ENGAGING THE DANCE: EXPLORING LEADERSHIP AND UNDERSTANDING GOD AS TRIUNE

by

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Abstract

This research explores the interface between leadership practice and the understanding of God among Anglicans, lay and ordained, in the Diocese of Melbourne. A social understanding of the Trinity and the notion of perichoresis are used as a resource, with particular reference to the work of Moltmann, Johnson, Gunton and LaCugna. Consideration is given to developments in the Anglican Communion, secular leadership theory and Christian perspectives. How people articulate the theological understandings that underlie the church’s leadership practice and possible avenues to foster future dialogue with and contribution to leadership theory are significant.

A qualitative approach using grounded theory principles is used to explore the leadership experience and theological perspectives of 12 participants in significant leadership roles in the Diocese.

Participants’ leadership practice is considered under categories of leadership style, leadership context, the processes engaged and how understanding of God connects with each of these. Some significant themes emerge about language and symbols of leadership style, connections between style and context, issues of trust and transparency, perceptions of power and authority, consultation and discussion, a theology of ministry to inform decision making, the significance of self-awareness and transition, language for expressing understandings of God and how such understandings connect with leadership style and practice.

The findings indicate a diversity of leadership understandings and practice as well as theological foundations. The impact of experience of transition, context and new awareness is profound. Secular leadership models are predominant in language used for leadership practice, with limited critique of focus in meaning and purpose. Understandings of God are more apparent in planning processes, while connection with personal conduct of leadership tends to be exploratory. Opportunity for focused reflection is positively received, suggesting further work would strengthen networking, capacity for theological articulation as well as dialogue with and contribution to leadership theory.
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I deeply appreciated and enjoyed the contribution of the participants in this study, without whom the ‘dance’ of this research project could not have occurred.

I dedicate this thesis to those who have the courage to lead differently and who search for the language to express God’s undergirding of their leadership practice.

Statement of Authorship

Except where reference is made in the text of this thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified or been awarded another degree of diploma. No other person’s work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis. This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

The Reverend Cecilia Francis
Melbourne, 8th December 2014
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Chapter 1  

Introduction:

*When minds and bodies meet as one*

*and find their true affinity,*

*we join the dance in God begun*

*and move within the Trinity,*

*for all the good that’s seen and done*

*in every kind of unity,*

*begins with God, forever One,*

*whose nature is Community....  (Wren 1989, p. 212)*

Entering into the research project:

The origins of this project lie in my own experience as an Anglican priest in the Diocese of Melbourne where I have exercised leadership at senior levels across a variety of ministries both as an ordained and an authorized lay minister. Over this range of experience, I observed that leadership practice, within Anglican tradition at least, tended to be influenced by and rely on concepts of secular leadership theory and management contexts rather than drawing on the theological resources which undergird our understandings of ministry and its practice.

This awareness prompted my asking the question: Do our understandings of God inform our leadership practice? If so, in what ways, and if not, why not? And further, given that we espouse an understanding of God as triune, what might this and developments in a social understanding of the Trinity have to say to our leadership practice in the Church.

The questions were triggered initially by two situations – the first was in the context of
conversation with a bishop with whom I worked collegially in diocesan structures. He observed that my style of leadership, though effective, was unlike any he had experienced, but that he struggled to articulate its difference. The interchange stimulated my own search to articulate my leadership style and to consider why it was regarded as different. The second situation was a book discussion among local Anglican clergy exploring the nature of priesthood for our times. While some suggested we needed to recapture former understandings of what it meant to be a priest, I found myself asking rather, what does our understanding of God have to say about the nature of priesthood for the church in the future?

What followed was a renewed awareness of the theological resources which undergird Anglican practice, especially trinitarian theology which is both central and visible in much of Anglican liturgical and ministry practice – embedded in our practice of worship, in baptismal initiation, in Eucharistic thanksgiving, in absolution, blessing and patterns of prayer.

**The scope of the project:**

**The aim of the project and its key questions**

The aim of this research project is to explore what informs the leadership practice of ordained and lay Anglicans in Melbourne, especially the place of understanding God as triune. Three further significant questions are considered - a) what principles, models or theory informs and influences leadership practice in the Anglican Church in Melbourne, b) given the visibility of a trinitarian understanding of God for Anglican practice, what connections or disconnections are there between this understanding and leadership practice, and c) what might strengthening these connections mean for leadership practice in the changed social and organizational contexts in which the church conducts its life now and in the coming years? These questions are addressed in the context of the formal leadership structure of Anglican tradition within the
worldwide Anglican Communion.

The questions also arose out of a journey in leadership where there were few role models for the style I sought to develop, especially as I frequently found myself pioneering new directions. Being in leadership positions across diverse spheres and institutional contexts including healthcare institutions, professional bodies for pastoral care and education, diocesan and local church contexts, as well as in formation processes for those preparing for ministry, I have sought to exercise appropriate and authentic leadership for these differing contexts. I have had to grapple with how leadership is best communicated, given voice, expressed behaviorally and in action, which holds people together in a unity of purpose and encourages seeing change as a creative opportunity.

A further concern emerged in relation to my questions and reflections. My observations were that leadership practice in the church was characterized by two features. First, that the language, behaviours and decision making processes of leadership practice tended to be influenced predominantly by secular leadership and management models, not necessarily with critique, and second, that there was not a well-developed capacity to bring theological understandings into the reflective process on the actual practice of leadership. This highlighted for me the need to bring together theological insights and secular understandings of leadership so they might inform one another and where appropriate, to be open to critique. This led, in turn, to the naming of the two significant aspects of the project – articulating the theological understandings that underlie the church’s leadership practice so that there might be engagement with and contribution to leadership theory.
Interdisciplinary connections

World events of recent years have led to an increasing focus on organizational, financial and political leadership globally. Within the faith community, leaders, lay and ordained, are more aware of their influence on the present and the potential health and growth of faith life and its forms. Those exercising such leadership have to be attentive to what is needed for building community at local and institutional levels which in turn enhance the faith community’s contribution to wider society. Even so there is often a lack in confidence and clarity about how leadership might be effectively enacted. My desire is to more fully understand what happens in these processes within church life so that leaders may be better prepared, discerning and more confident to work with and to be agents of change.

The decline in mainline church attendance, the disinclination toward church institutions, interest in spirituality and the increase in religious diversity (Bouma 2009, 2011) indicate that the perpetuation of leadership patterns of former times is not an option, nor desirable. This is especially so if we are to continue to have a gathered, learning and growing community of faith which is robust, informed and enriched by diversity. The Church, in its tendency to look to the plethora of secular management models, has appeared reluctant to critique our inheritance of pyramid leadership patterns or to recognize the non-pyramidal leadership patterns in both secular organizations and leadership theories. This reluctance has also influenced the capacity to take hold of the rich perspectives which our theological traditions and diversity can bring to the leadership task – both for conceptualisation and practice (Robertson 2007, Pickard 2009).

Exploring the interface between leadership and understandings of God has highlighted for me the potential of the social understanding of the Trinity as a resource, especially its emphases
on a relational community of unity in diversity. Trinitarian theology offers potential for engagement with demanding conceptual frameworks. This is evident in its historical evolution, but also in extending the boundaries in our thinking and of stimulating fresh approaches to the intentional exercise of leadership in the complexities of relationships in which we now find ourselves.

While understandings of God as triune have developed over many centuries of Christian tradition, it is not the intention of this project to enunciate this development. One strand elaborated in more recent years is a social understanding of the Trinity, especially the notion of perichoresis, whose roots are in the thinking of the Church Fathers. It is this trinitarian perspective which will be considered in relation to the themes which have emerged from my research. Some hallmarks of this understanding are co-equality and interdependence in the inner and outwardly expressed relations of the three persons of the Trinity, and a search for language which does not reinforce hierarchical ecclesial structures. The imagery of dance is one such language form. ‘Engaging the dance’ has been used in the title of the project not only because of the association between perichoresis and the movement of interweaving and making room for another, as in dance, but also the connections with movement within the process of the project itself.

Leadership in the church is offered in many forms, in separate tasks and also the holding together of both the tasks and the individual places from which people come to worship together. Leadership carries responsibility for creating the channel through which the mystery of God’s presence can be manifest, made accessible and able to be touched and explored. Such processes are especially important in at least three contexts - the centrality of relationship for human community; society’s increasing need to develop life-giving inter-
dependencies in light of global networking and that our context is one of change and of holding diverse perspectives.

The significance of the project:

This project takes up two significant concerns - first, that the church articulates the theological perspectives that underlie its leadership practice, and second, that the church might engage in dialogue with and contribute to leadership theory.

Others have considered trinitarian theology and Anglican Church practice with reference to structures regarding who and how people are prepared for leadership in particular church contexts and the training and involvement of lay and ordained people in ministry (Farran 2004) and for strategic planning and management (Stevens 2006). This research project takes up an innovative extension of such considerations by exploring the interface between leadership practice in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, secular leadership theory and trinitarian theology, with particular reference to perichoretic understandings.

It is my intention that the outcomes of this project will contribute to reflection upon as well as inform the actual practice of those who carry significant leadership in the life of the Church. In particular, this will be taken up with Anglican leadership at diocesan and regional levels and also with Anglican theological colleges in the Melbourne Diocese, in order that the material might contribute to the formation of those preparing for ministry leadership in Anglican contexts especially. I will also endeavour to engage with and generate networks among those who are working with leadership issues in other dioceses in the Province of Victoria and, as appropriate, in other Australian dioceses. Where possible this will be extended to the wider church and in dialogue with those in secular leadership contexts.
An overview of the thesis:

Following this introduction to the project, the aim, key questions, scope and significance of the research, Chapter 2 will discuss the background including an overview of a number of areas relevant to the project - Anglican Church structures and the centrality of trinitarian perspective; current and future issues for the church; the social understanding of the Trinity, particularly the notion of perichoresis, as well as past and present perspectives on leadership and the potential for leadership theory and theology to be conversation partners. Chapter 3 will provide an overview of the literature pertinent to this study in relation to leadership theory and trinitarian understandings with particular reference to four perspectives on a social understanding of the Trinity. Chapter 4 will discuss the methodology chosen and the details of the method used in exploration of the questions. Chapter 5 will present the findings of the research in terms of its key categories and emergent themes followed by a discussion in Chapter 6 addressing the interrelationship between the data, the aim and the key questions. This, and the concluding chapter, will include some suggested ways to encourage those in and preparing for leadership in the Anglican Church in Melbourne to become more articulate about the theological perspectives that underlie leadership practice so that the church might engage in dialogue with and contribute to leadership theory.

Why the dance?

Brian Wren (1989) writes of the process and struggle to reach language, especially in hymnody, which expresses enough of the complexity of God’s three in-one-ness. The verse with which I began voices the creative struggle as we, too, ‘join in the dance of God begun’ (Wren 1989, p. 212). This research process of exploration itself has embodied the notion of engaging the dance, not least of which is my own place within it as participant observer.

The imagery of the dance suggests an embodied, interactive, flexible, moving engagement
around and between people. There may be fluidity or jarring changes of pace. The dance can be taken up by an individual, by two partners or even multiple dancers. It requires co-operation, a sense of timing and connected space as well as differentiation. It can be spontaneous, responsive or highly structured and carefully choreographed. A multitude of stories can be held within the dance.

All of the aspects of the imagery of the dance have been or have become a part of the exploration of leadership and understandings of God as triune which are elaborated in this thesis. In engaging with this material, readers are also invited into the dance.
Chapter 2  Background:

The interdisciplinary framework of the project:

While the focus of this thesis is on interaction between three disciplines, namely the Anglican tradition, trinitarian theology and leadership theory, there are four aspects which are significant in the background to the formation, work and analysis within this research process:

i) Anglican Church structure and the centrality of trinitarian perspective

ii) The current state of the church and looking to the future

iii) The social understanding of the Trinity, particularly the notion of perichoresis

iv) Past and present perspectives on leadership and the potential for leadership theory and theology to be conversation partners.

i)  **Anglican Church structure and the centrality of trinitarian perspective**

   a)  The three-fold order and its authority structure

The organizational context of leadership in Anglican tradition and its formal leadership structure of Church order is focused in the ordained ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons (Constitution 2003) with lay people being authorized by the Diocesan Archbishop or Bishop for specific ministries. Melbourne Anglican synodical government and its corporate decision making on legislation and broad policy currently requires representation of twice the proportion of laity to clergy for parishes, as well as lay representation from other spheres of diocesan life to counter any weighting of the number of licensed clergy numbers from wider ministries (Consolidated Acts of the Synod 1950).

Though diocesan policy is decided primarily at synodical and episcopal levels, lay
representatives at executive levels can exert significant influence, for example through Archbishop in Council, which is a body that provides advice to the Archbishop and whose consent is required for the Archbishop’s action on temporal matters (Anglican Diocese of Melbourne Report to Synod 2005, p. 17-18). Such policy is then enacted in a wide diversity of local contexts which may have limited direct episcopal contact in its community life. These contexts include clergy and authorized lay people conducting ministries in secular organizations where the spiritual dimensions of life are valued, for example in healthcare, welfare, criminal justice and educational settings, as well as in parishes.

Thus leadership practices can be highly diverse although the apparent structure of authority within the denomination appears clear. Bouma suggests that one aspect where such diversity becomes clearly evident is in liturgical practice, where the focus is on ‘how to do the sacred things and who is allowed to do them’ (Bouma 1992, p. 191-192)

The Diocese of Melbourne has been known for its capacity to hold together a wide range of practice and theological understanding in relation to what are regarded as the ‘sacred things’. Such diversity has led to times of more obvious polarity and difficulty in engaging in constructive dialogue about those things which are commonly held as central tenets. This has been true for those holding to the middle ground, as well as for those of positions at either end of the spectrum, from more evangelical to particular expressions of Anglo-Catholicism. This was evidenced in a process undertaken prior to the Election Synod for a new Archbishop of Melbourne in 2006. Deanery groups and regional gatherings were held to discuss the primary and secondary issues of our faith and practice which enabled people, lay and ordained, to at least name, and in some instances discuss, their differences of perspective in a non-adversarial context.
b) The significance of trinitarian perspective

The centrality of trinitarian perspective is particularly expressed in Anglicanism through our liturgical life, in baptismal initiation, in Eucharistic thanksgiving, in absolution, blessing and patterns of prayer. In light of an increasingly informed laity and the need for us to think afresh about more collaborative models of working together, a social understanding of the Trinity seems to offer a potentially generative place for dialogue. Yet interpretation of trinitarian doctrine and the importance with which it is regarded spans a wide spectrum. Standing beside one another’s difference of interpretation, albeit sometimes with fragility, is one aspect where the Anglican Communion, and particularly the Diocese of Melbourne, represents a form of unity in diversity rather than uniformity.

The dynamics of dealing with diversity and its fragilities have also been present in the changing understandings of the doctrine of the Trinity, where different emphases have arisen and been refined or disregarded as the Christian church has sought to find again the relevance of a trinitarian perspective for the different stages of its developing life and changing times.

c) Foundational documents

Some of the documents recognized as formative for our present structures include those related to liturgical practice as well as those which represent ‘Instruments of Communion’ for the Anglican Communion.

Thomas Cranmer’s Book of Common Prayer is recognized as the framework and patterns out of which our various present revised liturgies arise, hence a source of how the triune nature of God could be expressed in liturgical language and actions (The Book of Common Prayer, 1968).
It was at a Convocation of Archbishops, Bishops and Clergy in London in 1562 that the ‘Articles of Religion’ were agreed upon (The Book of Common Prayer 1968, p. 682-702). These Articles, now referred to as the ‘Thirty-Nine Articles’ (A Prayer Book for Australia 1995, p. 800) remain a founding document for the Anglican Church to which clergy at their ordination give their assent. The first Article, perhaps one might say the first foundational step in the tradition, is a statement ‘Of faith in the Holy Trinity’ and reads

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power wisdom and goodness; the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. (Book of Common Prayer 1968, p. 685)

It was the initial Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer which provided the doctrinal basis for subsequent revisions of The Ordinal – The Making, Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, including that of our current A Prayer Book for Australia. The significant place of the Trinity is evidenced in the forms of prayer and blessing, for example in the declaration of authority to fulfill the office of deacon - “Take authority to exercise the office and ministry of a deacon in the Church of God, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (A Prayer Book for Australia 1995, p. 789) and is taken up descriptively in the Exhortation and Examination of those to be ordained priest.

There are four ‘Instruments of Communion’ of the Anglican Communion – The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conferences, the Primates’ Meetings of the chief Archbishops and Presiding Bishops of the Provinces of the Anglican Communion worldwide chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Anglican Consultative Council (The Anglican Communion Website 2008).
The Lambeth Conference of Bishops is a major source from which statements about Anglican Church structure are initiated for the consideration and guidance of the Anglican Communion. The Conference is a world-wide gathering of Bishops who are called together each ten years by the Archbishop of Canterbury as first among equals of the Primates of the various Provinces of the Anglican Communion. The Archbishop of Canterbury is responsible for this gathering, in unity of purpose if not perspective, of those who carry the holding together of the Anglican Church in their specific Diocese or Region.

The Lambeth Conference initiates processes and groups to prepare reports for consideration by the Conference and the wider church. Two Reports have relevance for this project – The Virginia Report (1997) and The Windsor Report (2004).

The former arose out of a 1988 Lambeth Conference Resolution which recommended

As a matter of urgency further exploration of the meaning and nature of the communion with particular reference to the doctrine of the Trinity, the unity and order of the Church, and the unity and communion of humanity (Lambeth Conference 1988 Resolution 18).

However implementation, prompted by a Primates’ meeting, did not begin until 1991, finally resulting in The Virginia Report which discusses trinitarian theology as framing the mission, oversight and decision making processes within the Anglican Communion. The Report was prepared by the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission (IATDC), under the umbrella of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) which made the Report available in 1997. The ACC, formed by the 1968 Lambeth Conference for contact and discussion among a wider group of up to three representatives from every Province of the Communion, meets every two to three years, with its Standing Committee meeting annually. The IATDC reconsidered The Virginia Report in October 2006, commenting that its arguments had not been translated into practice in relationships within the Anglican Communion (Anglican
The Windsor Report, made available by the ACC in 2004, is concerned with issues relating to who can be in leadership with particular reference to gender and sexuality, and the matters raised continue to be debated (Driver 2014).

The Lambeth Quadrilateral was adopted by the 1888 Lambeth Conference, following initiatives taken by the Chicago House of Bishops to assist in discussions with other traditions. Its significance rests in the statement of four points which are seen as capturing the essential elements of Anglican identity – The Holy Scriptures, The Creeds, The Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion and the historic Episcopate. While trinitarian theology arises from the scriptures and is embedded in the liturgies of the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, it is in the statement that the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds form ‘the sufficient statement of the Christian faith’ (Anglicans Online 2008) that places overt understanding of God as triune at the forefront of Anglican perspective.

**ii) The current state of the church in our time and looking to the future**

*a) The changed place of the church and leadership status of clergy*

Though in Anglican tradition church structure has remained constant, the roles of clergy have undergone considerable shifts, often precipitated by social change (Croft 2002, p. 20). For example, although people may periodically use the church as a service agency, no longer is the church, embodied in the parish priest, the primary guardian of ritual in matters of birth, marriage and death, nor the central point of local community, nor a decisive source for society’s values, though its buildings may be regarded as ‘icons’ in the community.
Such shifts have in turn generated profound reconsideration, even crisis of identity for the clergy. One feature of the shifts has been a blurring of what constitutes a leadership role and a focus on functional rather than vocational matters – that a priest is simply the leader of an organization. Anglican tradition has not been renowned for a developed capacity to reflect upon and learn from its experiences but has more usually appeared caught in its particular and fixed leadership patterns and structures, struggling to manage the impacts of change. This struggle emerges in questions concerning the distinctiveness of roles of ordained and lay people or whether the definition of priest has to recapture lost features from past tradition or be stated afresh (Guiver 2001).

b) The need for new approaches in a changed and changing, vulnerable global society

If the church is to be able to move forward amidst the climate of rapid change, not only to protect and maintain the central tenets of its life in all its creative diversity but also to find and enhance its voice and take up its particular contribution to the life and sustenance of the wider community, leadership and the suitability of its style for such contexts is a pivotal matter.

In order to address the issues of identity, especially of the ordained, it is perhaps not surprising that the Church has tended to turn to secular models of leadership, rather than to reflect on the theological resources and insights that arise from our engagement with the tradition of the Church. My concern is that these two dimensions, of secular models and theological insight, be brought together so that each might inform the other, particularly the connection of understandings of God as triune and leadership practice.
iii) The social understanding of the trinity, particularly the notion of perichoresis:

a) Developments in understandings of perichoresis

My introduction to the social understanding of the Trinity was through the writing of O’Donnell (1988) in his discussion of some of the significant developments in Trinitarian doctrine, especially in relation to the understanding of the persons of the Trinity. In exploring what he terms the social image of the Trinity, O’Donnell takes up different perspectives of God in community and the movement from Augustine’s ‘absolute indivisibility of the divine unity’ to Moltmann’s ‘divine community of persons in relation’ (p. 106-109).

Holding the unity yet differentiation of the persons of the Trinity and of the nature of Father, Son and Spirit were critical issues for theologians of the fourth century and arose within a context of lively debate and conflict in emphasis and understanding, leading to the formulation of the Nicene Creed and doctrinal developments of subsequent Councils of the Church. The Cappadocians – Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa, steeped in philosophical tradition, each made their contribution to the doctrine of the Trinity. It was during this period that the precursors to the term perichoresis were used. Prestige (1952) distinguishes between the term perichoresis and the formative notion of the coinherence of the persons of the Trinity elaborated by the Cappadocians in their defence against the charge of tritheism in the debates of the Arian controversy of the fourth century.

Gregory of Nazianzus is understood to have introduced the verb *perichorein* in consideration of the divine and human nature of Christ, which were taken further by Maximus the Confessor in the seventh century who is attributed with the use of the noun *perichoresis* into Christological thinking (Lawler 1995, p. 49). Maximus’ understanding and use of perichoresis and the direction of reciprocity between the human and divine natures of Christ
is debated (Thunberg 1995), however he went on to extend use of perichoresis to activity between the divine and the cosmos.

Identifying who initially developed use of the term in relation to trinitarian, as distinct from Christological understanding is also debated (Prestige 1952), yet it is John Damascene in the seventh century who is understood to have popularized the term ‘perichoresis’ in reference to the nature of the oneness of God in the inter-relationship of Father, Son and Spirit (Louth 2002). The primary concern, however, is giving expression to the relational nature, the unity yet distinction of the three persons of the Trinity, without suggesting a tri-theistic position.

b) Issues of interpretation

Etymological discussion of the term perichoresis take up a range of nuance which include mutual interpenetration which preserves identity & properties, indwelling, making room for another around oneself, interweaving with another, simultaneous rest and movement, alternation and rotation, dynamism and stability, symmetry & asymmetry. Lawler, whilst highlighting Kress’s mistaken derivation of perichoresis from the Greek verb to dance around, also comments that etymology may not always be primary but rather that the ‘fortuitous error’ of Kress, offers another way of consideration, that terms are related in what they connote which in turn offers exploration of theological meaning (Lawler 1995, p. 50-53).

c) Perichoretic models

Relational models and language have become the focus of the social understanding of the Trinity. In this research project particular consideration is given to the work of Moltmann (1993), Johnson (1993), La Cugna (1991) and Gunton (1989, 1998, 2003) who speak of God
in communion or community in various ways and forms of language in relation to perichoretic understanding of the Trinity.

