actions?
- What action do you need to take as a result of this reflection?
- When do you need to repeat this process?

You may find it helpful to share these reflections with a mentor or trusted friend and to decide together on a way forward, and a process for accountability.