Feminist perspectives include not only the struggle to find appropriate language for God but also the notion of Right Relation. Spalding takes up this notion as embodying mutuality and personal autonomy, their implications for understandings of God and for living the Christian faith within church practice. She explores the relational nature of God from the perspective of a number of feminist writers, including recognition and inclusion of difference (Spalding 1995).

Tanner (2004, 2012), among others, expresses the need for caution in making too ready connection between the life and nature of God and interpersonal human interactions.

Through the centuries the struggle to articulate the mystery of God’s inner self and God’s relationship with and activity in creation has continued. However it is the notion of perichoresis which has become a significant aspect of twentieth century theologians’ articulation of their different emphases and approaches to the trinitarian community known as the social understanding of the Trinity, particularly in expressing profound mutuality and dynamism in relationship, in energy and activity – another form of the dance.

Such traditions continue to inform our understanding of the depth of intimacy central to God’s self, where differentiated expressions of Father, Son and Spirit are understood as a whole in their interconnected unity. It is this intimacy which is evidenced in the stories of the divine-human interactions of scripture and of the continuing activity within creation. This is the mystery that the worshipping community of faith is drawn towards and into as it
celebrates eucharist together, prays together, is nourished spiritually together. Leadership carries the responsibility, offered in many forms, for holding together the diversity of individual places represented within the faith community, as the mystery is explored and comes alive. This in turn strengthens the community to reach out and attend to its wider worlds.

**iv) Past and present perspectives on leadership, and the potential for leadership theory and theology to be conversation partners:**

Leadership and organizational life have become matters of great interest, at times even of preoccupation, in the social climate of uncertainty of recent years. In our present environment of global interaction and change, the generation of creative, proactive response, rather than reactivity, has become the focus of conceptual development and commentary of writers such as Senge, Scharmer and Jaworski (2005) and Zohar and Marshall (2004). Such commentary on business contexts emphasises the impact of economic profitability and consumerism for society as a whole and raise issues of motivation, personal integrity, sustainability, quality of life and addressing the breadth of human need.

**a) Movement in leadership styles**

There are some significant leadership models of the past which remain influential, particularly for the Anglican Church context. These include the leadership trait paradigm where certain characteristics such as gender, physical and psychological traits, achievements and behaviours differentiated leaders from others. This led to theories such as Charismatic Leadership where the emphasis includes leader characteristics but extends to their impact for those led and for the organization, now expressed through positional power in terms of effecting their vision, organizational achievements and follower motivation (House and
Aditya 1997). Leadership in the Transformational and Transactional Leadership model is understood in terms of the leader’s capacity to stimulate others to function with heightened effectiveness for the benefit of the group or focused on performance of others and the conditions and rewards for doing so (Bass and Avolio 1994).

Emerging under the umbrella of contingence theory and the focus on leader behaviours, such as those associated with being task or person oriented, theorists sought to account for differences in leader behaviours, including the impact of behaviour for the situations of leadership and the levels of control leaders exert. One such perspective is Hersey and Blanchard’s Situational Leadership model which takes into account leadership style in terms of task or relationship behaviours and the interaction between levels of direction, amount of support and the readiness of followers to take responsibility in varying situations (Hersey and Blanchard 1988).

More recent developments in leadership theory include a diversity of approach. Servant Leadership focuses on key characteristics which include fostering values, caring and attending behaviours for direction setting and through which the leader ‘serves’ the people of an organization (Greenleaf 1977). Distributed Leadership is where focus is not on a solo, individual leader but rather on fluidity in leadership for different situations by leader participants in formal, informal and spontaneous forms (Spillane 2005). The Communities of Practice concept focuses on learning as a social process and problem solving within the activities of actual practice (Wenger 1998).

b) Changing perspectives in the Church

Those seeking to address the changing role of the church and its ministry for this century are
in fact grappling with similar issues but from perspectives more internal to Christian tradition and practice. Frost and Hirsch (2003), in discussing the development of the ‘missional church’ model, discuss the decline of the Christendom mode of church with its institutionalization. They observe that though we have entered a post-Christendom period, much of the Western Church operates in the mode of the former period. This would be true of Anglican Church structure generally. What they propose is the abandonment of the strict lines of demarcation between the sacred and profane spaces in our world and the recognition that people today are searching for relational communities that offer belonging, empowerment and redemption.

Fifteen hallmarks form the foundation of this missional church model, which includes what they term an apostolic mode of leadership based on Ephesians 6 where the leadership style is understood as flat-leadership rather than hierarchical.

From an alternative perspective on the church and the future, Robertson (2007), in his discussion of collaborative ministry and its leadership style, offers a rethinking of the ways in which pyramidal leadership models have operated within church life. Developed from biblical interpretation, he highlights the principles of ‘going out and building up’ (p. 22) and proposes a Christ centred model of what he terms ‘Christian Collaboration’ (p. 52) and describes how this can be applied within church community life.

Stephen Pickard (2009) in examining the theological foundations of a collaborative approach to leadership considers many relational aspects to this approach from interdisciplinary and ecclesial perspectives but also with Trinitarian understanding at its centre. He comments in his introduction ‘The perichoretic…life of God is the deepest foundation for a collaborative
ministry’ (p. 4) but also emphasizes collaborative interrelatedness as connected with being members of the body of Christ as developed in Pauline theology. He discusses how a Christological or Spirit focus can impact on leadership stances and finally calls for a rethinking of an understanding of friendship, alongside Zaragoza (1999), concluding that ‘Together friendship and servanthood make collaborative ministry what it is and inform the manner in which it is to be undertaken’ (Pickard 2009, p. 235).

c) The place of critique

Differentiating between leadership and management has been an ongoing issue, with leaders generally being perceived as focused on matters of organizational vision and change whilst managers deal with their implementation. The volunteer base within the Church, where ‘line management’ is often blurred or variable, poses a number of levels of complexity for the transferring or adapting of many leadership models for use within church contexts.

Fragmentation and isolation have been reinforced by western society’s focus on the individual’s and corporate pursuit of success and its associated emphasis on competition and gaining the marketing edge. The impact of globalization, with ever widening boundaries and its accompanying potential for creativity, is alerting us to associated intrapersonal issues such as the increased awareness of anxiety, depression and burnout. We are coming to recognise afresh the centrality of relationship and the need for community in human wellbeing and also in the practice of leadership.

d) Becoming conversation partners

As a priest in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne where I exercise leadership and prepare others for lay and ordained ministry in the church, I am concerned that those in leadership in
the church articulate the theological perspectives that underlie its practice. One reason for this is so that leadership theories and practice for predominantly secular contexts and theologically informed leadership practice might become ‘conversation partners’ in order that the different perspectives might better inform one another. A two way process is important, so that clarity and critique of language may be developed, especially of language that may appear common but which may carry significant distinctions. This in turn could become ground for the church contributing more broadly to leadership theory and to its leaders being better prepared for leadership in the changing environment of the future.
Chapter 3  
Literature Review

Two areas of focus:

The two significant areas covered include:

i. review of material discussing a range of traditional leadership views and styles, particularly those which have relevance to perspectives and practice within the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne as it stands within the Anglican Communion;

ii. review of material discussing a social understanding of the Trinity, as well as understandings pertaining to a perichoretic perspective.

i) review of traditional leadership views and styles relevant within the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

Some of the difficulty in gaining an overview of and assessing writings on leadership and its practice is the sheer quantity of material being produced in forms that appeal to a wide audience. One significant difficulty is the lack of evidence based material. Much of the literature is based on anecdotal material, with a focus on praxis and perceptions of practice within political, military and organizational spheres, with no consistent elaboration of the theoretical framework underlying such approaches. Finding connections between such material and approaches to the life of the church and its communities requires considerable reflection and if undertaken superficially can lead to a too ready acceptance of seemingly connected language and ways of thinking, without addressing what assumptions undergird such approaches which may have considerable impact for theological perspectives.

Yukl (2006) offers a summary of leadership theory under three approaches, trait theory, contingency theories and charismatic or transformational leadership. Leadership views will
be addressed under these three approaches initially.

a) Trait theory approaches

In their overview of the study of leadership since the 1930’s, House and Aditya (1997) highlight a number of paradigms which are particularly relevant to the Anglican context, the first of which is Leadership Trait Paradigm. This was initially articulated in material published in the mid-1900’s, which ‘focused on the search for individual characteristics that universally differentiate leaders from non-leaders’ (p. 409). Characteristics investigated included ‘gender, height, physical energy and appearance as well as psychological traits and motives such as authoritarianism, intelligence, need for achievement, and need for power’ (p. 409).

Prior to the ordination of women in this Diocese, leadership as priest was male gender based. Characteristics of voice and physical bearing were perceived as carrying authority and the mentality of ‘Father knows best’ still persists in some parish decision making processes, despite the increasing recognition of the capability of lay people. Academic achievement continues to be a significant factor in selection for ordination and particularly so for the more public positions.

A revival of interest in trait theory occurred in the 1970’s where some consideration was given to relationship between the situations faced by a leader, leader dispositions and behavior, and predictability of traits evidenced. This in turn led to such theories as Charismatic Leadership where emphasis is on leader characteristics and their impact for both those led and for an organization. Aaltio-Marjosola and Takala (2000) in their consideration of this perspective look at the case of ice hockey coaching, the guardian role of ethics and context as a cultural trigger. They comment that ‘Charisma, the use of personal power and
personality in organizational contexts, comes alive when organizational culture and the followers are willing to allow room for it.’ (p. 156).

An example of a more modern view of trait theory and which has resonances in the Anglican context can be seen in the impact of positional power coupled with charisma of a leader, where people can acquiesce to decisions or even feel any critique may be silenced in the face of such influences. This may be particularly evident where an Archbishop takes a determinative role in diocesan planning and financial decisions for programs and staffing arrangements. This was seen in the Archbishopric of David Penman, whose early and sudden death created a rift in the usual pattern of seeing through the vision of an archbishop in their term of office. Alan Nichols (1991), a close friend and colleague of Penman, captured his sense of Penman’s contribution in the title of his book ‘David Penman - Bridge-builder, Peacemaker, Fighter for Justice’. Penman’s appointment arose in response to a previously deadlocked election process. He brought to the position of Archbishop a well-developed capacity in international and multi-cultural matters through his experience in relations between Islam and Christian faith traditions as well as advocacy for the Palestinian’s position in his involvement in the Israel-Palestinian relations. He became known locally and overseas as a warm, hard-working, confident people’s person. In a church climate calling for ‘mission not maintenance’, Penman is described as bringing to the office of Archbishop ‘a ‘holy discontent’ about the state of the church and he was determined to bring the church into the public arena’ (p. 118). While, through various Committee processes, he oversaw a restructuring of the Diocese at various levels, his interest, energies and influence were primarily directed to his national and international work in the interfaith, multicultural and social justice work in the early stages of the impact of AIDS. This meant a reduction in attention to the detail of some local commitments and plans which met with insufficient
funding, even in areas of his espoused particular interest such as ministry preparation of ordinands. Focus was drawn to his profile in the arenas of his wider contributions where his charisma was highly visible.

\hspace{1cm} b) Contingency theory approaches

A subsequent theoretical development out of charismatic leadership was that of leader behavior. These were identified as task oriented and person-oriented behaviors. House and Aditya (1997) note that the underlying assumption here was that ‘there are some universally effective leader behaviors, and that these could be discovered by either observing leaders in action…or by asking subordinates about the behavior of their immediate superiors’ (p. 416). Various theoretical positions emerged, under the umbrella of contingency theory, to account for the differences discovered among leader behaviors which included exploration of the impact of the interaction of behavior and the situations of leadership, and the level of control that leaders exert. One such perspective is the Situational Leadership model of Hersey & Blanchard (1988).

‘Situational Leadership' was initially developed in the 1970’s by Hersey and Blanchard (1988) and which, as a form of contingency theory, was developed as a model which takes into account leadership style and the situation of the person(s) being led in terms of leader behaviours in relation to their followers. Hersey and Blanchard emphasise their focus being on observed behaviour in varying situations from which they ascertain two types of leader behaviour – task behaviour and relationship behaviour. Task behaviour is defined as ‘the extent to which leaders…organize and define the roles of the members of their group (followers)’ (p. 116). This includes explaining the what, when, where and how of tasks, establishment of organizational patterns, communication and implementation processes which are seen as essentially directing behaviours. Relationship behaviour is about levels of
leader involvement in two-way communication to maintain personal relationships between personnel involved in the tasks, in terms of ‘opening up channels of communication, providing socio-emotional support, “psychological strokes” and facilitating behaviors’ (p. 117).

Various combinations of these behaviours are possible, though four are established for this model which are seen to demonstrate four basic leadership styles relating to different levels of focus on task and relationship. The critical issue for situational leadership is the interaction between the level of direction given, the amount of support provided and a third aspect, the ‘maturity’, later referred to as ‘readiness’, of the follower. This relates to the follower’s capacity to take responsibility, understanding of and experience in carrying out the task, as well as their readiness to receive the leader’s influence.

Readiness is framed into four combinations of characteristics, depending on the level of ability and willingness (p. 175). The appropriateness of the leader behaviour to the situation in terms of task achievement and follower maturity/readiness determines leader effectiveness.

Some significant features of Hersey and Blanchard’s model are competency of the leader to ‘diagnose’ the needs of both their followers and their particular environment, to adapt their leadership style to meet what is required in any given situation, and to communicate in ways that influence others to see a process through. They see this model as distinctive in that it ‘does not depict a single ideal leader behavior style…as being appropriate in all situations’ (p. 119). Selection of style of response is based upon the intersection of four scales of follower readiness, on a bell curve traversing through the four styles of possible leader response.
Various instruments and measures have been developed to assess readiness, leader behaviours and effectiveness by managers, staff and by self-assessment, as well as forms of training for situational leadership in organizations. Situational leadership has also been adapted for application in group and organizational contexts, particularly in relation to problem solving.

Research conducted by Avery and Ryan (2002) noted that situational leadership was found to be popular among practitioners for its ‘simplicity, intuitive nature, relevance to the workplace, and it matched common sense’ (p. 251) despite criticism by academics on its theoretical basis, as is the case with much of the writing on leadership. They comment that respondents claimed that it is simple to use and adds to their confidence, though organisational support assists in its practice. It was interesting to note that most respondents in the study avoided and disliked using a directive style, preferring supporting stances, and the researchers comment that ‘Australian managers like to be seen as a member of the team and not set apart as the boss’ (p. 250). Respondents stated that the capacity to communicate was reinforced as significant in use of situational leadership, that training assisted in managers’ awareness of flexibility in using all the leadership styles and that diagnosing developmental levels was not regarded as difficult, though the researchers had expected this. Further research was strongly recommended.

Criticism by Graeff (1983, 1987), and by Blank, Weitzel and Green (1990), while acknowledging the appeal of situational leadership to practicing managers, highlight problems with its assumptions, the conceptual, theoretical basis and the matching processes using the bell-shaped prescriptive curve, the definition and application of the term maturity,
the measures used and the applicability of the situational leadership model to less specific tasks and group process. Graeff also notes the problematic, even conflicting nature of shifts on the multiple versions of the model and the resulting confusion for practitioners.

While this model has been regarded as a helpful resource in management practice in the church context at both parish and central administration levels in diocesan life, and was used as foundational for a management course in one of Melbourne’s theological colleges, no literature was found which reviews, evaluates or critiques this model from a theological perspective.

The model is espoused as one applicable in group contexts though it clearly lends itself more to individual and homogeneous group use. Use by leaders within the smaller size church or leadership team structures is more readily envisaged, where individual assessment of maturity can be made and where patterns can be followed through to both formal and informal leadership from the modeling of primary leadership. One example of its usefulness would be in training of youth leaders and in front line management within church groups. Opportunity for mutual interdependence of activity, ideas or learning appears limited as the leadership process or response seems dependent upon the leader’s evaluation of others’ level of maturity and hence response to their need and situation.

One example of a contingency theory model within the context of the Church was explored some years ago by Rothauge (1983), who undertook research into the interrelationship between congregation size, leadership style and congregation growth from a systems perspective. This approach remains highly relevant to our present context. He proposed four categories of Church according to congregation size from up to 50, to 150, to 350, to 500+.
Within these categories his analysis highlighted the impact of the informal leadership networks expressed in actual practice, regardless of set church procedures.

Parishes of up to 50 members he describes as a Family Church where well established matriarchs and patriarchs provide control in norms and change as ‘gatekeepers’, rather than the primary leadership being provided by the formally designated clergy, whose role tends to be focused on spiritual guidance for individuals which may require wider community interventions (p. 7-13). The Pastoral Church is used to describe churches of 50-150 members with three key layers of influence - the leadership circle which includes the cleric and other paid professionals or long-standing members; a group constituting more committed attendees and then those who form the general membership. In this structure the central cleric is looked to for direction, inspiration and pastoral care (p. 15-21). These two forms of church structure and leadership represent the majority of parishes in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

The larger congregations described by Rothauge are the Program Church of 150-350 members and the Corporation Church of 300-500+ members. These represent a smaller group of parishes in the diocese. Leadership in the Program Church is described as a team approach with delegated responsibility where the cleric as formally designated leader is primarily involved in co-ordination of others and in direction setting (p. 23-30). The formal leader in the Corporate Church model is more a symbol of unity and stability in a diverse and complex structure where other forms of formal and informal leadership is provided at Board and group life levels respectively (p. 31-36).

One of the inherent risks in utilizing such a model as descriptive of leadership style rather than of fitting leadership style to the nature of the church community is that clergy can be
labeled with a particular leadership style depending upon their experience in a specific congregation size. Likewise, a parish can become labeled by its particular size in certain periods of its life which may limit a community’s capacity to envision its life in other terms.

c) Transformational Leadership

Later developments in charismatic leadership perspective have related more to explicating characteristics of leaders, in terms of organizational achievements, in effecting their vision and in the means of establishment of ‘extraordinary levels of follower motivation, admiration, respect, trust, commitment, dedication, loyalty, and performance’ (House & Aditya 1997, p. 428). One representative of this group is Transformational and Transactional Leadership with the associated Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

The term ‘Transformational Leadership’ was initially used in the 1978 sociological writings of James Burns. It was not until 1985 that Bass presented a theory of transformational leadership with its associated factors and their measurements. Subsequent research and development in organizations such as Fiat and the Kellogg Foundation contributed to the refinement of the model into ‘the full range of leadership development’, with an assessment and training program, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), developed by Bass and Avolio (1994, p. 2).

The full range of leadership includes transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership behaviours. Transformational leadership is understood as the capacity of a leader to stimulate others to envision and achieve more than their expectations, for the benefit of the group. Transformational leadership is distinguished from and seen as an expansion of transactional leadership which is focused on fulfilling requirements and the conditions and
rewards for doing so. Laissez-faire leadership amounts to non-leadership. All of these leader behaviors are likely to be operative at some time.

Transformational leaders are understood to use four behaviours known as the “Four I’s”: Idealized influence, which relates to role modeling, risk sharing, concern for others and doing the right thing which generates admiration, trust and respect for the leader; Inspirational stimulation which relates to providing followers with meaning, challenge and a future vision with commitment and clear expectations; Intellectual stimulation by generating others’ innovation and creativity through questioning assumptions, a reframing and new thinking approach to problems and familiar situations in an environment where there is no public criticism of mistakes; and Individualized consideration where leaders attend to supported opportunity for individual development needs and achievement, listening and communication exchange, expression of individual difference with increased autonomy (p. 3-4). Ackoff (1999) suggests such leaders are driven by ideas rather than others’ expectations and are skilled in ‘beating the system, not surrendering to it’ (p. 22) and thus also envision and effect a transformation of the system.

Transactional leaders focus on the exchange which takes place between the leader and followers in relation to performance of followers in assigned or agreed activities and the resulting reward or discipline. This way of leading depends upon the ways in which work practices of followers are reinforced positively or negatively. Positive reinforcement is achieved through rewarding productive performance within the set activity boundaries. This is referred to as contingent reward and has been found to have some efficacy in motivating development and improved performance, though not as significantly as the Four I’s of transformational leadership.
The more negative approach to the exchange of transactional leadership is through *management-by-exception* which can be by actively monitoring errors or deviations from the set standards and taking action in correcting these, or can be by passively waiting for errors to take place and then correcting such actions (Bass and Avolio 1994, p. 4).

Den Hartog, Van Muijen and Koopman (1997) refer to the bargaining nature of these exchanges between leader and follower in clarifying performance requirements acting as a form of compensation for failure in the environment to provide job satisfaction, motivation and direction.

Laissez-faire leadership is regarded as non-transactional or inactive, where there is an avoidance or absence of leadership (Bass and Avolio 1994, p. 4).

The differentiation between transformational and transactional leadership highlighted by Bass and Avilio is based on how transformational leadership contributes to the improved operations and practices of personnel for an organization’s life rather than the transactional leader’s focus on particular activities and their outcomes. However they acknowledge that those regarded as the best leaders use both styles, though research indicates that transformational leaders are regarded as ‘more effective and satisfying as leaders’ (p. 5-6).

The critique by Den Hartog, Van Muijen and Koopman (1997) of the Bass and Avolio approach centre on the efficacy of the MLQ to establish the three leadership concepts and whether the dimensions elaborated in them are distinguishable. They support the transformational leadership conceptual model but raise questions concerning the
differentiations within the transactional and laissez-faire concepts. Tracey and Hinkin (1998) explore the relationship between the description of transformational leadership and managerial practice and note some distinguishing features, citing themes of leadership behaviour as future orientation, intellectual stimulation dimension and development of followers as some examples. Avolio, Bass and Jung (1999) in response to theirs and others’ research re-examined the MLQ survey for further refinement and note the need to take into account the changing leadership environment, especially in the transactional model and its interplay with transformational leadership, commenting ‘The level of integration and interdependencies that are needed for the new work environment will require leadership that goes beyond the more basic transactional style to styles that are more intellectually stimulating, inspirational and charismatic’ (p. 460). A question that needs to be asked is whether, in light of increased need for interdependency, a charismatic style of leadership and the associated individual dynamism and vision generation would be an appropriate choice. A more collaborative, democratic approach, rather than a strong leader-follower model might also be suited to the new environment.

Agashae and Bratton (2001) explored leader-follower dynamics in relation to three leadership roles as steward, designer and teacher, as posited by Peter Senge (1990) in The Fifth Discipline, and their influence in fostering followers’ informal work related learning and its impact for the learning within an organization. Such learning was understood to be in both skill acquisition and cognitive development in dealing with problems. The research focused on the interaction between and perception of workers of their leaders in a Canadian energy company, and whether informal learning was fostered or impeded. There was support for the differentiation of the three roles as learning contributors. The dimensions of each of the roles have resonances with the behaviours associated with Intellectual stimulation and
Individualized consideration dimensions within the Four I’s, of transformational leadership.

Other issues which emerged as problematic in the study were how an individual’s learning was transferred to organizational life, how intentional space was made in working life for conceptual or cognitive reflection, and a disconnection emerged between espoused and actual practice in terms of encouragement of learning by leaders which was not upheld in the culture of the organization.

Clements and Washbush (1999) raise the need to acknowledge the negative behaviours, influence and effects in both leaders and followers, rather than only seeing the positive, in order to learn about the process of leadership. They raise the example of the assumption that the positive perception of the transformational leader as ‘doing the right thing’ represents ethical stances. Through discussion of literature on understandings of social power and psychological commentary on dysfunctional behaviours, Clements and Washbush (1999) highlight the need for leaders to attend to their intrapersonal understanding, distortions of self-perception including their taking on others’ perceptions of them, understanding of their own emotions, and how power is exercised. Elaboration is provided about how limitation in each of these areas can have impact on leading and organizational life. Undermining follower behaviours which generate negative consequences for leaders and organizations are also explored, including personal traits of followers such as the interaction of active, passive, independent and dependent behaviours in the leader-follower relationship. They cite as an example the difficulty for a transformational leader to get realistic feedback when surrounded by highly dependent followers. The writers call for leadership education which deals authentically with such factors and a preparedness for people to take responsibility for the impact of negative behaviours on outcomes.
Transformational leadership has appealed to writers on Christian leadership in its apparent connection with the transforming intrapersonal human change inherent in encounter with the life and work of Christ. Lewis (1996) takes over the language and some ideas in creating his model of transformational leadership for the revitalizing of the church in face of the challenges which our changed social environment presents. His focus is on adaptability of leadership style for results in a particular environment and proposes three characteristics of transformational leaders as building on others’ strengths, raising awareness of issues and ways to fulfill organizational goals and enabling others’ to transcend self-interest in order to ‘change minds and hearts’ (p. 6). Note is made that his views are adapted from the writings of Kouzes and Posner, Covey, and also Bass in relation to transactional leadership style, with no deeper acknowledgment, critique or differentiation of the business corporate context and that of the church as an organization. In presenting ‘Ten Strengths of Transformational Christian Leaders’ (p. 13) in terms of principles of leader behaviours, each supported by a scripture reference, he states that the purpose is ‘to lead people to a closer and more intimate relationship with God’ (p. 12) so that they and then others may be transformed.

Such a style reflects a pattern of appropriating, uncritically, an eclectic business approach into Christian practice, rather than establishing dialogue between their differing purposes and undergirding values or addressing the negative aspects described previously.

In transformational leadership theory the dynamism between the individual leader and followers is to facilitate more effective working practices for the sake of the profitability and success of the organization. In Christian thinking the nature of the transformation is for the growth of faith understanding and integrity of practice for a community of gathered individuals, not for the ‘success’ of that community but for the furtherance of the ongoing
activity of God in human history. One of the underlying differences lies in what is generative of transformation and what such transformation is designed to accomplish. This is not to say that one cannot constructively inform the other or that the parallels between them cannot be explored. What is lacking in Lewis’ approach is clarity about the distinctiveness of motivation and purpose and the awareness that some critical analysis may also be called for in applying transformational leadership concepts to Christian leadership practices.

There is a marked dearth of theological evaluation, critique, analysis and research in relation to Transformational Leadership theory though there are connections in their dynamism, some language forms and principles of practice that are attractive to those interested in Christian leadership. Patterns of the kind described above are not helpful in assisting leaders, lay or ordained, to assess the potential benefits or problems of transferring leadership principles into a different, and especially a faith context.

d) Other approaches to leadership

The conceptualization of Servant Leadership is primarily the work of Robert Greenleaf, a Quaker, who articulated his thinking in a seminal essay originally published in 1970 on ‘The Servant as Leader’ which he revised in 1991. Greenleaf developed his major work ‘Servant Leadership’ in 1977 from the first and three further essays, which gave rise to the naming of this model.

Greenleaf’s notion of servant as leader arose from his reflections on Leo, a character in Hermann Hesse’s novel, Journey to the East, where Leo is servant to a group undertaking a journey which he ‘sustains …with his spirit and song’ (1977, p. 7). Leo’s sudden disappearance creates the abandonment of the journey and a search by one group member for
their servant. Leo is traced to the Order which sponsored the journey of which he is titular head. This notion becomes the fulcrum for Greenleaf’s model – ‘The servant leader is servant first…It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead’ (p. 13). The critical factor for Servant Leadership manifests in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that people’s highest priorities are being served. The fundamental questions which are seen as the test are: ‘Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?’ which is followed by ‘what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived’ (p. 13-14).

Greenleaf sees the marks of the leader as follows: ‘A leader initiates, provides the ideas and the structure, and takes the risk of failure along with the chance of success’ (p. 15) which includes the articulating of goals, having a sustaining spirit to support the pursuit of these and eliciting trust through confidence and competence undergirded by their values.

Greenleaf elaborates ten key characteristics required for servant leadership - listening and understanding; language and imagination; withdrawal; acceptance and empathy; foresight; awareness and perception; persuasion; conceptualizing; healing and serving; community building.

Sheldrake (2005) groups these characteristics, slightly differently named, into three groups - those which are concerned with skills, with values and with oneself as leader, and comments that the servant leadership model is not written as prescriptive but rather that ‘it is ideas, processes and suggestions, and they are often contradictory or at least inconsistent’ (p. 7).
Sheldrake acknowledges that servant leaders are difficult to find at the top of organizations and are more usually recognizable as what he refers to as ‘embedded in the core of organizations’ (p. 8) yet have transformative influence within organizational life. For Sheldrake the distinctive features of servant leadership appear to be caring behaviours and those identifiable as stewards, attending to the service of others.

Spears (1996) elaborates the application of Greenleaf’s concepts within six spheres - on individuals including writers such as Max DePree and Peter Senge; on boards of trustees of organizations; in community leadership organizations; in experiential education programs; in leadership and management courses and in programs for personal and spiritual growth.

Greenleaf being a Quaker seems not insignificant for the central themes of Servant Leadership, although he does not himself elaborate this connection. One of the tenets of the Society of Friends, a distinctive Christian group formed in 1668, is the doctrine of ‘Inner Light’, developed from an earlier historical understanding of ‘Christ within’, in which a person’s sense of the divine leads to characteristics of life such as simplicity, purity and truthfulness and which take precedence over biblical writings, forms of church order, or sacramental emphases. From earlier disciplines of dress and speech have developed the significance of silence for their ‘meetings’, a democratic organizational structure, a pacifist stance most obvious in refusal to engage in military service and a deep concern for education, social work and personal integrity (Cross 1958). From such patterns of life, of insight arising out of silent reflection, of a profound sense of respect for individual and collective process and integrity, it is perhaps not surprising that Greenleaf emphasizes the capabilities of listening and standing back, of trusting intuitive insights which contribute to interpreting an
environment or interpolating from it foresight for what is to come, as well as empathy, and a regard for human wholeness and building community. Likewise there is a consistency of such bases of life with the understanding of caring for and serving others. What is unclear is how transferable such patterns of life are to organizational life which is hierarchical rather than democratic in structure, and what time frame might be required for developing such patterns organisationally when the personal and social life of individuals who form those organisations are based in very diverse patterns?

What is problematic in evaluating Greenleaf’s approach is the lack of research material, writings which constructively critique the model or detailed descriptive material as to how the model is actually practiced in organizations.

Recognising the philosophical and anecdotal nature of writings on Servant Leadership, Russell and Stone (2002, p. 145-157) sought to develop a theoretical framework to assist future research. By reviewing the literature, they ascertained nine functional and eleven accompanying attributes from which they proposed two models of Servant Leadership as a basis for discussion and further analysis. Model 1 focuses on Values as core beliefs and principles, on Servant Leadership and its functional attributes. Model 2 adds organizational culture, employee attitudes and work behaviours and organizational performance as both outcomes of and influences on Servant Leadership. They suggest that the concept of servant leadership has the potential for generating change in society, organizationally and at personal levels and offer their models as means of researching its implementation.

Critique has been offered from feminist writers, from literary criticism and theological perspectives, in relation to the impacts of the language of servant leadership. Eicher-Catt
(2005), from a semiotic analysis standpoint, disputes the supposedly genderless approach of servant leadership on grounds of how language is utilized, for example in the neutralizing effect and contradictory thinking in the juxtaposition of servant and leader. She suggests that while this has the effect of destabilizing the associations of leadership as dominating power and potentially introduces a feminizing element in promoting service, it can also lead to confusion and having to make a ‘choice’ between acting as servant or leader which in turn creates a subtle reinforcement of behaviours associated with gender. In exploring the nature of discourse and myth, she further suggests that the descriptive terms and language forms used in servant leadership have ‘coalesced into a socially-constructed myth of what the ideal leader represents.’ (p. 19). She also posits that while appearing to offer a new social order, servant leadership’s language, informed as she sees it by the patriarchal ideology of religion, potentially reinforces masculine characteristics within organizational norms. She differentiates the need for leaders who are ‘meaning-makers’ generative of new systems rather than ‘meaning re-producers’ who ‘re-authorize pre-given meaning systems’ (p. 24), however ethical in rhetoric these may be, suggesting that servant leadership represents the latter.

Another source of critique from theological perspective is Zaragoza (1999), writing in relation to a theology of ordained ministry. He highlights difficulties with the premises of the servant leader model from liberation and feminist theology frameworks and questions the uncritical acceptance by the Christian church of Greenleaf’s use of Jesus Christ as a model of servant leadership. Zaragoza develops his critique from the assumptions that are made of the understanding of ‘servant’ in Christian teaching as distinct from Greenleaf’s understanding, using the biblical example used by Greenleaf. Zaragoza differentiates Greenleaf’s use of the story of the adulterous woman and Jesus’ responses as illustrative of ‘all the elements of an
effective leader’ (p. 44) from what the text demonstrates theologically about Jesus and his purpose. Zaragoza goes on to elaborate what he sees is stated about Greenleaf’s approach which is appropriated by Christian leaders as a basis for ordained leadership, without critique of the differences in motivation. Some of the characteristics of servant leadership which Zaragoza raises from the above example are the stress on individualism in a leader’s self-sustained and self-contained approach, winning in the face of competition by making the right choices in order to achieve the goal, and confident rationality. He notes how appealing such perspectives have become to church leaders without taking into consideration their implications. Examples he suggests are an emphasis on having faith in oneself rather than in God, or on an individualism which, in defining ministry with leadership responsibility, fosters the divide between leader and people so reinforcing hierarchical systems, or that goal and achievement orientation can emphasise the task rather than the people involved. An example of the latter is that Greenleaf’s view relegates the woman in the story to the occasion of the challenge rather than the place where compassion is lived out.

Zaragoza notes one instance of uncritical appropriation of Servant Leadership by Christian writers in the writing of Ray Anderson (1997)¹. Zaragoza’s concern is that though Anderson acknowledges that Christ is servant of God and that his leadership is taken up in the power of the Spirit of God, Anderson fails to develop why this might have differences from Greenleaf’s perspective of Jesus as a model of Servant Leadership or that the model could be challenged.

Zaragoza expresses his concern about the collapse of ministry practice understanding into Greenleaf’s model. Jesus’ ministry was not simply putting others’ needs first, or the

¹ Ray Anderson, then Professor of Theology and Ministry at Fuller Theological Seminary, was clearly in an influential position for those preparing for Christian ministry positions.
fulfillment of a job description as an effective leader but had a far more complex purpose which was certainly not formative for Greenleaf and remains unaddressed by Anderson (Zaragoza 1999). Anderson does place emphasis on the leader as the source of knowledge of the vision as one with delegated power from God, whose accountability is to God. Parallels are offered with biblical characters. The issue of abuse of power is raised, both in reactivity to the language of servant lending itself to leaders being treated as ‘doormats’ in service of others and in the need of discipline of the power leaders take up in his model. Anderson (1997) states ‘Power in the service of vision issues in a strategy that unites the wisdom of God with the work of God in order that the will of God may finally be accomplished’ (p. 200). He continues to list the qualities of the servant leader which align with Greenleaf’s characteristics where the leader articulates and interprets the vision, is more aligned with what is right (associated with knowing the will of God more than others), will lead the implementation of the plans and goals by others, will empower others to see the articulated vision and will advocate for those who fail or are hurt by others. Anderson does not develop aspects such as collaboration and consensus in decision making which are features alluded to in the servant leadership model. Essentially Anderson’s approach appears to fit the pattern of a charismatic leader who shows care for others but is not accountable to or informed by others’ wisdom.

Dunfee (1989) and Grant (1993) are among the feminist theologians referred to by Zaragoza who offer critique of the language of servant. Calling on the understanding of feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Reuther concerning the differentiation between servitude as subjugation and domination, and the reinterpretation of servanthood as relationships without domination and with mutual empowerment, Dunfee takes this understanding further by suggesting that there cannot be mutual empowerment without a sense of self, ‘the authority to
be a self” which she sees as ‘the authority to speak and act from one’s own center of freedom’ (Dunfee 1989, p. 143). A central focus of Dunfee’s argument is that for women service has been emphasized without there being in place this sense of self or personal authority, and that such authority is a precursor to serving others. She then questions whether serving others can generate liberation toward mutual empowerment and suggests that service tends to reinforce the development of dependency, rather than fostering an autonomy which enables persons to be responsible for themselves. Speaking from a theological base, she goes on to develop the notion of accompanying, being with others, as expressive of care, and proposes that freedom, authority and friendship express more adequately the liberation which empowers others through ‘the call to selfhood and the affirmation that that selfhood is vulnerable, deeply committed to relationality, and aware of the needs of others’ (p. 156).

Grant (1993), again from the standpoint of Christian theology, offers a critique of understandings of service and servanthood in light of the overt and subtle servitude which Black men and especially women have experienced. She calls not only for the reconsideration of servant language, which she sees as reinforcing subordination and not empowerment, but also for the creation of liberating psychological, political and social conditions which servant language fails to effect. She suggests discipleship as a more appropriate language form to use in the context of Christian community, though she recognizes that it too is a term with diverse interpretation.

Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) explore, briefly and superficially, what they describe as Jesus Christ’s model of Servant Leadership using a passage in Mark’s gospel, suggesting that Jesus’ use of the term servant was synonymous with greatness. They use the example of Jesus’ washing of the disciples’ feet in John’s gospel as redefining ‘the meaning and function
of leadership power from ‘power over’ to ‘power to’, that is power as an enabling factor to choose to serve others’ (p. 59). They go on to elaborate this as being an example of the shift in a leader’s self-concept and primary intent as a concept of being a servant rather than doing acts of service. In reviewing the evolution of servant leadership they comment that the notion of servant leadership originates in the Bible as they perceive they have outlined. As noted earlier, Saragoza highlights the fact that this was not Greenleaf’s intention in laying out his understandings, but rather that Jesus Christ was regarded as demonstrating servant leadership behaviours on some occasions. However, Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) do raise some questions needing to be researched, including measurability of this form of leadership, whether the results produced by this leadership practice differ from other models and what organizational factors might foster or inhibit such practice.

Saragoza (1999) is also a rare voice in questioning Greenleaf’s model being inspired by and based on Hesse’s fictional character, Leo. Zaragoza raises the fact that ‘when Leo left the pilgrims, they could not function without him and quit the pilgrimage’ (Saragoza 1999, p. 43), an issue left undeveloped in Greenleaf’s approach. Yet within the church a similar pattern is often seen. When a charismatic leader leaves and moves on, devotees will tend to follow that person to their next ministry and initiatives begun by such a leader will not be continued, often because neither the motivation for the initiatives nor the leadership for them have been shared in such a way that others have been involved in the vision so that they can follow through or form the leadership succession by bringing their gifts to these ministries.

The merging of the language of servanthood into present day culture, especially where biblical references are alluded to without careful consideration of their cultural and theological background, seems highly problematic and can lead to a further lack of clarity in
defining how such principles might be taken up in leadership practice.

e) Comparison of Transformational and Servant Leadership

An interesting development in the literature is the comparison of the Transformational and Servant Leadership models. The language of servant and transformational leadership is also frequently used in Christian contexts, though the distinction of meaning from usage in secular contexts is not necessarily clarified. Smith, Montagno and Kuzmenko (2004) regarded these leadership theories as being popular in discussion by researchers and so sought to look at their similarities and the contribution these theories offer to understanding leadership. Through consideration of the leadership components of each model, the researchers considered model overlap and the contexts that might be appropriate for each model. They conclude that there is overlap of behavioral components though the theoretical bases and contexts for application are different. The servant leadership model, they argue, is better suited to environments which are more stable with less external pressure and ‘serves evolutionary development purposes’ (p. 87) in which the leader is more concerned with followers’ personal growth and self-actualization, whereas the transformational leadership model is better suited to organizations experiencing intense external pressure where ‘revolutionary change is necessary for survival’ (p. 87), in which the leader’s abilities lead to the organization’s success.

Stone, Russell and Patterson (2004) review the similarities and differences between transformational and servant leadership exploring the leader’s focus. The primary difference found was that the servant leader’s focus is on service to followers whereas the transformational leader’s concern is on followers’ ‘engagement in and support of organizational objectives’ (p. 354). They see these differences as carrying further implications – the former on valuing the people who make up the organization rather than its
tasks and productivity though with the longer term development of the organization in view; the latter in generating enhanced performance of followers which results in the organization’s achievement of its objectives.

These differences also contribute to the leader’s influence and motivation of followers. The servant leader facilitates through their service the followers’ service and stewardship to foster and resource meaningful work. The transformational leader, through their own charisma and enthusiasm, draws followers’ commitment to the goals and objectives of the organization. The negative aspects of influence in the risks of manipulation and corruption are also discussed. Servant leaders risk the complexities of obligation where reciprocal relationships are developed, especially where self-centered service rather than the service of others operates. The charisma of transformational leaders may lead to misrepresenting their vision’s reality, ignoring of problems or manipulation of followers’ loyalties.

Some reflections on Rothauge’s (1983) research on leadership styles and congregational size are pertinent here. The ‘Family Church’ of up to 50 members, could reflect some elements of the servant leadership style where the formal clerical leadership is that of chaplain and carer of members, and where preserving their well being, rather than challenging the status quo, would be paramount. Visionary work, if even tolerated in such a context, would be controlled through the informal leadership of ‘gatekeepers’, the matriarchs/patriarchs, and their level of tolerance for acceptance and incorporation of new membership or group behavioural change. The Four I’s of transformational leadership could only be engaged in collaboratively with the involvement of both the formal and informal leadership.

In the ‘Pastoral Church’ of 50-100 members the expectation of those within the leadership
circle and possibly beyond would be that the responsibility for envisioning, inspiration, innovation, support and care for others sits with the clerical, formal leadership, with varying degrees of preparedness for and resistance to this load being shared collaboratively or delegated.

The team approach of the ‘Program Church’ of 150-350 members suggests that the primary cleric would be the carrier of the nature of organizational life and the provider of the Four I’s for the leadership team. The primary cleric would also be responsible for modeling the principles of service as part of their oversight of a leadership team. The team would in turn carry forward these modeled behaviours, as well as transactional leadership, with those for whom they are responsible. This pattern in larger scale would be reflected in the ‘Corporation Church’ of 300-500+ members.

\textit{f) Distributed Leadership}

Some of the key features of distributed leadership (Spillane 2005, Spillane, Halverson and Diamond 2004, Woods, Bennett, Harvey and Wise 2004) are that focus is not on the solo or individual leader but on a number of leadership participants; that leadership emerges among interacting individuals in a context or situation, with awareness of both the internal and external context for practice and contribution of a variety of capabilities and expertise; that there is fluidity in leadership processes and participation with autonomy yet interdependence in tasks with an openness of boundaries permitting varieties of practice in formal, informal and spontaneous forms.

Research has tended to be focused in education and health settings where role clarity and associated expectations of practice tend to be more clearly defined compared with the changing and less defined roles within the breadth of ministry practice and its variety of
contexts. In the parish life of the Pastoral Church there are some areas such as fund raising and social activities which can readily operate within a distributed leadership model, with reporting of process to the parish priest or central leadership circle. In the Program and Corporation Church models, a form of distributed leadership may operate for occasions of different and particular styles of worship, yet the tendency has been for such activities to be managed under a line management model orchestrated through the primary or secondary leaders, rather than with the fluidity of leadership envisaged in the distributed model.

How such a model might operate at higher levels within a hierarchical organization is difficult to envisage. It may well be that a distributed model appears too context and role specific to be applicable within some areas of the church’s life. A question would be how might the characteristics of interdependence and a fluidity of process and participation in working towards fulfillment of a mutually agreed purpose be lived out in our actual practice of leadership at all levels of church life, not only at the grass roots, local level of ministry practice? And, as an extension of this, how might such a model connect with theological perspectives to inform such leadership practice?

Gronn (2000), in developing his understanding of the place of distributed leadership within the future of leadership, highlights the need to ground consideration of leadership in an understanding of action and comments that there is need to ‘rethink current organizational practices, and the ontological properties of activities which aggregate to constitute those practices. The reason is that a distributed view of tasks and activities implies the existence of a new form of division of labour at the heart of organizational work.’ (p. 318) Such rethinking in the organisational life of the institutional church precipitates levels of anxiety which have often led to shutting down, rather than engaging with the courageous and
sometimes life-threatening work modeled for us by the early church.

g) **Community of Practice**

The Community of Practice concept (Wenger 1998) focuses on learning and problem solving within the activities of actual practice. Learning is not solely individual but is a social process generated by workplace interactions, of both formal and informal kinds, within the community which is formed by those working within an area or organization. The characteristics of community are mutual engagement, a joint enterprise and shared repertoire. The model suggests a level of reflection on practice which is not easily initiated within the various forms of gathered and changing community membership expressive of our church organizational structures and faith community practices, though this could be possible in groups brought together by a particular practice context, such as faith education, where sufficient group cohesiveness existed. Criticism of this model focuses both its methodological and theoretical bases (Allix 2000), in the definition of community, especially in who is included or not as members, and especially of the ‘claim that a community of practice is an intrinsic condition for learning’ (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2004, p. 31).

Both approaches appear to have arisen in response to the need to accommodate and adjust to organisational and social change and to deal with problems resulting from such change. A vivid example of a form of a gathered community of practice in a health care setting is described by Bate (2004). In order to address organizational change issues in a non-competitive and non-conflictual context, a group of people from different professions and authority levels within a hospital context volunteered to come together as a group to consider where and how change in the system could be effected. In this context where mutual trust was developed, with permission to think outside the boundaries and structures which were part of their current system, the group shared through story telling the dilemmas faced and
explored some new ways of addressing the issues raised. The detail of the process of change both within and outside the group is not elaborated but the power of the storytelling itself as a means whereby new pathways can be envisaged and forged was powerfully demonstrated, to the point of having impact on the National Health Service.

Given that the foundation of Christian faith community is the biblical narrative of the interaction and action of the triune God in human history, which describes and continues to bring into being faith communities, the narrative, storytelling model of addressing change is surprisingly silent within the church, though some parishes have utilized a form of this in reviewing their past when considering future direction. Further investigation of the detail of the processes of this narrative model would be needed for its application to be considered in the church context, yet it carries a sense of possibility and hopefulness for collective responsibility often lacking in the other models. There also seems a ready connection of such a group process with many of the characteristics of distributed leadership which may offer some alternative ways of working and leading collaboratively and with mutual interdependence. Certainly Hester and Walker-Jones (2009) have explored the place of narrative for how clergy approach their congregational leadership and for use in clergy peer group process.

h) Praxis approaches:

An example of a praxis approach to leadership arising from observation, teaching and consulting experience is that of Heifetz and Linsky (2002) in ‘Leadership on the Line’. They distinguish between technical and adaptive challenges. Technical challenges are where ‘people have problems for which they do, in fact, have the necessary know-how and procedures’, and adaptive challenges ‘require experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments
from numerous places in the organization or community’ (p. 13) and state that ‘without learning new ways – changing attitudes, values and behaviours – people cannot make the adaptive leap necessary to thrive on having the people with the problem internalize the change itself’ (p. 13). They take into account the disturbance to entrenched patterns which adaptive challenges create and the costliness of working with the reactions generated in such comments as ‘adaptive work creates risk, conflict and instability because addressing the issues underlying adaptive problems may involve upending deep and entrenched norms’ (p. 20). This is particularly relevant for the Anglican Church in seeking to address change brought about by declining church attendance, changed attitudes in society to institutions and where community is to be found, and negativity toward formal religion as distinct from forms of spirituality.

Heifetz & Linsky (2002) also address the dangers in leadership, experienced in resistance to change evidenced by attempts to marginalize, divert, attack or seduce the leader, so potentially undermining their effectiveness in addressing the adaptive challenges. Acknowledging honestly the costliness of leadership in such dynamics carries with it a respectfulness of the realities which leaders face, with the clear intention of offering not rapid solutions but rather ways of approach and response which are constructive for addressing the strong desire to maintain equilibrium in the face of change. This is further developed in ‘The Practice of Adaptive Leadership’ (2009) where a systems approach, addressing such issues as the political landscape, conflict and building an adaptive culture, takes more of the form of the current ‘how to’ approaches for leadership.

Hansen (2009), speaking from the business context, begins his text entitled ‘Collaboration’ with the statement that ‘Bad collaboration is worse than no collaboration’ (p. 1) and goes on
to speak of some of the pitfalls of getting collaboration wrong, proposing a solution in the form of a three step process through what he terms ‘Disciplined Collaboration’ (p. 14). Though he sees collaboration as offering potential in terms of ‘new services, greater client satisfaction and better-run organizations’ (p. 26) for non-business contexts he also notes the costliness in terms of ‘time, effort, and resources’ (p. 41) involved. He reviews four possible barriers to collaboration and the need to evaluate structures and particular situations and proposes three solutions – unifying people through goal setting, the value of teamwork and creating collaborative language; establishing leaders who practice disciplined collaboration with managers who ‘deliver results in their own job and by collaborating across the company’ (p. 95-96); and building networks with diversity and a variety of ties.

Robertson’s (2007) ‘Collaborative Ministry’ model, framed in Christian perspective and based in biblical interpretation, could be described as a praxis approach in offering concrete guidelines for establishing the change processes for effecting collaborative ministry primarily at local church levels. The foundation and motivation for collaboration for Robertson – extending the kingdom of God - is of a very different dimension than the benefits of collaboration that Hansen suggests, yet despite their inherent differences of focus, there are points of connection that could become potential points for dialogue. Both focus on responsibly carrying out individual work and working collaboratively with appropriate communication or building the necessary bridges and networks, though the language for describing the processes and their ultimate intention may be both similar and distinct, respectively.

**Issues arising from the material:**

In overviewing some of the influential models and approaches to leadership, it becomes
evident that many remain anecdotally or practically based, with a lack of evidence based and theoretically tested models. A further dimension is the changing nature of the perceptions of leadership, the impact this has had for society and organizational life and their flow on effect for leadership models utilized in the life of the church.

Processes of discernment and critique are necessary for evaluating leadership models for different leadership contexts within the church. Sustained reflective practice that encourages learning from both positive and problematic experiences, and which attends to wider influencing factors are foundational for such processes.

The merging of language is a significant matter at a variety of levels. Such merging is seen where theological terms or biblical references are used in secular leadership material which can be appropriated uncritically into Christian practice. Two examples of this are ‘Transformational Leadership’ and ‘Servant Leadership’. Both terms are widely used in the life of the church but they have quite distinct meaning in secular leadership theory from writings and use in Christian contexts. Clarifying both the similarities and differences of meaning and of language used as well as the intentions, in foundation and purpose, would be some of the groundwork needed for constructive dialogue to occur between secular and Christian perspectives on leadership.

ii) review of material discussing a social understanding of the Trinity, as well as understandings pertaining to a perichoretic perspective

As with the literature concerning leadership, there is a considerable body of material concerning trinitarian theology.
Attention will be given to the formative influences of the Cappadocian Fathers and John Damascene for the development of the social understanding of the Trinity and perichoresis, rather than to the historical evolution of trinitarian doctrine (Fortman 1972). While critical issues within classical tradition, such as subjectivity, substance and person in relation to the divine, remain matters of significance, these will not be developed. Four perspectives on a social understanding of the Trinity will be considered in more detail, with brief reference to other developments.

a) Formative influences

As has been mentioned previously in chapter two, the context in which both the unity and differentiation of the persons of the Trinity were upheld in the fourth century was one of lively debate and difference of understanding. Such was the background for the subsequent formulation of the Nicene Creed and doctrinal developments of subsequent Councils of the Church. The contributions made by the Cappadocians remain significant for ongoing debate in relation to a social understanding of the Trinity.

From these early stages the foundational place of scripture informing the practice of the Church, particularly as seen in baptism, was used by the Cappadocian Fathers to argue for the co-equal standing of the persons of the Trinity. Basil, in ‘On the Holy Spirit’, in light of the baptismal formula given by Christ speaks against ranking the Spirit as inferior saying

> When the Lord established the baptism of salvation, did He not clearly command His disciples to baptize all nations “in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”? He did not disdain His fellowship with the Holy Spirit…” (Anderson 1980, p. 45).

He continues, citing 1 Corinthians 12, ‘that in everything the Holy Spirit is indivisibly and

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2 E.J. Fortman provides a wide reaching overview of this material, including biblical perspectives, early church developments and key influences through to the 20th century.
inseparably joined to the Father and the Son’ (p. 60) and brings a welcome concrete analogy to the disputes concerning order of ranking and the differentiation in role within the persons by likening Paul’s reversal of the usual trinitarian ordering to human response when receiving gifts ‘first we thank the messenger who brought the gift; next we remember him who sent it, and finally we raise our thoughts to the fountain and source of all gifts’ (p. 61). Though this analogy is clearly not an adequate explication of the depth of the differentiation and nature of the triune God, what is captured here is the necessary struggle to find language for the mystery of God as three and one, for holding an essential nature together yet with varying expressions of distinctiveness. It was finding language, sometimes through analogy, for concepts which had eluded or created confusion for many which became the Cappadocians’ gift to the Church.

Gregory of Nyssa developed the articulation further in ‘On the Holy Spirit,’ saying ‘we affirm that the union of that which has once been joined is continual; for it is not joined in one thing and separated in others’ and continues ‘For all the divine attributes, whether named or conceived, are of like rank with one another, in that they are not distinguishable in respect of the signification of their subject’ (Schaff and Mace 1994, p. 327). Gregory goes on to argue for the community of the Spirit with Father and Son, that the Divine nature is shared, as is their operation and so the attribution of Godhead, ‘The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit alike give sanctification, and life, and light, and comfort, and all similar graces’ (p. 328).

Later John Damascene was to draw on the work of Gregory of Nazianzus to elaborate his innovative use of the term *perichoresis* or coinherence through the analogy of ‘three suns with no space between them shining with a single radiance’ (Louth 2002, p. 113). With reference to John 14:10 concerning ‘I am in the Father and the Father is in me’, Louth writes of John Damascene’s Exposition 8
This being ‘in one another’ of the divine hypostaseis John explains by using the term *perichoresis*… they have coinherence with one another without any coalescence or mixture’, …where the distinction of hypostaseis does not detract from the unity of the Godhead: the hypostaseis can be discerned to be distinct in their several ‘modes of existence’ but in reality they are wholly at one and that unity between the hypostaseis is manifest in their interpenetration or coinherence, *perichoresis* (p. 113).

b) *Development in perichoretic understanding*

Perichoresis as a theological term was initially utilized by the Greek Church Fathers, such as Gregory of Nazianzus and Maximus to speak of the unity of Christ’s human and divine natures and later was taken up in relation to the three persons of the Trinity.

The origins of the word perichoresis are described as deriving from the verb perichorein, meaning to make room for one another, or to rotate as well as the interweaving of one thing with another which corresponds with Latin theology’s use of *circumincessio*. Lawler (1995) suggests this is a dynamic process as expressed in both the Greek and Latin in contrast to the more static English rendering of coinherence (p. 49-50).

Harrison (1991) explores the developments of perichoresis as a theological concept with particular reference to Gregory, Maximus and Ps.-Cyril. She concludes that ‘perichoresis emerges as a key theological concept expressing the conjunction of unity and distinction, stability and dynamism, symmetry and asymmetry’ (p. 63) with three areas of application – in the Trinity, in Christology and in regard to the created world. The emphases that she expresses in relation to the Trinity are that ‘symmetry is paramount’ (p.63) though she takes up asymmetry as expressive of the Father being the ‘origin of the Son and Spirit and thus also the foundation of their mutual coinherence’ (p. 63). Her opinion is that the mutual indwelling of these persons ‘indicates that they give themselves to each other in love…in mutual self-
giving’ which is a relationship of ‘eternal rest in each other but also an eternal movement of love’ (p. 64). While this focus is more on the nature of the Trinity in itself, she sees the connectedness of this with humanity as being through Christ’s incarnation and follows Maximus’ understanding of perichoresis as ‘a kind of interconnectedness and comingling among created things themselves’ which she perceives as ‘a radical giving of one’s own being to God and to all other persons, as far as far as is possible, and a receiving of theirs in return. This perichoresis of love is the created likeness and manifestation of the Holy Trinity…’ (p. 65).

Perichoresis was later to become significant for understanding community within the social understanding of the Trinity, in expressing profound mutuality and dynamism in relationship, in energy and activity.

Such traditions continue to inform our understanding of the depth of intimacy central to God’s self, where differentiated expressions of Father, Son and Spirit are understood in their interconnected unity. It is this intimacy which is evidenced in the stories of the divine-human interactions of scripture and of the continuing activity within creation. This is the mystery that the worshipping community of faith is drawn towards and into as it celebrates eucharist together, prays together, is nourished spiritually together. Leadership in the community of faith offered in many forms, in its separate tasks, holds in various ways the individual and collective places from and in which people come together. This is particularly so in exploring the mystery of God in worship where through word, symbol and action, life lived in relationship with God and one another in our world is opened and engaged.
c) Four Approaches to a Social Understanding of the Trinity

1. Jürgen Moltmann’s approach

Moltmann (1993) challenges the relegation of trinitarian doctrine to irrelevance or it not making a difference in lived life by opening up, but not elaborating, the question of how God experiences us. It is the nature of the divine-human relationship which is critical for Moltmann – one of ‘covenant and love’ (p. 3), the foundation of which is God’s capacity to suffer with us which can be known through God’s history and experience with humanity, primarily evident in scripture. Rediscovery of trinitarian thinking he sees as coming about when there is a movement away from ways of relating characterised by dominance - ‘The motive that impels modern reason to know must be described as the desire to conquer and dominate’ (p. 9) - to a position where reason sees a fundamental change ‘from lordship to fellowship, from conquest to participation, from production to receptivity’ (p. 9).

Moltmann gives his starting point as trinity moving to unity, rather than the Western tradition’s reversed movement of thought. He understands the direction of thinking from trinity to unity to be expressive of a social doctrine, ‘a concept of the divine unity as the union of the tri-unity’ (p. 19) where relationships and communities are the focus, rather than issues of substance and subject. He warns of the possibility of the modalism and subordination debates reappearing in subtle forms of emphasis in twentieth century thinking, despite very changed understandings of personhood and subjectivity. He highlights the political implications of trinitarian understanding, critiquing monarchical emphases which have reinforced hierarchical patterns of social order. These he describes as ‘the whole cohesion of a religious legitimation of political sovereignty’ (p. 197), an issue which Basil is seen as reticent to develop to its fullest extent. In reviewing the perspectives of the tradition
Moltmann comments

the concept of God’s unity cannot in the Trinitarian sense be fitted into the homogeneity of the one divine substance, or into the identity of the absolute subject either; and least of all into one of the three Persons of the Trinity. It must be perceived in the perichoresis of the divine Persons. If the unity of God is not perceived in the at-oneness of the triune God, and therefore as a perichoretic unity, then Arianism and Sabellianism remain inescapable threats to Christian theology (p. 150).

In dealing with the economic and immanent Trinity, Moltmann calls for congruity - that if a distinction is to be made about God’s presence and activity in human history and God in God’s self, then it pertains to the maintaining of ‘God’s liberty and his grace’ (p. 151) and for the work of revelation, those expressions of the love which is both God’s inner nature and outward communication. Human recognition and knowing of the triune God comes primarily through thankful response, both individually and collectively, to salvation history where the tri-unity is manifest. What is also known in and through this history is the perichoretic at-oneness which connects to the potential depth of mutuality in human community, even in creation as a whole, brought about through Christ and sustained by the Spirit, the place of God’s suffering for and with us.

In tracing the development of understanding of the distinct persons of the Trinity, Moltmann focuses on the inter-dependence of ‘person’ and ‘relation’ – ‘The three divine Persons exist in their particular, unique natures as Father, Son and Spirit in their relationships to one another, and are determined through these relationships’ (p. 172). He takes up Richard of St Victor’s further development of what he terms ‘eksistentia’ to say ‘Then existence means a deepening of the concept of relation: every divine Person exists in the light of the other and in the other...Each Person finds his existence and his joy in the other Person’ (p. 173). Moltmann develops the sense of reciprocity which is generated between the three persons as both the being and giving of energy which is both distinct in each but necessary for each to
exist through an interchange which is love.

This understanding flows into the at-oneness not of homogeneity but of perichoresis ‘without reducing the threeness to the unity, or dissolving the unity in the threeness’ (p. 175). Moltmann uses the expression of the ‘circulation of divine life’ (p. 175) which is a source, an expression and a fulfilment of unity. This envisaging of the Tri-unity appears very different from the more static notion of substance.

However, the emphasis still remains on the inner life and nature of the Trinity’s relating, as a community itself rather than in developing how the nature of relationship within the human community is engaged. Moltmann does, at various points, use the notion of correspondence. What he sees corresponds with the triune God is not monarchy but ‘the community of men and women, without privileges and without subjugation’ and ‘a community in which people are defined through their relations with one another and in their significance for one another, not in opposition to one another, in terms of power and possession’ (p. 198).

Moltmann seeks to explore the outward movement in the external activity of the Trinity primarily from its dynamism. The eternal nature of this dynamic itself generates active energy which is also located in time and allows for the continuity of the outward and future dimension of God’s activity – working for the freedom of creation. Freedom, for Moltmann, is not related to individual human activity but in being related to and in relationship with God, to being included in God’s family, in contrast to the position and obedience required by servants, a liberty which ‘lies in their personal and intimate relationship to the Father and…their participation in the Father’s kingdom’ (p. 220) as well as in their relationships with one another. However there is yet more movement – the presence and work of the Son and the Spirit bring both servants and children to become friends of God, expressed most
particularly in prayer, in a hearing and speaking form of relating. So, for Moltmann, humankind is drawn into the external activity of the Trinity in human history as it continues to develop, in what he sees as growth, ‘the process of maturing through experiences that are continually new’ (p. 222), recognising that the freedom of full participation in the life of the Tri-unity is yet to be.

2. **Elizabeth Johnson’s approach**

The dimensions of dynamism and relationality in God are pivotal aspects of Johnson’s (1993) approach. She too recognises that trinitarian doctrine has suffered from being regarded as irrelevant, as ‘too separated from experience and too complicated to understand’ (p. 193). One strand of critique of the doctrine by feminist theology is ‘that this symbol is used to sustain the patriarchal subordination of women. It does this through both its male imagery and the hierarchical pattern of divine relationships inherent in the structure of reigning models…’ (p. 193).

Johnson takes up aspects of imagery and structure - the former in terms of the masculine language reinforcing the assumption of the essential maleness of God’s nature with its socially subordinating effect for women; the latter in concepts such as an originating source and the order of procession, noting that biblical selectivity has strengthened such positions. She suggests alternative approaches which offer inclusivity in both imagery and structure.

Johnson sees that retaining both the mystery of the Trinity and language of analogy is essential in freeing the doctrine from the constraint of literal interpretation. She explores the history of the doctrine based in the stories of experience of God’s activity in the world and relating with humanity, commenting that ‘Three experiences come to human beings from one
God. Therefore three sorts of relationship are possible with one God and three corresponding distinctions may be said to exist within one God’ (p. 198-199). She sees the historical terminology as seeking to interpret this experience, in all its mystery, but that such interpretation has ‘lost its mooring in experience’ (p. 199).

Johnson understands analogy to be a way of using and finding language to speak of God’s inner being expressed outwardly through salvation history. She says analogy ‘is a pointer to holy mystery in trust that God really is the compassionate, liberating God encountered through Jesus in the Spirit’ (p. 199). She explores the language of the tradition, particularly in relation to understanding of ‘person’ which she sees as especially problematic in the trinitarian symbol, commenting ‘God transcends what we understand to be person as source of all that is personal, and thus is not less than personal. God is interpersonal and transpersonal in an unimaginably rich way’ (p. 203).

In reviewing twentieth century theologians’ search to conceptualise trinitarian thought, Johnson sees her task as a feminist theologian as engaging in dialogue which opens other ways of speaking about God while not reinforcing past patterns. She honours the differing emphases on relationality as expressive of the livingness and dynamism of God and particularly focuses Moltmann’s approach to which she raises two points of criticism. These are first, that strongly hierarchical patterns of relating have persisted despite past potentially liberating emphases on community and shared responsibility, and second, that his model is not realistic or viable, stating ‘Nor do we yet have the human experience of an integral, harmonious society upon which this model is predicated. The nature of its unity escapes us experientially’ (p. 209). However, Johnson proceeds to call us to consider and experience female metaphors for the divine life which are not to be constrained, determined or limited by
proven efficacy. Rather she asks of us (what she does not allow Moltmann) that we enter with openness a perspective different from the dominant models, in this instance masculine language, suggesting that we need ‘a strong dose of explicitly female imagery to break the unconscious sway that male trinitarian imagery holds over the imaginations of even the most sophisticated thinkers’ (p. 212). But simply reversing the gender emphasis, while it may promote another way of hearing which is important, is not enough for provision of inclusive language. In focusing the language of holy mystery, Sophia, Holy Wisdom she begins to evolve in her descriptive language a dynamism which she names as God’s livingness in trinity, where the experience of women is not excluded, subordinate or omitted, but potentially equal. She also calls forth again the language of the tradition – *imago Dei, imago Christi, imago Spiritus* - which is not gender based.

Using the language of Holy Wisdom, Johnson retraces some of traditions’ emphases. For example in speaking of the mutual relations of the Trinity she states

> Relationality is the principle that at once constitutes each Trinitarian person as unique and distinguishes one from another. It is only by their reciprocal and mutually exclusive relationships that the divine persons are really distinct from each other at all…Holy Wisdom *is* a mystery of real, mutual relations (p. 216).

She also takes up the centrality of community and develops the theme of friendship and its various qualities to speak of the inner relations of the Trinity which she presents as alternative to the hierarchical, masculine imagery of the tradition. Though the notion of perfect friendship is introduced, this imagery does not seem to have the necessary depth or complexity to adequately carry the triune relating. She raises the inherent difficulty of equality in women’s experience, given that social formation and self-identity for women have frequently generated concentration on the primacy of the needs of others, and addresses this by emphasising the personal uniqueness and mutual enhancement of the divine relations.
Perichoresis also becomes a significant theme for Johnson and she clearly enjoys developing Edmund Hill’s metaphor of the ever moving circling dance (p. 220) as expressive of the mutuality in the divine life.

She acknowledges the need for breadth of analogical language in speaking of God as trinity in order that the trinitarian symbol might invite enquiry and have meaning. She concludes ‘The Trinity provides a symbolic picture of totally shared life at the heart of the universe. …The Trinity as pure relationality, moreover, epitomises the connectedness of all that exists in the universe’ (p. 222).

3. Colin Gunton’s approach

Gunton (2003) highlights the different historical emphases in trinitarian theology in order to focus some essential elements for a doctrine of the Trinity. This doctrine, he suggests, attempts ‘to identify the God who comes among us in the way that he does; to enable us to see as much as we need of the nature of our God’ (p. 12). He remarks on the risk of error in focusing on God in singularity or plurality, returning to the help offered by the concept of the person contributed by early trinitarian thought, of God as one being in three persons. However, he comments on this concept offering both difficulties and opportunities and goes on to consider understanding of the human person – as matter or spirit, in the individualism of self-fulfillment, and that ‘Being a person is about being from and for and with the other….it is also to be uniquely what we are – ourselves and not identical with others’ (p. 14). He names the contrast between such understandings in more recent trinitarian perspectives and the theories of our world and its social order where apparent individuality or even pluralism can be lost in homogenizing market forces. He stresses the need to carefully
interpret words like community, being and communion, given their common use in our marketing and social frameworks in ways that are different from reference to trinitarian understanding (p. 15-16), a strong theme noted earlier concerning secular and Christian leadership literature. While Gunton recognizes the differences between human and divine personhood, he states ‘God’s triune being stands as a model for ours: a being in which all accept their need of one another, while enabling all to be truly themselves’. But, he continues, ‘We need not only a model of personhood, but the means for its redemption and realization’ (p. 17) because of our relationship failures with others and our world, and in light of the church understood as Christ’s body, called to live life in communion.

Gunton’s final point about the doctrine of the Trinity is that ‘The three persons who make up the being of God; who together are the one God, are bound up together in such a way that one word can be used to describe their relation: love’ (p. 17). He stresses that the significance of trinitarian doctrine is that ‘it enables us to know – both theoretically and practically…who the God is who meets us in Jesus Christ and his Spirit’ (p. 18). He proceeds to consider this doctrine in terms of the three persons, in relation to eastern and western theological influences, for creation and in relation to understandings of atonement, baptism and the Lord’s Supper for the life of the Church.

In earlier material Gunton (1989, 1998) explored trinitarian perspective in relation to the ontology of the church and the doctrine of creation respectively and the place of perichoresis. He speaks of the deficiencies of understandings of the church as being related to the failure to consider the church in light of God’s triune being. He places this deficiency as the consequence of the doctrine of the Trinity as ’a kind of intellectual hurdle to be leaped before orthodoxy can be acknowledged’ (1989, p. 49) and hence its connection with and centrality
for life and worship can be missed. A key matter for Gunton is ‘the hypothesis that the sole proper ontological basis for the Church is the being of God, who is what he is as the communion of Father, Son and Spirit’ (p. 66) but calls for care in using this as a model for church structures. However he suggests an important step in considering any connectedness between the persons of the Trinity, either in unity or distinctiveness, as a model for the life of the church is to consider a trinitarian theology of creation.

Gunton explores economy in trinitarian understanding, commenting that ‘The concept of economy became a way of integrating a plurality, of maintaining the richness and diversity of the ways of the one God towards and in the world’ (1998, p. 158) and sees the concept of perichoresis as a way of opening out its implications. He understands perichoresis as a way of expressing the unity and plurality of the being of God whose interaction with the world is unified and yet diverse; that is of drawing out the implications of the economy…it enables theology to preserve both the one and the many in dynamic interrelations…God is not God apart from the way in which Father, Son and Holy Spirit in eternity give to and receive from each other what they essentially are. The three do not merely cohere, but dynamically constitute one another’s being’ (1998, p. 163-164).

Gunton goes on to work with the concept of perichoresis as an analogy, and ‘a process of thinking theologically under the impact of the economy of creation and redemption’ (p. 164). He asks whether perichoresis can also be used in a transcendental sense as pertaining to reality temporally, spatially and relationally, offering ‘a framework, or, better because more dynamic, coordinates for our human being in the world?’ (p. 166). It is from such questions that he begins his analogical exploration in relation to the personal world, the material world and culture. Foundational to this, however, is his proposal that ‘The dynamism of mutual constitutiveness derives from the world’s being a dynamic order that is summoned into being and directed towards its perfection by the free creativity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.’ (p. 166). Such an orientation of relationship becomes distorted and disrupted by limitation but
Gunton suggests that being made in the image of God generates the possibility of humans as ‘perichoretic beings’ (p. 168), a notion undermined by not being considered seriously especially in the struggles to balance emphases on the individual, collectivity and particularity and how relatedness to one another is conceived – as the ‘mutual constitutiveness’ noted above or as separateness and autonomy. He reiterates that perichoresis is an analogy and recognizes the impact of limitation within human reality, yet acknowledges the relatedness of all things - ‘Everything may be what it is and not another thing, but it is also what it uniquely is by virtue of its relation to everything else’ (p. 173) expressing not only a human ‘perichoretic reciprocity’ (p. 170) but a ‘perichoretic universe’ (p. 73) as well.

It seems that, for Gunton, a trinitarian perspective is not to be considered as exclusive but that his emphasis on its inclusion is ‘to stress its essential contribution to our understanding of our world and our appropriate habitation of it’ (p. 179), of human relatedness focused in God’s being which continues to call us toward perfection, and of how the one and the many are held together.

4. Catherine Mowry LaCugna’s approach

LaCugna (1991) suggests in her introduction to ‘God for Us’ that ‘the doctrine of the Trinity is ultimately ‘a practical doctrine with radical consequences for Christian life…the specifically Christian way of speaking about God, summarizes what it means to participate in the life of God through Jesus in the Spirit’ (p. 1). She offers an overview of her understanding of the development of the doctrine historically and philosophically, with a question as her background -
But why, if trinitarian theology is fertile ground for reflection on every dimension of Christian life, has it been so neglected or made distant and utterly abstract, and even regarded by some as contrary to reason? And how might trinitarian theology once again serve as a fruitful source for reflecting on every aspect of Christian life?’ (p. 2)

Her exploration of Cappadocian theology focuses on the new way of understanding God’s self and the relationship of the divine persons brought about by the controversies of the time, as distinct from the reflection of the earlier centuries being ‘focused on the biblical revelation of God in Christ and the Spirit’ (p. 53). The nature of God was explored through the relationship and distinction between nature or essence (ousia) and person (hypostasis), where the differentiated persons of Father, Son and Spirit were understood as ‘within God’s being’, this emphasis then ‘taking precedence over God’s relationship to us in the economy of salvation and deification’ (p. 54). In elaborating the Cappadocian particularities of thought, she describes their understanding of God as ‘To exist as God is to be the Father who begets the Son and breathes forth the Spirit…What Father, Son and Spirit are is the same; who each is, is unique’ (p. 69). She understands this to be at the heart of trinitarian doctrine and sees divine personhood as being related to origin ‘what a person is in itself or by itself cannot be determined’ and that this notion means that ‘The idea of relation of origin makes it impossible to think of a divine person ‘unto itself’, disconnected either from other persons or from the divine essence’ (p. 69) and that this equally applies to nature or essence. It is these points of identity which lead to her position that ‘it is impossible to think of the divine persons in an entirely abstract way disconnected from their presence in salvation history because it is only through the Son and Spirit that the unknowable God (Father) who dwells in light inaccessible is known to us’ (p. 70). This is the understanding which she develops as both foundational and central to the understanding of the Trinity as both relationship and persons in communion.
LaCugna considers ongoing debate about the origins of the theological definition of personhood as derived from both Greek and Roman sources but recognizes the work of the Cappadocians as formative for trinitarian ontology and the primacy of person, as distinct from substance, for God’s nature and for the equality and distinctiveness of the divine persons in relationship. She does suggest that the Cappadocian position is one in which the Father is primary in terms of origin of personhood, the ‘personal originating principle’ (p. 245), but relationally oriented toward love. She speaks of the Father as ‘the cause of everything that exists, including Son and Spirit. This causality does not indicate priority in being, in time, or eminence, but refers to the fact that God is absolutely personal…God ‘causes’ God to exist in the person of the Son and Spirit’ (p. 245). She sees Greek theology as ordering of the persons of the Trinity from the primacy of the Father yet as inherently ‘economy oriented’ (p. 248), that it

situates the mystery of communion in the economy of redemption and deification. Jesus Christ is the true union of divine and human and therefore the means of our own communion with God and with one another. The Holy Spirit is the power and presence who brings about through theosis the real union of the creature with God (p. 249).

She contrasts this position with emphases of the Latin tradition on substance as primary in the unity of the divine nature and that ‘The communion of the Father, Son, and Spirit among themselves structures the divine substance; communion is the unifying force that holds together the three co-equal persons who know and love each other as peers’ (p. 249).

For LaCugna the relational personhood of the Trinity is essential and her focus on an economic understanding of the Trinity and God’s self-communication flows from this – ‘The God of Jesus Christ exists entirely for, with, and through another. The law of personhood is that the only way one ‘has’ oneself at all is by giving oneself away’ (p. 398). These emphases and those above also give rise to her understanding of the distinctions between ‘God’s being-
in-relation’ (p. 246) rather than ‘God’s being-in-itself’ (p. 246). This is reiterated in her view that the doctrine of the Trinity has implications for living the Christian faith, especially through her understanding of ‘God-for-us as revealed in creation, in the face of Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit who brings about communion between God and creature’ (p. 250) and what this means for how we live the reign of God as ‘the rule of love and communion’ (p. 411).

Perichoresis, in LaCugna’s view, took over from both the early patristic understanding of God’s unity being located in the Father and of what she understands as the Cappadocians’ understanding of relations between the persons of the Trinity, stating that ‘Perichoresis provides a dynamic model of persons in communion based on mutuality and interdependence’ and ‘avoids the pitfalls of locating the divine unity either in the divine substance (Latin) or exclusively in the person of the Father (Greek), and locates unity in diversity, in a true communion of persons’ (p. 271).

She refers to some of the analogies used to elaborate perichoresis but is not satisfied with them, saying they ‘do not convey the dynamic and creative energy, the eternal and perpetual movement, the mutual and reciprocal permeation of each person with and in and through and by the other persons’ (p. 271) and continues

There are neither leader or followers in the divine dance, only an eternal movement of reciprocal giving and receiving…The divine dance is fully personal and interpersonal, expressing the essence and unity of God…perichoresis provides a point of entry into contemplating what it means to say that God is alive from all eternity as love’ (p. 272).

In exploring the term perichoresis from its Christological beginnings, LaCugna highlights the shifts, in its later Latin translation, that opened out the active sense of movement as well as a passive sense of sitting around. She also takes up the subsequent positive and negative
influence of the Latin developments of trinitarian theology, from the position of non-subordination of the persons of the Trinity to the focus being on the intra-divine relationship rather than with creation, respectively.

Despite the appeal of perichoretic notions to feminist and liberation theology and its use to support ‘a vision of egalitarian human community’ (p. 274), LaCugna offers some critique by emphasizing the starting point for connection coming from ‘returning to the economy of salvation and the revelation of the concrete forms of human community proclaimed by Jesus as characteristic of the reign of God’ (p. 274) rather than the starting point for connection being from a model of God. She continues ‘The starting point in the economy of redemption, in contrast to the intradivine starting point, locates perichoresis not in God’s inner life but in the mystery of the one communion of all persons, divine as well as human’ (p. 274). She alludes to the appropriateness of the image of dance for such communion and that a dance of the divine persons should not be separated from that of human persons but that ‘The one perichoresis, the one mystery of communion includes God and humanity as beloved partners in the dance’ (p. 274).

\( d \) Other perspectives

Correspondence between the nature of the church and God as triune, especially the understanding of church as community, has been taken up by a number of theologians, often with warnings about such discussion requiring detailed consideration rather than a too ready acceptance of connection (Volf 2005, p. 153). Turner (2004) also calls for caution in ‘how to move from a discussion of God to a discussion of human relations when drawing political implications from the Trinity’ (p. 324) and takes up three aspects that are problematic - the meaning of terms used of the Trinity, what is said of the Trinity being applicable to humans
and how the gap between trinitarian relations and human society can be addressed. She also differentiates between whether humans model themselves on the Trinity or participate in it (p. 324-331). She develops her thinking further in a later article (2012) emphasizing a Christological approach, ‘in Christ the Trinity enters our world to work over human life in its image, through the incorporation of the human within the divine Trinitarian life’ (p. 382). She suggests it is not that we model our human relations on the Trinitarian relation but that it is identification with Christ that engages us with the ‘dynamic life of the Trinity’ (p. 384), that the trinitarian relations offer an analogy for participation in human relating and for the work of mission.

Otto (2001), critical of what he sees as Moltmann’s conceptual use of perichoresis in his more eschatological approach to relational community of the Trinity and also toward Gunton’s cosmological use of perichoresis, develops his argument from emphasis that ‘Perichoresis demands an ontological basis for relations if there is to be a real and not merely a conceptual relationship’ (p. 368).

Raith (2008) is critical of LaCugna’s understanding of the Cappadocians perspective on the grounds of her interpretation of the relationship between person and substance, in divine order and distinction, in her use of the terms ‘relation’ and ‘personhood’ and in terms of the purpose of their respective theologies. He concludes that ‘though there may be overlap in terminology between the two camps, which may give the impression of compatibility, the concepts advocated by these terms are not only different but also at odds with one another’ and that LaCugna and the Cappadocians are ‘walking a very different path toward very different goals’ (p. 284).
Kilby (2000) raises objection to social understandings of the Trinity particularly from her view that it is another form of projection. This includes commentary concerning both Moltmann and Gunton in relation to their discussions of the history of the doctrine of God concerning ecclesiology and metaphysics respectively and their resulting enthusiasm for perichoretic perspectives. She puts forward a three stage process from concept for the three persons of the Trinity, of ‘notions borrowed from our own experience of relationship and relatedness’ (p. 442) which she perceives are presented an authoritative resource for Christian theology and problematic ‘because what is projected on to God is immediately reflected back onto the world’ and ‘said to be what is in fact important about the doctrine’ (p. 442). She suggests, finally, that the doctrine of the Trinity is a ‘second order proposition…as a kind of structuring principle of Christianity’ (p. 443).

Pickard (2012), coming from a particular interest in ecclesiology, raises some similar concerns in discussing problems in social understandings of the Trinity. Three key matters are that this understanding tends towards idealization and projection in its application, that it fails to address conflict, even the positive aspects of ‘creative tension’ (p. 104), and ‘the charge of tritheism’ (p. 105), in its emphasis on the tri-unity rather than unity, especially the understandings of person and community that underlie this position. He continues with what he terms ‘Underlying difficulties’ (p. 107) which prove very interesting. First, ‘the doctrine operates in a ‘top-down’ fashion rather than a ‘bottom-up’ one’ (p. 107) the characteristics of which he sees evidenced in projection and use of the social understanding as ‘blueprint models of divine sociality’ (p. 107), where human dynamics and conflict fail to be taken into account, which ‘are symptomatic of rather artificial and speculative attempts to supply supposed knowledge of the inner trinitarian life of God to the formation and repair of human society’ (p. 107). His second difficulty is that he sees the social and perichoretic
understandings of the Trinity as focused on the inner life of the Church, rather than an outward focus on engaging with wider society in our world and for creation. This focus leads into the third difficulty, even danger he suggests, that such an understanding ‘operates within a static as opposed to a dynamic ontology of being’ (p. 108) in the way in which concepts for example of person, sociality, relationality and perichoresis are expressed as operating. Again these can become strongly influenced by idealization. Pickard goes on to explore how the nature of sociality for the life of the Church might be envisaged.

**Issues arising from the material:**

It is not the intention of this study to provide an exhaustive study of trinitarian theology but rather to take up an overview of some of the formative influences in the developments of a social understanding of the Trinity and particularly perichoresis. Four different approaches are offered from which to engage the purpose of this research - to explore the interface between leadership theory, leadership practice and social understandings of the Trinity.

Each of the four approaches raise matters of different emphases of how divine unity relates to human community, issues of finding appropriate language to express such connection, the changed understandings of the term ‘person’, and the place of speaking of trinitarian understandings for living in our world. Different forms of critique of social trinitarian understandings are presented.

Attention is given to the caution that connections between such a theological understanding and human interaction should not be undertaken too readily. This research is not presenting any form of ‘blueprint’ for leadership practice arising from a social understanding of the Trinity but rather exploring what interconnections there might be which, in turn, might
stimulate articulation of how leadership practice and theology can inform one another. These concerns will be taken up in the discussion of the data.

It is noted again that in both the theological and leadership aspects of this work there is a level of fluidity in technical terminology, where the same or similar terms are used but with different emphases or depth of meaning. Clarification, discernment and critique are needed for concepts to be utilized across disciplines or for engagement to occur between them.
Chapter 4 Methodology and Method:

Methodology

The choice for qualitative research & grounded theory principles:

Taking a qualitative approach

A qualitative approach was chosen for this research project on the grounds that what was to be explored was the actual, lived leadership experience of a number of individuals who shared a common elected or appointed responsibility within a particular setting – the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Melbourne. This approach is also characterized by the data – the material obtained through interviews with those in leadership in the diocese - being foundational. This data, the described lived experience of participants, is reviewed and interpreted in order for the sense and meaning of interconnections to emerge (Pope, Ziebland and Mays 2000). This focus fitted well with the summary that ‘qualitative research is pragmatic, interpretive and grounded in the lived experience of people’ (Marshall and Rossman 1999, p. 2).

A further aspect of the project was the interaction between two facets which began through telling the stories of life. The descriptions of participants’ lived experience of leadership and their understandings of God were the primary developmental ground and process for the formation of ideas and conceptual thinking, resonating with the notion of theological concepts being concerned with and developed through narrative, language forms, image and symbol (Ritschl 1986). The nature of such development was congruent with a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach.

In line with the focus of qualitative research being on interpretation and meaning making from a particular daily life experience, the process of the project began with identifying
issues and questions that would be guides for the collection of data, which would in turn be influenced by the content of the data, rather than stating a hypothesis which required quantitative testing to establish its veracity. Existing theory concerning leadership and understandings of the Trinity acted not as determinative for what would emerge but rather as informing and sensitizing the researcher to questions that needed to be explored or drawn out in more depth where that was possible (Charmaz 2006).

This research project is concerned with interdisciplinary interaction – searching out the inter-relationship between the discipline of leadership theory or models and practice, and of theology in understandings of God as triune.

As participant observer, I have been and am involved in experience of the social world of the project, in this instance of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, and could readily immerse myself in the situations described by those interviewed, yet was able to maintain distance from the specifics of their individual context in order to undertake the necessary analysis.

**Use of Grounded Theory principles**

The focus of the project is the exploration of ideas, intentions and actions concerning whether or not there was an interface between participants’ practice of leadership and their understanding of God. I perceived that the best method to draw out these issues was through in-depth interviewing. Though the interviews were open-ended they were directed in two ways - in terms of the initial question provided to interviewees prior to the first interview, and in probing for elaboration or for refocusing as the interviews proceeded. I had the advantage of having considerable experience in interviewing which aided the possibility of obtaining rich data (Charmaz 2006, Corbin and Strauss 2008).
A significant feature of the principles of grounded theory is the simultaneous involvement of data collection and analysis, where analysis is undertaken during the period of data collection and informs such collection. During these processes, the emergence of categories and themes was noted with corresponding constant comparison of responses. The emergent nature of themes from the data is what becomes significant, and their confirmation by iteration, rather than their being determined by preconceived ideas.

Three phases of literature review were undertaken - prior to, during and following data collection. The initial literature review triggered and clarified the questions and issues to be addressed. During the later stages of the project, the literature offered enhanced awareness of nuance within interviewing and in analysis of data.

Procedures for analysis of data in a grounded theory approach can be clearly defined with explicit processes, in terms of data analysis, through three forms of coding – open coding where the characteristics of a category and their dimensions are discovered; axial coding which concerns the relating of categories to subcategories at their point of linkage or axis, and selective coding, the integrating and refining process (Corbin and Strauss 1998, p. 101, 123, 143). Corbin and Strauss (2008) later define coding as ‘Extracting concepts from raw data and developing them in terms of their properties and dimensions’ (p 159) which demonstrates a less prescriptive approach, for example in reference to the previous “artificial” nature of distinguishing forms of axial and open coding, which in reality may operate in tandem (p 198). My preference was to take a more flexible approach as highlighted by theorists such as Charmaz (2006), using a variety of processes for analysis and meaning making, such as establishing categories, themes, forming matrices, creating diagrams and allowing conceptualization to evolve.
Given the interactive nature of the exploration of this qualitative research, where belief and action intersect, the purpose was to discover what connections there might be between the component parts through interviews with those involved in leadership within Anglican tradition. Grounded theory emphasises the need to allow information to emerge from the data which have the potential to become concepts informing future action. This makes possible the building up of theory to be discovered, developed, provisionally verified through data collection and observation in relation to the specific issue explored and through systematic analysis of resulting data. Cresswell (1998) comments that

the intent of grounded theory study is to generate or discover a theory, an abstract analytical schema of a phenomenon, that relates to a particular situation. This situation is one in which individuals interact, take actions, or engage in a process of response to a phenomenon (p. 56).

While the phenomenon in this instance is leadership and the theology that may inform it, the situation is likewise one of leadership, for leaders themselves are considering leadership in their context as well as contemplating a theological context and relationship which they may not have deeply considered. The work, then, becomes a projective task of looking forward, based on the information available in the present and generated in part by experiences of the past. Rather than generate a theory as such, the intent of this project is to highlight some areas which might inform the way in which leadership is conducted and prepared for in the Diocese of Melbourne and which could contribute to dialogue for the development of leadership theory.

An appealing and appropriate aspect of grounded theory pertinent to the question and process of this project is the use of ‘non linear forms of thinking such as going back and forth and circumventing around a subject to get a fresh perspective’, (Strauss and Corbin 1998, p. 13)
where stress is placed on emergence for theory building where ‘concepts and design must be allowed to emerge from the data…Such a task calls for sensitivity to the nuances in data, tolerance for ambiguity, flexibility in design and a large dose of creativity’ (Strauss and Corbin 1998, p. 34).

One feature of grounded theory methodology is its coding procedures, referred to previously, which have their own dynamism and fluidity. Their purpose is to assist in the building rather than the testing of theory. The coding principles primarily utilized in this project were that each interview was initially analysed separately from which four categories, or distinctive components, readily evolved. These categories were participants’ descriptions of their leadership style, the contexts in which leadership was exercised, the processes used or perceived to be operative in their leadership practice and their understandings of God, including how these understandings related, or not, to the former categories. This corresponds with the open coding process where ‘data is broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, and compared for similarities and differences’ (Cresswell 1998, p. 102). Data were subsequently analysed for thematic issues which emerged within and across the key categories. This process corresponds with axial coding where ‘the actual linking takes place not descriptively but rather at a conceptual level’ (Corbin and Strauss 1998, p. 125). Further coding procedures included note taking, construction of matrices and diagrammatic representation of material. Observations were also noted during the interview process and reflection on them subsequently included in the analysis and interpretation (Marshall and Rossman 1999).

Though artifacts may be more usually associated with ethnographic studies, it was decided to invite participants to provide an artifact, in the form of symbol, written material or art form,
in order to further open out or assist in participants’ articulation and elaboration of their experience and understandings.

Method

The processes of exploration:

Criteria for and selection of participants

Participants were selected on the basis of four criteria. Each was required to be a practicing Anglican, lay or ordained, named in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne Year Book 2006 as a person in a significant leadership position in diocesan, regional or parish life. It was important that those selected covered a span of levels of experience, age and gender and that they were people who had a demonstrated capacity to reflect theologically.

While there was equal representation of lay and ordained, and gender, this was not a representative sample but rather a cross section of liturgical perspective. Cross cultural representation was not included in the sample as this was regarded as a distinct area of specialization and not able to be considered in this project.

Ten to twelve participants were considered as a suitable and manageable number in the framing of the project, with the option of a maximum of fifteen if there was insufficient coverage of the issues with participants initially selected.

The initial letter inviting participation was sent to twelve people selected from a potential list of twenty five. The plain language description of the project and a consent form were provided following expression of interest in becoming a participant (Appendices 1-3).

At the commencement of the project the diocese was in a transitional period between
Archbishop’s appointments. In light of this and as a courtesy, permission was also obtained from the then Vicar General, Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, indicating the nature of the project, source of participants and use of records in the public domain. A copy of this material was also sent to the Archbishop elect.

All twelve persons contacted accepted the invitation to participate in the research and remained as participants for the duration of the project.

**Choice of interview for in-depth exploration**

In-depth interview was chosen for the project on two grounds. First, that it would allow the elaboration of the varieties of experience and theological perspective of participants to be explored. The intention, whenever possible, was to move beyond participants’ espoused understanding of both their leadership and theology to their actual practice in the ministry which they chose to describe. Second, it was a significant aspect of this project that both my former professional life and years in various ministries had included training and extensive experience in interviewing, particularly in relation to an individual’s lived experience.

In the early stages of framing the project, consideration was given to a combination of focus groups with a selected follow up individual interview for clarification purposes. This method was rejected for a number of reasons, including

a) the capacity of individual clergy to dominate discussion, especially if they were used to exercising influence associated with senior status in diocesan life. Such issues were envisaged particularly if a focus group had mixed lay and clerical representation;
b) the possibility that those who had more recently entered leadership within diocesan structures, regardless of age or gender, might allow their apparent lesser experience to render them less entitled to share their perspective;

c) the interpersonal and professional dynamics within a group drawn from an organization where those selected, because of their leadership roles, would be known to one another and where agendas from other places of connection or disconnection could influence responses.

**Interview procedures**

Two interviews were undertaken by the researcher with each participant, a total of twenty four interviews. The form of the interviews was semi-structured, each of up to one hour duration with each participant, over a limited period.

At the commencement of each first interview information was collected from the participant about their involvements within the local and the wider church, the length of time in their current involvement or position relevant to their leadership and the nature of that context, for example the size of congregation. This information was noted by the researcher.

The initial letter informing each participant of procedures requested that they consider and be prepared to discuss a significant leadership situation which they felt demonstrated their style of leadership. The recorded interview began with this open ended question and the invitation to describe their understanding of how they carried out their leadership, using their chosen example. This allowed the particular experience of each participant to emerge.

The second interview commenced with the researcher providing a verbal summary of the
main issues elaborated in the first interview. It was also ascertained that this summary aligned with the participant’s perception of what had been raised. The researcher also named the matters that were to be further explored in this interview.

Whilst it was initially hoped that interviewing would take place over a four to six month period, for a number of reasons the complete interviewing process took place over fifteen months. Some significant changes occurred in the diocese over this period including the election and installation of a new Archbishop. Soon after this, in accordance with a decision at a previous Synod, there was a reduction in members of Archbishop in Council by half, with a changed structure of representation.

Request for artifact
At the first interview, each participant was invited to provide an artifact, for example written material, symbols or images, which they perceived represented, elaborated, informed or had contributed to their understanding of leadership. Forewarning of this invitation had been provided in the initial information provided to participants. A range of artifacts were referred to including objects, iconography, pictures, papers written for professional purposes, reference to and reflections on particular passages of scripture or images that arose in the course of an interview. Some descriptions were powerful in their symbolism, however detailed reference to the artifacts is not appropriate because of possible identification of participants. Reference will be made to the issues raised by such artifacts.

Interview records
Interviews were audio taped and transcribed by a professional transcriber. Permission of the participants was ascertained through the consent form. Transcription and initial review of
material took place as soon as practicable following each interview.

**The Processes of Analysis:**

**Allowing the themes to emerge**

Analysis of data involved a recurring series of processes which included:

i. multiple reviews of interviews, notes and evolving associated references,

ii. the ascertaining of key categories arising from the interview material,

iii. establishing the themes which emerged,

iv. construction and exploration of matrices in order to correlate data and sensitivity to themes,

v. establishing saturation,

vi. attending to triangulation to ascertain similarities and contrasts between emphases.

**i) Multiple reviews**

Initial analysis took place through note taking during the interview and subsequently in reviewing the transcribed material at the various stages of analysis, in checking recurrence of categories and themes or for variances and nuance in understanding or interpretation.

**ii) Key categories**

Categories became clear from the first interviews and in note taking during interviews and the initial reviews of the transcribed material. As noted above, this process took the form of adapted open coding. Four categories were ascertained as follows:

1. leadership style,

2. contexts in which leadership was exercised by the participant,
3. the processes used or perceived to be operative in the conduct of leadership in the contexts discussed, and
4. the participant’s understanding of God, particularly God as triune and the connection of this understanding with their leadership style.

iii) Emergent themes

The second level of data analysis was establishing themes which unfolded as the first interviews took place. These were noted both within each interview conducted and by comparison between interview data in the subsequent multiple reviews of transcriptions. This process of analysis across and within the key categories was an adapted form of axial coding, as referred to in the methodology.

iv) Matrices

The third level of analysis was through matrices constructed by the researcher to garner the overall pattern and distribution of reference to the themes that emerged, and to consider reference distribution within distinct initial categories of analysis. Flow and development of ideas were also explored through diagrammatic representation.

v) Saturation

Saturation relates to the point at which a decision is made not to recruit further participants, where patterns or themes emerging were being reiterated or the participant was not able to provide a further level of articulation of their understanding. The researcher judged that the significant key matters for this project had reached saturation by the second interview, though many issues more peripheral to the key components of this research could have been explored in more detail. It was decided that recruiting additional participants would not add to further
elaboration of the key questions.

\textit{vi) Triangulation}

For the purposes of triangulation, that process of intentionally looking at the question from different perspectives, at least three types of materials were utilized. These materials included documents in the public domain relating to Anglican tradition and practice, a traditional literature review as well as consideration of and comparison with other approaches elaborated in Anglican contexts in Australia.

Material pertaining to Anglican tradition included The Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia, A Prayer Book for Australia, significant Reports arising from the Lambeth Conference and Reports to the Synod of the Diocese of Melbourne.

Consideration of other approaches included reference to and discussion with the authors of two Doctor of Ministry Studies theses (Farran 2004) (Stevens 2006), as well as discussion with personnel involved in a process of Newcastle Diocese referred to in a text by Greenwood (2002) concerning a trinitarian approach for a Diocesan Ministry Strategy.

\textbf{Interdisciplinary interaction:}

A significant interaction within this research project is between the disciplines of theology and leadership theory. Within the former is a further subset of theological interaction concerning understandings of God and the particularity of perichoretic understandings of the Trinity. It is not the intention of this project to provide an overview of such understandings but rather to address some of the significant influences which led to perichoretic understandings and to focus on four contributors’ perspectives in the development of a social
understanding of the Trinity. In relation to leadership theory, this project reviews some of the significant influences in secular leadership theory and developments in Christian thinking on leadership.

Stevens (2006) considered such methodological issues for interdisciplinary research involving trinitarian perspectives for diocesan strategic planning and management processes in terms of boundaries, language and dialogical frameworks and comment will be taken up in the discussion of the findings of this research. Discussion will also be reported on meetings with members of the Diocese of Newcastle exploring the strategic planning process of that diocese noted by Greenwood (2002) and in conversation with the then Diocesan Bishop, Brian Farran (2004) and the elaboration of his research outcomes within that diocese.

**Concluding comments:**

A qualitative and flexible grounded theory approach was taken for this study because of the focus on the actual lived leadership experiences of participants and their understandings of God. It also took into account their diverse experiences of leadership within the Anglican tradition. The exploration of leadership through story, image and their associated search for language to capture significant aspects and what informed leadership activity connects with the corresponding story and search for language in theological developments and concepts. This dynamic resonated more readily with qualitative processes. Engagement in the interview process allowed for the emergence of key categories and especially the themes which both highlighted and enabled further consideration of the critical questions posed by the project and its significant concerns.

This research project itself embodies what it seeks to encourage in the future – dialogue
between understandings of God, especially understanding of God as triune which is so visible and central to Anglican practice, with understandings of leadership theory and practice.
Chapter 5  

The Findings of the Research:

Exploring the data:

Analysis of the interview data involved a recurring series of processes, described in the previous chapter, where the key categories were ascertained and from which emergent themes were established. In addressing the data, some of the key categories will be presented with direct material and some by overview of the significant characteristics. Detailed material will be provided to illustrate or elaborate each of the emergent themes. There is some inter-relationship and occasional overlap between data for the categories and themes. Where data has been provided in a previous section it will not be repeated.

Where quotations are provided from the interview process, participants will be noted as P followed by numbers 1-12 according to the particular participant referred to. Following the participant number, a, indicates the quotation is from the first interview and b, from second interview. The transcript page reference is also provided for location of the quotation. For example (P1a, p1) indicates a quotation is from the first interview with participant 1, found on the first page of the transcript of that interview.

Key categories

Initial analysis of the interviews focused four key categories arising from participants’ description of the leadership situations they had chosen to discuss and subsequently elaborate.

Material was readily attributable to four categories. These were:

i. leadership style;
ii. the contexts in which the participants exercised leadership, the organization type, size and the terms used to capture the culture;

iii. the processes engaged by the participant in exercising their leadership and

iv. understanding of God and its connection with the participant’s leadership practice.

i) Leadership style

The terms which participants used to describe their leadership style in the situations they chose to discuss were diverse and had resonance with styles referred to in secular models of leadership as well as in Christian leadership literature. These terms included being the driver of a process,

“I’ve had to stand up and articulate our mission. …I saw it as really crucial to affirm but to gently challenge (P1a, p1)… I’ve really been driving it (a planning process) (p3)”

and as storyteller of the organization,

“I think the driver for me is that I see myself as the main storyteller of the organization and I think that carries through in a lot of leadership roles that I have… I see my role as creating and maintaining a narrative alive in the organization… I had to re-tell the story as to why…and how we work together and that has been the driving force behind it… I actually thought of a strategic plan as what is the story we are engaged in, what is our reason for existence, what are we trying to do… I set up a process…to undertake a review of the strategic directions and I drove that myself (P2a, p1-2)…we are here to empower and transform people’s lives. That’s the story and that’s the theological story for me… I basically think the Christian story is about social and personal transformation, liberation, freedom (p2)”
being a strategic thinker and communication broker,

“I have a good strategic thinking capacity and can lead into future directions because I have a vision. I listen well to people and try to see both sides of the story...I have a good understanding and a good knowledge of that (the organizational system), being able to inform people about that...So as a communication broker I think that as a leader I like to be open with people and try to be upfront...if there is an agenda I will tell you” (P3a, p2)"

being authoritative, based on knowledge,

“I guess I was pretty authoritative...I like to know where I’m coming from, I like being on solid ground...knowing the regulations...I try to use a sense of humour...That detracts from being overbearing I think” (P4a, p1)

enabling others to come to a common mind or make a decision,

“I could help people come to a common mind, make an informed decision, make a conscientious decision, but also come to a common mind...exercising leadership there for me, it was more about disseminating good information ...and enabling people...” (P5a, p1)

having a relational approach,

“I exercise power, leadership in a very relationist way. Probably that’s my undoing, because relationships can have a greater impact on me than cognitive decision making or being decisive or didactic or whatever, and it takes longer” (P8a, p8)

“I am certainly a collaborative type of person; I like to work with people, not confrontational. My leadership style would be relational...working with people, trying to be persuasive rather than combative and giving people a sense of a common goal and everyone
working towards that goal (P12a, p3)’’

enunciating processes,

“I enunciated what we needed to do...a legitimate process that should lead to good outcomes. I am already committed to the fact that you can’t clarify the future until you have honestly accepted where you are now...I am very committed to objective processes (P11a, p2)”

naming the realities and the need for change,

“...to have the courage to name some of what has happened (P6a, p2)...so early on I sent out the signals that this was a different regime, there was a different ethos...I was all along confronting the mold and patterns that I thought were very unhealthy (p6)”

as well as addressing conflict

“In fact leadership is also about dealing with conflict, resolving conflict, facing conflict and I think we in the church often don’t want to do that. We don’t want to have conflict in the church, because we don’t know how to handle it. We actually think it’s antichristian...I mean Jesus went around turning the tables of the temple, and virtually putting everyone off side in the political hierarchy, he didn’t say I’m not going to do that because it will upset someone. He actually went there and named the issues (P2a, p7)”.

A range of factors was described as influencing leadership style which included parenting and transitional life experiences,

“I would have said in the past that I would have worked from a clear vision in a sense of where I am going and what I think...Probably I then create opportunities for people to
discuss and come to a shared or common vision, and probably the thing I learnt most in parenting I’d probably use and that is waiting for the critical moment to speak. And in waiting for those moments then things move and happen very quickly...but because I have changed so much I’m trying to work out my relationship with (the organization) at the moment....So at the moment all that I am able to do is engage with the critical moment (P7a, p1)”

particular or changed work experiences,

“... changing my working environment where my leadership gifts have been celebrated...so I’m not fighting to obtain power or to exercise influence. I’ve been able to exercise influence and then I can be more benevolent and wise (P3a, p3-4)”

the development of competence,

“I’ve done leadership type courses...reading about leadership and organizations ...I would say that leadership is something that I would identify as a spiritual gift...but it’s something I think is innate and I can’t not do, so it’s learning how to use it and obtain a level of competence with that as a tool to be able to then be effective in the way you exercise it...you need to gain proficiency...It’s more over a period of time reading around it, talking to various people, praying about it, thinking about it yourself and the way that you operate within that context (P3a, p2-3)”

and also contrasting views about the concepts of leadership,

“I think it (uneasiness with the concept of leadership) comes out of a fairly profound commitment to social justice and the like, a wariness about strong leadership...I guess I am really into the notion of people becoming more empowered in a genuine way, people actually
taking on for themselves the ability to think, the ability to critique, the ability to act and to do things for themselves (P10a, p3)...I guess I would ideally like to see leadership as a mutual interaction which is perhaps not leadership at all, and perhaps that’s why I am struggling with that. I struggle with courses that teach people to be leaders because it suggests that some lead and the rest follow (p4)...in a community that is functioning well there are times that many people will have a leadership role and there are times when many people will follow...I guess I’m very interested in the sharing of roles (p6)”

“I am aware that as a leader your personality comes into it...I think a general awareness of are you a task person or a people person or are you introverted or extroverted, those sorts of things, what are your comfort zones. There is a lot of leadership that is out of my comfort zone I think. And I see some of my peers around the place with strong claims on leadership and think sometimes, I am not a leader, but other times I think I am, but maybe not in the mold that they think leadership is about...leadership and teaching the scriptures is sometimes underplayed ...In some ways my fundamental gift or my main gift is as a preacher but thereby I am also a leader (P9a, p6)...I get worried sometimes that leadership and change are the dominant issues or whatever, where I actually think it imbalances things where, at the issue of where a leader ought to be a person of godly character, but also at the area of theological leadership...I’m not sure that sometimes the strength of the sort of leadership change management sort of stuff quite integrates a ministry of preaching for example (P9b, p3)”.

Some participants noted learning as a result of particular leadership experiences,

“It was interesting to suddenly realize that people really wanted to know my opinion and I found that quite confronting... Part of my feeling about leadership...is to push people to go and make a decision and stick to it...I learned through that situation...that it is possible to
work within a politicized system and have some integrity as long as you stick to your
guns...my voice was respected...therefore I felt an obligation to use it...I also think I learned
a good deal about a level of leadership through this experience to which I had not previously
been exposed, and I’ve noticed whether I’ve taken back many of those things actioned into my
professional working life (P5a, p2)’’

of taking up appropriate resources for a new approach,

“...I think what changed was that I claimed a new authority for myself and I think going
back to the ordinal is a touch stone for that proper authority I have. I have a high respect for
order and a high need of it and a high respect for proper authority, properly exercised...So I
think I found within myself a new legitimacy of that authority and a new courage in living
that (P6a, p3)”

“...that was a new expression of leadership on my part in terms of asking someone else to be
involved who had professional skills but also had a church understanding (in a situation of
pastoral breakdown). ..I’m always keen to delegate and to empower people but this is a new
resource for me now (P8a, p1)”

and of using new insights, following personal work, about the place of theological
perspectives

“I have a greater clarity now about the role of the church in being a redemptive community,
the curer of souls...I think of what a parish can do for people is create a safe place where
they can see things in the light of Christ and uncover what is hidden...The things hidden from
our sight now, that once we see them, there is more of ourselves and so more of us is brought
into the light and more of us is available and of course when you get a shift of your own self-
understanding, you get a shift in your understanding of who God is (P6a,p7)...I've become very much more aware that a good leadership resource that I need to bring to people is the insights of the early church (p8)”.

ii) Contexts of leadership practice

Participants exercised leadership in a variety of church related and wider contexts, though all had experience in Archbishop in Council in the Diocese of Melbourne. The contexts of the leadership situation that participants’ initially chose to illustrate their leadership style were wide ranging. These included Diocesan committees, parish settings where the number of parishioners ranged from between 50-100 up to more than 300, institutional contexts which included mission and welfare agencies, as well as workplaces with no direct church connection but where participants sought to apply their faith understanding in their work practice. However participants did not focus their comments solely on the initial context chosen, but rather, over the course of the two interviews, spoke of the similarities and differences between their own and perceived leadership practice across the range of contexts in which they exercised leadership within the Diocese. Issues of differences in culture, perception and understandings of various aspects of decision making and priority setting by those in leadership were acknowledged within different contexts, for example between different diocesan bodies. The contexts also included engagement in strategic planning with large groups and interdisciplinary bodies as well as small group and individual interactions and were described in various levels of detail.

iii) Processes

This category focused on the way participants described how they went about their leadership and how they saw their own and others’ leadership being exercised in different contexts. This
frequently included commentary on how they experienced leadership being exercised in the institutional life of the church. Descriptions included awareness of the consecutive steps undertaken as well as processes which were generic in character or which emerged through the description itself.

Some participants noted the differences in processes they perceived were used between different bodies within the church, for example diocesan bodies and local parishes,

“There’s a lot of anxiety I think between the corporate decision making that comes out of the centre and what actually happens on the ground...in ‘parish land’ people don’t necessarily understand...the big picture and therefore they don’t buy into it in the same kind of way, and the people who are making the decisions don’t get where people are coming from, so there’s this disconnect all the time...An example of that would be the (diocesan) budget (P3b, p1-2)...the model of church of some of the people who are in the centre is really different to the model of church that is actually predominant or emerging in predominance in the diocese and where people don’t get exposure to the way a parish actually functions and the kinds of issues that people in parishes deal with on a day to day basis. It makes it really hard for them to think about how to actually structure stuff administratively that works (p4)”

or between secular and church contexts,

“All of this is harder in volunteer organisations, because you’ve got generations of expectations and generations of emotional commitments to the institution and what it means, what it did mean and what it should mean. Which is I’m sure just the same in business but it’s different with volunteers, because there is a higher level of emotional connectedness to what has been and whatever the future should be, so they are harder to turn around (P11a, p2-3)”.
with comment about induction processes in those contexts

“...it’s about enculturation and training and preparing of staff to work within a culture, and I think that there’s not a lot of visioning or enculturation that’s done within (diocesan contexts) that actually helps people get that (how a parish actually functions day to day)...(the organization) that I work for now works much harder at that visioning kind of thing and there’s more open conversation about the culture issues than I have seen at the diocese...like the dominant culture is not a Christian culture in the workplace and at (the organization) that’s an ongoing tension. What it means to be a Christian organization and how does it look, that kind of thing and I think they try and address it in different kinds of ways, and take it much more seriously and there’s a lot more conversation around it than there is at the diocese (P3b, p5)”.  

Comment was also made about perception of individual leadership action for wider contexts,  

“I often see a disconnection between an individual person doing great things and then wondering how that actually relates in practice to the diocese, the conglomeration of parishes, then what parishes themselves do, and I still think there is a huge disconnection between what happens at one level and what’s expressed at the other (P1b, p3)”.  

Different processes were also described as operating in groups of different size. In one larger parish various approaches to leadership processes were utilized,  

“When we started a new...congregation here that’s a fairly significant step and that was my initiative pretty much ...it wasn’t hard to win people to do that, to convince us in the budget that we should budget the high cost of doing it and get some money out of the diocese to support it for a time...Probably the building project we did here which was $1.6 million...was a slightly different sort of process. In some ways I didn’t take the
lead...gradually there was a build-up of people saying we need bigger buildings...I was not slow but I didn’t jump on it straight away...so the leadership process meant quite a bit of consultation with a fundraiser...church leadership setting up a committee, canvassing options and I suppose one thing I did there that I think was significant was have in a fortnight period before a congregation meeting, my A team would hold meetings in my house. Every parishioner was invited to come...we limited it to 15 people for each meeting to go through in detail what we were doing and answer questions. And the meetings were very positive, winning people over, and so the congregational meeting to vote was well informed and not divisive (P9a, p1)"

and a very different experience was described by a solo priest in a small church

“The dislocation, the separation between the parish and the community is so huge that building the bridges is going to be quite a mammoth task. Just running a normal parish takes up all my energy, that the whole thing about initiating ministry, that’s a whole other job altogether as well and I can’t do both, there’s not enough of me to do both...because maintaining is a full time job (P7a, p4). It’s really hard to get anybody to do anything. But now we have the outreach committee ...I really would like all of us to work together on this...but it doesn’t quite rate as high as Vestry, doesn’t rate as high as the concert booking...So the vestry is an optional thing as is church attendance. I think they are very much into the bus driver model of ministry which is, I’m paid and can be asked to do whatever...they don’t have a sense of how there might be new life...(after the congregation’s experience with Godly Play) it’s still passive, it’s responding to what someone else is doing and they will receive it deeply but it’s not the same as taking up your mat and walking so to speak” (p7)"
Ways of dealing with relational dynamics were recurring processes described as requiring a range of leadership approaches, including directly addressing appropriate accountabilities or behaviours of personnel

“I think one of the critiques we had of the old style was that it kept people in families all the time and that was its downside, but there are times when being the parent that cannot be pulled off course is just what is needed and other times making the decision that’s not going to be entered into negotiation, that’s the decision. And sometimes saying I don’t want to do that. And I’ve learnt to say that kindly because I used to be anxious it would come across as more punitive and people sense when you are defending yourself and now I have much more freedom to say it just won’t do and say it in a way that gives the person the signal that they are actually allowed to have another go and do better (P6a, p9-10)”

(arising from description of two situations where people with their own agendas had negative impacts on organizations) “I think that leadership that is relational based produces a level of accountability apart from just strict structures and discipline and decision making processes that makes for me at least...would make that sort of behavior not an option (P12b, p5)”.  

Whereas some participants were very clear about the processes they utilized in exercising their leadership,

“I have an idea or vision or a hope of what I think the organization can achieve...in all your consultations, all your discussions...you are constantly implanting that vision, that hope and what you are trying to do, I think, in that process is to see where it resonates for people, how does it sit, is it something they could own, it is something you articulate that could be their vision also and what’s their place in it (P2b, p1)”
others found the interviews enabled them to develop new insight or enabled extension of a line of thought,

“So I don’t know why the evidence isn’t enough to knock me over, perhaps I just haven’t thought about it in that broad sort of way – why do I feel this way and explore what it means (where leadership recognized in one context might offer authority to contribute in another) (P4b, p8)”

or discovered that processes were still not fully developed “I’ve certainly got some really good questions to begin to think about (P7a, p8)”.

iv) Understanding of God

While this included understanding of the Christian story and how they saw God’s place and action within it, participants were specifically asked whether and how they understood God as triune. Though the terms Father, Son and Spirit were used by participants, they saw such terms as requiring elaboration, defining or alternative language in face of the constraints that trinitarian terms created in conversation with people both within and beyond the church. ‘God the Father’ was the term which was more problematic for participants.

The link between participants’ theological understanding, especially their understanding of God as triune, and if or how they perceived this to be connected with their leadership style was at times tenuously expressed, something they had not previously considered or, initially at least, was not readily able to be articulated. There were comments such as “I probably would never have articulated it in that particular way before (P3a, p7)” when exploring a symbol to elaborate leadership style and understanding of God, and in relation to Trinitarian understanding “I haven’t really thought this through till now (P4b, p5)”. Participants who
did articulate this connection had diverse approaches. This will be taken up in detail under the emergent themes so that material is not repeated.

However in general participants spoke of their understanding of the Trinity as relational and connected with community, and there was a tendency to relate more readily with one or two of the persons of the Trinity rather than all three.

From these key categories a number of themes emerged which were noted and regarded as significant according to the consistency of their recurrence.

**Emergent themes**

The most significant recurring and consistent themes which emerged from the interview process and analysis are as follows:

a) language and image or symbols of leadership style  
b) leadership style and context  
c) issues of trust & transparency  
d) perceptions of power & authority  
e) the place of consultation and discussion  
f) space for developing a theology of ministry  
g) the significance of self-awareness  
h) the significance of transition for leadership style  
i) language for expressing understandings of God  
j) connection or disconnection between understanding of God and leadership style and practice.
A brief overview of issues which emerged less consistently will also be provided with some comment.

a) Language and image or symbols of leadership style

Participants used a wide range of language to describe their leadership styles many of which have been referred to in the ‘Leadership Style’ category in the previous section. Leadership style was also elaborated using analogy, metaphors or other images, symbols and terminology.

One example was differently nuanced understandings of servant leadership, highlighting a fluidity of language and emphasis,

“Well servant leadership is a bit of a trendy sort of idea at one level but actually I think it’s thoroughly biblical, and probably picked up the language of Jesus “I come not to be served, but to serve, to give my life as a ransom for many”…I think serving others without being a slave to others is important…I think right leadership is serving what you are convinced is best for people, even if it’s not what they want, and it may not be the easiest or best for you either…I think right servant leadership would be saying I’m feeding people spiritually as a preacher say, and pastor, say, but you know if there are other means or ways in which I can help people, then for their sakes, and for God’s sake, then I’m not going to stop, you know, I’m not limiting myself to preaching for example (P9b, p6)”

“I think that good leadership is really servant leadership. (A conversation is recounted about systems of government) and elected representatives are reminded that they are actually servants…But that kind of leadership that is accountable leadership and is servant leadership. What does servant leadership mean? Well, it’s in the Christian context, serving
God, it’s Father Son and Holy Spirit. Yeah, it’s concepts of power and dominance and self-gratification and all that sort of thing are all out of that concept, foreign to that concept. I see all my ministry involvements in terms of service...I think a common theme is a mission, God has a mission of rescuing these people and restoring them in relationship with Him and that theme runs through the Old and New Testament and again I think of leadership and the church very much in the context of the mission of the church (P12b, p5-6)

Some used a symbol or artifact to help them elaborate their style

“...the thing I like about that image (Rublev icon of the Trinity) is the sense of invitation and the openness of the three welcoming you into the same space and to sit at the table together and I think that when I think about leadership that’s part of what I’m trying to do, is to open a space so that more people can exercise their ministry giftedness, particularly more in the parish context, where you are really trying to say this is a safe space for you to come and be the person that you are and to exercise ministry in a way that you can and that is an inclusive team based thing that we do together and we do it together as people and we do it together with God, Father, Son and Spirit...that God works within God’s self and invites us to come in and be part of that and part of what we do as leaders is to try and do the same kind of things to other people (P3a, p7)

or to speak of how a leadership style in a particular context might have parallels for a church context

“I see Vestry should be much more like that, it should be the way a tutorial runs, someone should be there that ultimately has to make the decision, has to be responsible for the group but shouldn’t be deferred to, they should be guiding the discussion and guiding ideas...Not guiding it as to what the decision is, but guiding the group to a decision, and hopefully the
best one, whatever that may be...Making sure that the different voices are heard, that it is not a decision based on one person has an idea, and we all just discuss how great that idea is and go with it and make that decision ...Every decision has a consequence (P4a, p9)”.

Authority in leadership was connected with particular images such as

“Uniforms ... when they are not in uniform, some of it is just ego, they expect that they will still have this level of respect that they’re given because of who they are when they are in uniform or not. The uniform is the thing that has provided that...they still expect an innate level of respect, which they get. I see my PhD in a way as something that will provide a form of authority (P4a, p11)”.

Reference was made to the Ordinal as a basis for clerical leadership and to the model of the monastery abbot as significant resources for appropriate authority, especially for addressing the complexity of relationships in leadership situations in the church,

“I think it was a key turning point and a key moment of myself, of this priest as Vicar here ...of the job description that’s in the Ordinal not just in the mind of the people who just want what they want (P6a, p1-2)...I think what changed was that I claimed a new authority for myself and I think going back to the Ordinal is the touch stone for that proper authority I have (p3)”

continuing with

“So the monastery abbot thing is also about recognizing people’s foibles and compensating for them, not excusing so much as saying what they are like...It’s allowing other people to be who they are and not demanding that they never be annoying or it’s not ignoring bad behavior but where it’s just a bit of their foible behavior, it’s kind of having a laugh about it,
rather than needing to fix everything and have everybody in the image I want them in...I think it’s at some deeper spiritual level it’s actually seeing a person, seeing their humanity or their personhood, then maybe it’s to do with seeing them differentiated or separate, the more you see that clearly, the more you also know that sense of common humanity or co-humanity (P6b, p7-8) ”.

The image of a circle of people holding hands was used to explore the changing leadership role of clergy

“It’s hard to see, for a parish, who’s in charge, do the Wardens run the show, does the priest? Should it be a collaborative effort, what happens when that can’t be because of personalities...I said (to the Vicar) the Wardens don’t see you as a leader or as a position of responsibility, they see you as someone they can manipulate and someone that’s there to do what they want rather than holding the community together, and that’s a troubling thought. But that’s not the only parish that is happening in...it’s like a ring of people holding hands and one of them saying no...you are a leader but you are also in the community, you have to be a part of it and I guess that was what was troubling me, they see (the Vicar) as the expendable part of the parish. You come and go, we stay. The priest is on the outside but it’s too outside, it’s too external. It is true that the priest is the transitory part, but for their time there they have to be in the community, they have to be allowed in but to lead from that position...I guess we’d all be in the circle moving, and the priest might be the one to say, go the other way now (P4a, p12)”.

Leadership on societal issues at wider and local levels was also seen to be symbolic of the prophetic

“I’m very encouraged when I see leadership expressed at the level that addresses issues in
our culture...So I think we should expect to see, given that the resurrection is about a new order and a new creation as a sign of that, we should expect to see at the wider level the diocese making a contribution to what that looks like in terms of enhanced relationships, more accountability in terms of unjust structures, those types of things...but in the end there will always be a tension between expressing that and what ultimately only God can actually bring about when he returns...So there is a balance I think between what I expect the diocese to do at that level and what I am doing at the local level, which I think is prophetic but then also you don’t lose sight of, well how do we actually encourage parishes and equip them and encourage them to do that at the local level. I think that’s where the leadership is quite symbolic at that point...I think that (accountability in childhood issues) is certainly a sign of God’s grace, restorative grace, starting to affect unjust structures (P1b, p2)

The kind of language or image used was also seen to have impact on people, especially on how leadership, the institutional church and people’s place within it is perceived

“I suppose I don’t know how you can delineate between institution and non-institution. It’s a bit like managing the family budget that the family spends, it’s one family but we are spread across a very large expanse. And you can’t say inside, outside it’s more like a house, we’re all under the one roof, in different rooms, in different functions and different characteristics and they are all built on the one foundation so using the body of Christ image, the lounge room can’t say I’m not of this house anymore, like it or not, we’re all part of the one house and if the tap is leaking in the bathroom, it’s going to need fixing and the resources of the whole house come into play to fix the leaking tap...we are all one house and I suppose that picks up on my concept of building community that those inter-relationships do affect one another (P8b, p3)...There’s an old cliché from years ago. You know the church is not an organization, and if you use organizational kind of language, that’s what people will buy into
and then see where do they fit in the organization and who’s trying to grind me down or who’s subverting my efforts, whereas for an organism you see that there is a sort of interdependence that is inescapable (p4)"

b) Leadership style and context

Some aspects of the interface between leadership style and context have been explored previously under ‘Processes’ in the key categories above, for example in relation to future planning or in areas where responsibilities differed. Further more direct connections or disconnections between style and context are extended here. While some readily utilized terms or concepts, others drew on further descriptive details of a situation to elaborate their leadership style.

It was interesting to note that where the context of leadership was one of three hundred people or more, the language used to describe leadership style was associated with being the ‘driver’ of change processes and of articulating and educating others concerning the vision and its procedures of implementation. This is consistent with Rothauge’s (1983) comments on the relationship of leadership style to the size of an organization in the ‘Corporation Church’, where ‘The head pastor becomes the symbol of unity and stability in a very complicated congregational life.’ (p. 31). It was also noted that in such a context the process of coming to a vision included a range of personnel with varying levels of contribution.

One example in a large church context was described in this way

“I was very keen to come up with a process whereby I said, right from the start, we need to be thinking about I guess our role in this community and I encouraged them to think about the kind of legacy they would like to see this community receive from the church for the next
10/20/30 years. I said it was very important for us to begin a master planning process which didn’t just look at buildings, but looked at buildings and people and money and ministries in the context of our vision… I want to lead you and empower you but I want you to be involved in designing even what the process looks like. I was very keen to empower them to own the process in terms of feeling consulted and it being transparent and inclusive and even objective… I formed a master planning group which was made up of people who represented, congregationally and inter-generationally, the interests of the church… and we gave people an opportunity to help design it and then we brought it to the people of God to which they could sign off on it (P1a, p2-3)”.

In a smaller church context a planning process was undertaken where a very different leadership style was utilized where connection with a gathering of parishioners was more personal and direct. This resonated with elements of Rothauge’s (1983) ‘Family Church’ and ‘Pastoral Church’ models where the priest has a central pastoral role in enabling new insight (p. 7-21).

“We had a parish planning day and I’ve begun to work with them in terms of story and to get them to begin to tell the story of the parish and do that by getting them initially to draw their own timeline...so they did their own personal timeline and then a timeline of where they had been aware of God being present and then I got them into pairs and share what they were comfortable sharing and what the other person, in terms of trust, had a right to hear...it was quite difficult to stop them. They dived into that...and ignored me every time I would call...telling them it was time to wind up...I heard all these God conversations going on and I was thinking that this is quite amazing for this place. And then we ended up beginning to draw a timeline of the church, because that was the purpose to discover the church’s history and for me to see where there is a sense of understanding about the past and how the church
came to be and places of vision or encounter with God along the way...And now we have a plan for 3 story telling sessions during the year (P7b, p1)”.

Those who undertook leadership for future planning also highlighted the place of permission giving

“I think my role is to give active permission and encouragement...Permission giving has to be an active process whereby you’re in a sense saying again and again and again, where you are now is fantastic, you already are doing great stuff here, this is really encouraging what’s going on, and if you want to move forward, we’re here to work with you to go forward, we’re not here to tell you what it is to go forward. We might discuss some possibilities and we’ll help you to resource the process for you to work it out yourself under God, because it is a spiritual process ultimately of discernment (P11a, p5)”.

Some were clear about the impact of context for their own leadership style and the reasons for this

“I guess it’s (leadership style) a combination of consultative and a little bit directive in the parish anyway (P9a, p1). In the other roles I have I don’t think I’m directive because I don’t have that responsibility...I am more responsive than taking initiative (p2)”.

while others described contributing confidently in their parish context but not as yet in a diocesan context

“We had our AGM recently in the parish and although I’m not involved in any parish leadership per se, a few questions arose about the Vicar’s salary, superannuation, about sort of lurching out on assessment, whether we could do that on assessment payment, those sorts of things, and so I found myself answering from a Council representative point of view, what
the council’s view would be in payment of salary and those kind of things (P4a, p1). In council I am very observant and I’m still feeling my way and it’s a hard thing to get in to…(in relation to more legal issues) I don’t know where my authority is in that. In terms of the factions, I’m not so sure that that’s my thing (p3)”

especially about offering skills, for example in strategic planning, to the wider church

“…at the parish level I feel incredibly comfortable just to say I want a day where I can do this…I think that it is important to make the connection between council and the parishes, and that’s what is missing is that connection so I can strengthen that on an individual level, but I guess part of it is that I don’t know how to do that on another level, I don’t know how to make a more institutional change about those kind of things (P4b,p7)”.

c) Issues of trust & transparency

This theme became particularly evident in descriptions of participation in Diocesan bodies relating to decision making processes for a variety of arenas including finance, property, and policy.

In relation to issues of trust and decision making processes comment was made

“I’m quite fine about the need to have meetings to organize and think through things, but I really think they need to be open and porous and invite new people in all the time (P5a, p4)...We whinge about the diocese and the thing we miss is trust, and that’s the biggest presenting issue for me, and that gets in the way of good policy making, bringing people together, being outward looking, all of those things (p6)...this (in relation to God and vulnerability) is why I get so angry about mistrust and defensiveness in the diocese, because it goes right against the gospel if we are honest about that three-fold combination of who
God is, and what Gods will is for us…our defensiveness and mistrust is a lack of openness, so if I’m honest about how I think and feel about God and again that sense of God can break into our lives, it has already. To not be open to that or to be closed to other possibilities, other people’s expressions and behaviours and beliefs is to deny that experience (p9)”.

A number of factors, including where control lies, were seen as intertwined in relation to property matters

“Why have these parties not been able to sit down 12 years ago and get this right? And there I think the money factor has come in as a different factor that people want to have control over property and money…So the legalisms have had to come out to turn that situation and while at one level they protected everyone but it comes back to that level of trust and money and, more than I thought, theology (P5b, p3)”.

and also in relation to decision making about leadership itself

“Certainly that process (Archbishop’s election) identified lack of trust as a key issue in the diocese at large and in the particular process about identifying a leader (P5b, p1)”.

Transparency linked with accountability was also highlighted at diocesan levels especially

“I think we need to be transparent in our decision making and be able to give an account as to why a decision was reached and how it’s going to be carried through. We’re not dictators, benevolent or otherwise (P8b, p4)”.

Dealing with diversity and its tensions was also raised

“If I were doing that process (an appointment to a State body) at, say, a diocesan level I’d be far less successful, as I’d be working with people whose views are far more diverse than
would be the environment I’m used to...I’m not sure that kind of leadership would necessarily succeed, or if it did it would certainly be more painful for me, I think, because yeah, I mean often in the decision making in the diocese you get to that kind of brink where relationships are stretched to their absolute limit...at a diocesan level I don’t think you’d get consensus on anything really. So that goal is an unrealistic one (P12b, p2)”

and the struggle to trust commentary that is offered

“I don’t really feel we’ve got people we can trust... It (comments by senior leadership) might simply be what’s expedient for them to say at that moment (P6b, p8)”.

The contrast between levels of trust was noted between different contexts

“...that whole level of governance (Archbishop in Council) doesn’t operate on the same assumptions of relationship and trust that I’ve experienced at a parish level or church agency level. It comes out of a very different culture (P12b, p8)”.

The dimension of discernment was also raised in relation to trust

“I mean he (God) has to act through us otherwise there is no manifestation of it apart from us...So obviously there has to be some action through us, but then how to discern what’s that and what’s your own self-interest in what’s going on...I suppose I would see that meetings should have a lot of space and room for contemplation of that and I don’t think they do, in large part those council meetings don’t. Because without the space you can’t, well I suppose that’s my sort of model for how I try to discern what God’s will is. (An hour long meditation process is described) I don’t think it’s practical to sit in a meeting for an hour and try to contemplate what God says, but I do think it does get lost in the process and we start to take on what we think is best and there is not enough trust in what God wants for us but on the
other side of that coin, is that God has put us there on council in theory so perhaps whatever is in our heads is there for a reason and maybe that’s happening at a later stage and not necessarily in a meeting or whatever (P4b, p3)

Some of the elements noted as significant for strengthening trust at various levels was time, communication and ways of working together

“I also think there are things we need to work at because the relationships within a parish, the relationship between the parish priest and the congregation and then the relationships in terms of the diocese and those charged with the responsibility of administering the diocese need to be worked at. Without a good basis of relationship, trust and recognition and coping with each other’s differences we are going to either be not progressing or doing more harm than good. More potential to do harm than good or doing less good than we hope to...So what I just said relates to people looking from outside the institutional church towards it as an institution but all those within the institution need to bear those things in mind as they are looking outwards and say, how can we communicate, how can we develop trust, how can we show people what we are trying to achieve but perhaps differently. But unfortunately sometimes we see things from different perspectives (P8b, p1)...I’m thinking in terms of the institutional church we need to be seeking better co-operation and collaboration, bearing in mind that whatever is said about the institutional church is always a two way street...You can’t just say trust me, trust has to be built up. And quality of communication and follow-up of communication (p2)

\[d\) Perceptions of power and authority

Understandings of power and authority and how these were exercised by those in leadership was a strong theme, especially in relation to organizational life in the church. Two further
strands were also present – the appropriateness of individual establishing their own voice and how discernment might occur.

One of the recurring issues expressed was how to manage those who dominate debate or decision making.

“Surely there is a slightly healthier or more informed way of doing this. It’s interesting too, how those people (who exercise power) are sometimes upfront in Synod, they’re getting elected to committees, being put on bodies, and they’re speaking a lot. Other times they are very quiet, silent, behind the scenes and you never know quite what is going on… I don’t like seeing power; I don’t like its habits involved in groups, it’s not really my thing. (Habits) As in small groups coming together that are closed, where in a sense of we’re going to run the policy in a direction and make it happen out there. That bothers me (P5a, p4)”.

In smaller church contexts this was seen as particularly influential in effecting change and future planning

“...you are trying to break the dominance of big voices in small churches, because a lot of small churches are dominated by one or two individuals and while you might have permission to do the vision thing because who is not going to regret that in a sense, it’s hard to argue against it, generally it’s hard to get permission to really change because the big voices, who are sometimes the most controlling voices, ultimately won’t do anything that is going to threaten their power base (P11a, p6)”.

Theological issues were also seen to be a focus of power

“I’m probably a bit more radical now in what I think people want power over and I would say power over theology. People want power over the ability to define who God is and what
we should believe and when we should believe it and how we should express that (in relation to wider church matters)...That unity has become this enormous challenge, not just for the sake of having a nice coherent ecclesial policy but because there is a real sense in which we may be, falsely perhaps, saying that we really do read the scriptures in completely different ways and we do believe in quite different Gods and understand that salvation is quite different. I’ve become fearful that that is in fact the case (P5b, p1)...So lurking under all that (a policy issue) which is all very old and reasonably nice is the way we behave at the moment is for me a suspicion that when struggles and divisions emerge, it’s a struggle actually over the interpretation of the gospel and what it means. That bothers me (p2)’”.

In larger contexts, the matter and place of caucusing issues was raised, where people sought to get support prior to raising an issue in a larger forum and to test the likelihood of it being taken up, but also to assure support in discussion

“I, from time to time, might either take an issue or be consulted with a couple of others so that we might have not so much an agreed plan, but a generally agreed view before we get to the meeting if we anticipate one or two people might be unsure or that is not necessarily canvassing everybody, but thinking that if these two or three people have agreed something, we are likely to expedite a decision and so I do a bit of that from time to time (P9a, p4)’”.

Differentiation between power and authority was raised and how power is perceived to be used

“Seeking power seems less acceptable than wanting authority...I see power as a negative thing. Whereas authority is positive and I don’t know why. Authority for me seems more passive, its more about knowledge and confidence and maybe charisma...In council I see groups I guess using their solidarity as a form of power. And in a way that’s part of my
hesitancy to break into that…I see factions using their solidarity to lead the church in the way they want to go, which may not be the right thing, or their reason for doing it is it’s the way they want to go as opposed to what’s best for the church, best for the community, best for the congregation (P4a, p5). And that disappoints me in the sense that I think then people react against it, purely for the opposing reasons, whereas it may be good policy (p6)”

yet there was also a desire for role clarity and openness about where power lies, formally and informally

“I guess outside the official structures there are whole bodies, movements, whole kinds of factions for want of a better word, which exert great influence and yet don’t have any kind of official status. I think that’s again difficult. I think we should be more open about that…You know, we pretend that it doesn’t exist, but actually it’s very powerful and particularly in this diocese because of the way balance of power is in this diocese. It’s absolutely crucial and it’s,…I’m not sure in a way whether the openness would really help us because of the dividedness. It’s the dividedness that is perhaps the fundamental issue and that’s really the accident of the way that the balance of power occurs (P10a, p4)”.

Authority was also perceived in ways other than those related to formal position

“…where does authority rest in the church?...In the end it’s all about moral persuasion and nothing else – you usually don’t have any other authority. We sometimes think we do…I can enforce it by saying I’ll sack you if you don’t do it, but in the end that’s not the way to go – you’ve got to bring people with you through moral persuasion and that to me is in part say for the church in which we didn’t have…any ownership of anything that was happening. So the leadership at the top has to own whatever you are doing, or whatever someone else is doing (P2a, p8)”
and also in terms of the church’s changing place in society

“I think it’s also all of it operating within a context of ministry becoming, ordained ministry becoming so hard because of the loss of status of being clerical in society generally and due to simply a growing democratization. And people are less willing to accept authority in all aspects of life and the church is included in that. And so that leaves a question mark for clergy. I think being a cleric is an incredibly difficult thing at this time (pause) I actually think being a lay person can also be quite hard, partly because of the difficulties that are presented from the clerical ambiguities and also because of the way society views Christianity…People actually have no idea of a more nuanced and sensitive and intelligent Christianity (P10b, p3)”.

Comment was also offered about how the positive aspect of power and influence could be encouraged

“The first thing I want to say is that leadership in the church needs to recognize the capacities and strengths of people, both in the congregations and in the clergy, who with some affirmation and some help would actually be much more influential and powerful and creative…we have limited people with visionary capacity and a willingness to really take a lot of risks for the sake of the gospel” (P2a, p7).

e) The place of consultation and discussion

Participants voiced a desire for both discussion and consultation at diocesan levels in relation to decision making as well as in communication between diocesan and local bodies for mutual understanding and planning purposes.

The importance of preparation for decision making and attention to process was raised
“I would like...a debate to happen...(in Archbishop in Council) it’s not a discussion, it’s we’re presenting, you’re accepting. There’s no let’s talk about why we want this policy, why we want it done, and part of that’s a very practical thing of I don’t want to be here past a certain time...you get a sense of nobody should discuss things because it just takes time, let’s keep doing the business and get the business over and done with (P4a, p6).what I think I guess is that different points of view should happen, because without that, you can’t know what’s best if you have an idea presented, you have no way of discussing that or being persuaded of the merits of that, then you can’t come out with the best policy...So I think that’s why I see it as important to discuss and engage and be open, so ideas can happen, changes can be made and the best can be thought of (p8)”

as well as a desire for balance

I think that the issue with the diocese is still that top down decision making and that there are not a lot of grass roots visioning upwards (P3b, p1). I think there needs to be a whole lot more conversation and discussion and talking about a way forward that actually lets us see the diocese as a whole from the ground (p2)’”.

How difference of perspective could be addressed was a recurring theme. Different approaches were voiced, of consultation with those of like mind, as well as recognizing difficulties where there were differences of interpretation

“So if I’m pushing an issue, I’m more likely to consult with people who would agree with me, maybe to garner a bit of support, maybe to sharpen some ideas...I don’t think we’ve done enough work in understanding each other across the variations, the pool of difference and I’m not sure there’s a great willingness to do that, is my experience...I think that at the core of our authority and belief structures there are differences but they are seen in symptoms and
I suspect that in many places they are closer to each other than we recognize, but I also think that there are some fundamental differences as well, on issues of hermeneutics (P9b, p1-2)

and insight was expressed about what might be needed for engaging more sensitive issues

“...it’s one of those kind of things where I wonder should I bring it up now and have a chat about this and what do you think about it and that struck me as interesting because it made me realize that to engage with someone requires a degree of hospitality and initiative (by those in leadership and authority) (P5b, p5)”.

f) Space for developing a theology of ministry

Both lay and ordained participants expressed a desire for a process for developing a theology of ministry, recognized at a diocesan level, that would be undergirding for and inform decision and policy making at both local and broader diocesan levels.

“I think there is a whole lot of stuff around the theology of ministry that is very unclear and I think the church is suffering a fair bit of confusion about that (P10a, p2)...I would like to see more theological grounding for what we do and I would like to see some of that negotiated and I mean I guess there are sometimes when controversial issues come up in synod and so on that I think need a really good theological debate, a really good open theological debate; people tend to make political moves to avoid them, to scuttle those things happening, and I’m not sure that’s helpful...I think sometimes the two factional groupings in Melbourne have really got to face each other about what they believe and what their differences are...the theology of ministry is absolutely crucial (p7)”.  

Fears were expressed about how the differences in understanding or interpretation of the same apparent theological terms might be addressed
“Language is big issue I think, because people (pause) the language is different, use different words that, I suppose, I’m not always clear on whether they mean, have in mind the same thing that I do...we’re all coming from quite different perspectives. Until you actually start to unravel that, identify what those differences are, I think any kind of conversation about strategy is difficult (P12b, p3)...to engage in those conversations you have to be very clear about what your own position is and I think, a lot of the evangelicals are not, kind of, ready to engage in those conversations...they all sort of label people of other traditions as almost sort of (pause) heresy. I think it’s the non-core issues that have got to the top and that’s where the differences are drawn” (p4)

with concern about how and where the discussion about theological bases could be initiated

“...on the whole we don’t sit back and have a shared discussion about the theological principles so that’s always assumed that we share them and I don’t think we might share them, but we don’t own them and I thought who is the body that would do that, and the theological colleges are one, but they are quite removed from the diocesan leadership...I feel like there is an absence of public, good, open theological conversation in the diocese that could inform all those things and I’m not quite sure how one could make that happen (P5b, p4)”

and of people’s capacity to listen to different perspectives

“I think our different understandings of who God is and how God operates in the world and what it means to be a Christian never get named, never get talked about in any kind of meaningful way, we don’t really want to listen to each other in that there is a lot of rhetoric about wanting to listen, but nobody ever really does and you can listen as long as you come to my position (P3a, p8)”. 
On the other hand, an example was described of a conversation where the people came from different perspectives yet where living with integrity in a relational dynamic of respect and trust was significant for understanding.

“I could appreciate (the other’s) side of it and in a sense the person was making themselves very vulnerable to me by telling me, knowing that I was probably not likely to really want to run with that and so we talked it out a bit. That to me, in the last year I suppose, has become one way of living in a way that tries to allow other people to be vulnerable by being treated as who you are and being aware of who you are, and engaging with other people on that basis. So making that space for conversation at quite a deep level and being real for want of a better word (P5b, p8-9)”.

g) The significance of self-awareness

Self-awareness emerged as a critical issue for both individuals in the evolving of their leadership capacities and style and in what was desired in those in senior leadership at diocesan level.

At an individual level, self-awareness generated a shift of leadership style.

“My leadership previously was often against something and I felt I was fighting against it, and I’ve had to learn in the last few years that I don’t have to fight against everything and that I can actually take a place (P3a, p1)...I’ve done a lot of interior work in terms of trying to understand myself better, understand what the trigger points are for those angry outburst things (p2)”.

Developing a deeper level of self-awareness also led to discernment about how to fruitfully engage as a leader, as well as use of insights arising from parallel reflection on the stories of
Christian faith and tradition,

*(Working on self-awareness)* “gave me more courage...I learnt to face the fears that were inhibiting me in my leadership, I learnt not to engage in rational attempts to demonstrate the wisdom of what I was saying...I’ve learnt to say, oh thank you for your opinion, and not engage...so I’ve learnt when to just let it go (P6a, p4)... So that’s about a leader who is themselves growing in self-knowledge in order to be clear of my projections as I can be and to see more clearly other people’s projections (p8)...I think I am really rather of the view that unless you know who you are and have a realistic appraisal of that and your gifts and your own foibles and projections and just your own patterns as much as is possible, unless you are actually working on that, I suspect you are almost dangerous to be honest. I think a lot of the hot water that our leadership gets into, looking at diocesan level, is the lack of that kind of awareness (P6b, p1”).

Commentary was also made about the desire for awareness and acknowledgment by leaders of their awareness of vulnerability or limitation

“I remember asking someone (in a church leadership interview process) spontaneously, in what ways are you vulnerable, and I got the answer, I’m not...I began asking this question...and it became this eye opener to me as to people’s self-knowledge and it was a privilege to be in those situations but also at times to see how obviously people could not see their own vulnerabilities and fragilities...yes, they were unsure about disclosure...but I was interested in how important that became to me, partly informational about people but largely realizing that sense of vision in myself, being able to see that (P5a, p8)...I find for myself to continually try to own a bit more my own vulnerabilities, the fact that I’m not perfect and I’m not particularly called to be. That’s quite challenging...I want to be a bit more idiosyncratic on bodies like council and say what I think...I think there is a way we behave in these
leadership bodies that dampens down individuality, there’s kind of a corporate mentality or stagnation very quickly develops and taking the easy route out and it means we don’t have to reveal ourselves to each other (P5b, p7)

and also of awareness of the perceptions others’ have of those in leadership and being open to learning from them

“I think self-awareness is important. But I think other people awareness, that is being aware of how other people are aware of you, is important...what I think is even more important is matching your awareness of yourself with how others are aware of you. (A particular situation and its interactions are described). So that was really good and helpful for me as well...So, self-awareness needs to be well balanced by an awareness of how other people see or perceive you (P9b, p4)”.

Integrity of life, as an underlying aspect of self-awareness, was also seen to be significant

“I think for me something as a Christian and a human being, given my background, integrity, honesty, and all those kind of feel good words but I take that to mean not just being publicly vulnerable, more importantly than that, being utterly consistent in living...you weren’t supposed to be a Sunday Anglican one day and a different person the rest of the week and that’s something that has become stronger and stronger force in my life, trying to be the same person, the same values, the same relationships, the same commitments and so on and it’s unbelievably hard to do that. I can’t get over the obstacles put in our way by these different sorts of corporate culture, by shame about speaking about a whole range of things...(P5b, p8)”.
h) The significance of transition for leadership style

At the time of interview a number of participants referred to either being in a place of personal transition in relation to their places of leadership or where the contexts of leadership activity were undergoing a period of transition. The impacts of such transition included shifts in current perceptions of how they practiced leadership, language for and connection with God, uncertainty about their identity in ministry, lack of confidence in presenting a point of view or a greater clarity in seeing a situation from different angles.

Personal transition provoked a change of style

“Perhaps part of what’s happening is that because I’m at this really critical point that I may be – I’ve got quite a compilation of words going round in my brain. I’m probably clearer about change has to happen otherwise I can’t stay, I’m probably being ruthless, I’m probably saying more of what I want more clearly (P7a, p2)...I feel like I am re-working my relationship with God and been re-working my relationship with myself, it’s kind of like everything has been reworked at the moment (p4)...I have to be really careful not to react out of the intensity of my emotion and experiences at the moment and not to say there are really good things are happening in the parish, they are...I’m at war with the institutional quality of things and I guess also partly how it is measured...this person I am becoming doesn’t fit into the institutional form or I haven’t worked out how to do that again, having escaped from it briefly (p5)”

or a change of style was generated by transition into a new context

“Here I have to learn to share...and I’ve gotten more comfortable with it now, at first I used to feel like I wasn’t fulfilling my responsibility if I wasn’t doing everything...So I guess that has been a transition that I’ve needed to get used to...it’s up to me to give the team direction
and clear directions...so I’m learning to spell things out more clearly, expectations, things like that. I’m not a particularly directive person and I’m not a particularly controlling person so I sometime forget, I just say well you look after that, but I mean you just get on with it, don’t bother me with it (P6b, p1-2)”.

Those in periods of transition between work contexts, in personal experiences or in understanding of their role or identity in a context, appeared to find the interview process itself facilitated their capacity to further articulate aspects of their new or emerging leadership style

“After the interview I started to think about the idea of responsibility in leadership and your role really in terms of taking responsibility for group decisions, that you maybe being the person that’s then going to have to accept the consequences of that more than the rest of the group (P4b, p1)”.

“There is no underlying theology raised in Council... Because it certainly features very strongly in the way I lead theological reflection, which is always a bit confronting...they do experience that as life giving and pushing the boundaries and opening things up and this is very helpful. (pause) Why do I feel there is no space for ‘me’ in council? That's a really good question (P7b, p7)”.

i) Language for expressing understandings of God

There was a considerable diversity in how participants expressed their understanding of God or the emphases of a community of faith. While there was consistent reference to the relational nature of a trinitarian understanding, very different language was used to speak of the different persons of the Trinity and the nature of their inter-relationship.
The diversity of understandings of God included perspectives informed by process theology,

“I guess I would reject the hierarchical image of God and I would reject the notion of God as unchanging and as omnipotent in certain ways of understanding. I guess process theology has influenced me as part of eco-theology. I guess I see the relationship between God and people and the universe less as a pyramid, not at all in fact as a pyramid...I see it more as almost like an eco-system in which there is interaction. And that’s how I image the Trinity too, as interaction and certainly not as something all powerful and I guess I do see God as changing, in some aspects at least (P10a, p4)

the breadth of biblical narrative,

“my primary thinking would be God the Father or God the Trinity together, in the sense that God of the Old Testament, Yahweh, is actually the Trinitarian God, not simply God the Father, I believe...and that then gives us the right link into Jesus fulfilling some of those things in the New Testament...it’s not that Jesus is the one who drives it, Jesus comes to fulfil what He, the Father and the Spirit, in a sense have begun in the Old Testament...we go back to the Father as the initiator...So, the Father’s purpose takes a bit of precedence then, rather than the Son and the Spirit (P9b, p5)

the struggle for appropriate language to express experience of God

“I probably most profoundly experience God as Spirit...I experience spirit as profoundly personal and with a profound sense of union at times. That sense of oneness where my spirit and God as spirit touch (pause) I run out of language and when I want to use the language of God’s holiness which is love and utter goodness and beauty, then it’s like how do you defend
those words from the wash over from the world of goodness as goody two shoes and holiness, and to encounter God’s profound love as God’s judgment at the same time, and that love and judgment are not a continuum but they are actually the one and the same thing. Because it’s as I experienced myself as utterly, profoundly loved by God and experienced a love that is beyond my comprehension, then I perceive who I am and how that capacity to love is not something that is part of me and that that goodness which is utterly disarming, that is how I experience judgment, it’s within that context of being loved that the judgment is me seeing who I am in the light of who God is. It is this God that sustains me in ministry and keeps me there (P7b, p5-6)”.

Reference was made to a sense of community in relation to God as triune

“I guess I have that sense of Trinity as community so the very heart of God as a community and that we are called into community. There is no life without relationships; there is no life apart from relationships (P6b, p6)”

and to relationship being significant not only for the inner life of the triune God but for human relationship

“For me God is a God of relationship and the Trinity captures the fact that God is a God of relationship within himself. So within the Godhead there is this dynamic relationship happening, it’s not a static thing, it’s a dynamic interplay between Father, Son and Spirit…And part of what it means for us as human beings to be made in God’s image is that we are made to actually be relational beings who are made to represent, to image what God is like, which is to be people who are in relationship ourselves. That gets expressed in terms of our relationship with God as Trinity ourselves, it gets expressed in our life together as God’s people because the church is ultimately a relational community and it gets expressed
in our life in the world because we are engaged in relating in all sorts of ways in the world, with the environment, in all sorts of other ways (P11a, p10)”.

A common difficulty was in holding the triune nature of God as well as the distinctiveness of the three persons of the Trinity,

“I’m not really conscious of thinking about God as Trinity separately in a work context…I probably think more about Jesus than I think about God the Father…I find Trinity quite hard sometimes and sometimes they are all just one, and sometimes they are three distinct things that don’t actually operate together or you talk about them in a way that sort of differentiates them which isn’t actually theologically correct (P3a, p6)”

“…I suppose that one of the elusive things of the Trinity, that sense of separate, yet three distinct persons each with their own freedom, and yet there is only one being…It’s interesting how at one level the more you live it, the less you actually have a language around it (P6b, p6)”.

Different language was used for the inter-relationship and work of the trinitarian persons and connection with human living

“…I think that’s what is redemptive about Jesus that he lived his life in unbroken fidelity, unlike us…that is our only access to God through Jesus’ humanity and ours…I think we experience what transcends our humanity though it and we call that spirit, we call that the movement of the Holy Spirit. I love that image of John Taylor’s in The Go-Between-God, the spirit who moves between us...God as go-between. And I do have a spirituality that says we go the Jesus, Jesus takes us to the Father, to take us to God imaged as Father (P6b, p5)”
Others raised differences in emphasis on different persons of the Trinity

“I tended to think in terms of the organic unity of the Trinity, I know implicitly that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are in relationship with one another and that’s the model of how we should think of our engagement socially, so hence the idea that it’s not just our soul, but the trinitarian or gospel of grace affecting everything and so that’s meant to change how we think about ourselves in relation to God and ourselves in relation to the people of God and our wider community…I think a lot of people would think of Jesus at (a parish). Although increasingly the Spirit and the role of the Spirit in prayer through the Son is becoming more and more dominant…But in terms of the Father, it’s not as dominant as it could be (P1a, p9)”

“I view as everything in my life is not predetermined but I’m not the best one to make that decision, God is. So whenever I am in doubt, whenever I have to make a decision, that I didn’t know where I want to go, it’s His turn…So I guess He is the decision maker, He’s the one throwing the options out there. You get shown what you should do (P4a, p9-10)...probably trying to give you confidence. I think it comes back to that karma thought that I had, that if you do good things, good things will happen to you, trust rewarded…I didn’t have a good father representation (in relation to God the Father)...Well I guess the Spirit for me would be human connectedness and the human, what I refer to as human spirituality that connects us all. I guess that’s definitely a sort of spirit representation. There’s definitely a figure up there that I envisage making decisions and guiding me. I guess providing comfort in the sense of I laid trust in and it worked out ok. I guess you might see in Christ the humanity, human people that you interact with...But that one would come much less than the other two (p10-11)”.
j) Connection and disconnection between understanding of God and leadership style and practice

There were a number of dimensions to this theme including how different understandings form a background for leadership style and whether or not there was an overt impact on actual leadership practice.

Undertaking personal work generated an expressed shift in perception of God which had an impact on leadership style

“I’ve moved away from my God has as a big stick and an angry person or a disciplinarian type person into coming into an understanding of God who loves me much more unconditionally or a God who is more gracious... And so as I have shifted that, I think That’s changed a little bit the way I respond to other people or to leadership situations... before I used to think I had to help God because I knew what needed to happen and sometimes he wasn’t quite with the program and I would try and influence things more and be more directive to achieve an outcome whereas now I feel I can trust him to be God and that my leadership is about opening up and facilitating a process where other people can see that it’s alright to trust in this circumstance, that God knows what he is doing and that something will come out of that. It may not be what we originally thought but we can trust it will be ok, so the practical outcome is that my level of intervention or my level of feeling like I needed to push or control or to manipulate more an outcome... that has just gone (P3a, p4-5)”.

Biblical understanding and theological perspective were called on to inform both practice and teaching on leadership

“I probably think more of Jesus when I think of leadership than I do of the Father and Spirit. Part of that is, I think, the incarnation, part of it is, I think a biblical emphasis (particular
reference was made to Paul’s teaching on leadership in 2 Corinthians). The Spirit is not absent in the discussion, but the model of leadership is Christocentric, I think. But the Spirit is there as an energizing power, is the one who’s, in a sense, within the Trinity, the one who is working through Paul for the leadership, the ministry he is exercising, especially in chapter 3, but even then it’s going back to the resurrection that actually gives Paul sustaining energy in ministry. And there’s a lot of that, I guess, I resonate with...But the Christocentric model, I suppose, fits where I think (P9b, p4-5).

In extending the image of the Trinity as ‘interaction’, there was further comment

“I guess I would like ideally to see leadership as mutual interaction, which is perhaps not leadership at all, but perhaps that is why I struggle with that (leadership). I struggle with courses that teach people to be leaders because it suggests that some lead and the rest follow...I don’t find that very helpful. Obviously I acknowledge there are real and genuine inequalities or differences between people. I know there are some people, you know all they can really do in life is survive, let alone do anything else, and I understand that, but still I think part of what has caused that is perhaps this notion of the sort of elitist aspect of leadership that I guess I struggle with. I like to think that people can change, as well as God, and I like to think the first will be last, and the last will be first up to a point. Rather than the first always being the privileged and the leaders and the ones who think and decide and influence and so on (P10a, p4-5).”

Comment was also made about connecting understanding of the triune God with vulnerability and integrity in leadership and as community

“Theologising (about real engagement and) the triune God and Jesus, well Jesus was crucified and he was pretty honest about who he was...I enjoyed that sense of self-revelation
through the gospels as Jesus himself comes to this understanding of who he is as people around him also do. It’s really quite powerful as a model for all of us really as our lives unfold. The triune God, well I suppose another way of me making sense of that bizarre Christian doctrine of the Trinity is a sense of people as a community, not just 2 people, who do fully engage with each other and are fully open and honest with each other as a kind of one paradigm to take out of that…(in relation to discussion of a comment by Rowan Williams) about how it’s all very well to go on about being an inclusive church and so on, but being a Christian, being an Anglican, a member of the church, does require a commitment and is a challenge and you don’t just accept everything and everyone, it’s a demanding life and was trying to introduce positive judgment...But I’ve been thinking, what are those demands, and more and more for me it is about how we live together as a community and how we live in an utterly honest way and I think as soon as we do that, it does actually affect your behavior a bit (P5b, p9”).

Another dimension was an understanding of God being connected with leaders doing what needs to be done

“I don’t have a view that sees God as omnipotent at all. I have a view of God which says God in his fullness has basically given away the creation, and he’s given away as an expression of love and has entrusted the creation including human beings to be the custodians and in some ways the co-creators of what we have been given...The person of Jesus is the one who in a sense gives the human face to all of that, the way we understand the nature of God as someone who is hospitable, generous, open, waiting, yearning, passionate, all those sorts of terminologies, about how God seeks to relate to his whole creation. And that God can be angry or as happy as us in some way...we’ve got to take responsibility ourselves...in terms of being able to offer leadership, you actually have to know the business, you have to know what
you are on about, not only the story...you have to know what has to be done. And so in that whole process, my understanding of God says we need to take our coats off, and we need to get engaged in the world...So that’s the sort of philosophy I’ve taken. I believe that we are called to work in partnership and it’s a privilege and a responsibility that discipleship is about. That gets you into a lot of trouble. And it’s also very demanding and very risky (P2a, p4-5)”.

When later asked about the place of the Spirit in this understanding of leadership the comment continued

“Well the language I would use generally is passion, I think I’m a fairly passionate person, often I think driven in a way by being frustrated, being disturbed, being upset, being annoyed. That’s how in one sense I understand the spirit of God, constantly disturbing us, constantly challenging us. I would use the term empowerment. I think that when we talk about changing people’s lives we are talking about empowerment and I think the Spirit is about empowering people, liberating people...The Spirit is also about wisdom, about knowledge...I try and look at individual strengths and skills which often seem to me to be signs of something, whether it be a new idea or way of handling something, but in the main I see the Spirit as the disturber, you know in the Book of Genesis where the Spirit hovers over Creation and continues to create that sense of unease, sense of challenge, all those sorts of things, that is how I would understand it (P2a, p6).

In an instance where a participant had responsibilities in the wider life of the diocese, there was both a personal connection with trinitarian thinking and a broader sense in terms of their leadership role

“I think one of the things I’ve been learning, becoming more conscious of...is probably like
living more consciously in the sense of the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit... sort of having a personal sense of being guided by the Holy Spirit in terms of having wisdom and sensing where places and people are up to and trying to actually be in touch with that so you can help them be in touch with where God may be for them and what’s happening for them (P11a, p8)...the challenge is to keep relying upon God and then not feeling like I’ve worked it all myself or to kill myself in the process or to feel like I’ve got to be the guy that’s running in to rescue people or places...So I think it all comes from a healthy sense of having confidence in God as father, having a clear commitment to seeing Christ is the lord of the Church and that we’ve got to be trusting him about that, and then trying to live in the power of the Spirit in terms of what that means (p9)

It was noted that while understanding of God was expressed as shaping leadership practice in general terms, making links with Trinitarian thinking proved more difficult

“For me, my Christian beliefs shape my style of leadership, in that (pause) I don’t know how to put it, that kind of strong, aggressive, unnecessarily combative behavior, or offensive or overbearing conduct, manipulation, those sorts of practices, would be unacceptable for me in a leadership or decision making process (P12a, p4)...I’m not sure how it (trinitarian thinking) influences my practice or involvement but I certainly have a strong sense of my own belief in a trinitarian God and of the three persons. I’m not sure what the connection is between that and my outward practice in terms of church involvement (p5)

There were also occasions when questions about the connection or impact of understanding of God for personal leadership practice were more readily taken up through the theological grounding of the vision for an organization

“I guess my understanding theologically of the Trinity, if you think of the Trinity as a model,
we pray to God the Father through the Son, empowered by the Spirit. What that means in practice for me is an affirmation of, I guess as an Evangelical, what we call creation and redemption, that good theology never separates them. The idea of being the life skills centre...I loved it because it actually affirmed I guess how we could think about mission where grace was being applied to every area of life – heart, soul, mind, body, the whole thing (P1a.p3)... I’ve always loved that idea of the people of God being a signpost, whereby they through living lives that are fundamentally God honouring, in word and deed, attract attention not just to themselves but to the one true God....that’s always been a healthy way of thinking about mission... ‘Cause it’s God focused, but to be a signpost you have to engage with creation and the redemption aspects of this good news...So hence we’ve thought in terms of what does it mean, in terms of the application of grace at a practical level it flows from trinitarian principles which are then expressed socially and spiritually being brought together (p5)”

or in terms of the nature of interaction at an organizational level

“...that’s a hard question. I think it’s got something about (pause) reflecting my commitment and belief about the divine is all around us...I think that’s expressed in my commitment to the principles of justice, because it seems to me that the resurrection of Jesus is about the justice of God, and Jesus, in his ministry expresses that justice in both word and deed in his engagement with communities in which he travelled and journeyed. So in some ways...it seems to me, that in my engagement with staff I am constantly talking about the need to be generous, hospitable and compassionate...when I talk about the role of the organization and I talk about it being a place of hope, I’m probably saying at the same time, although I haven’t thought about this, that this is the place of God, that in a sense the incarnation is around and about us and whatever we do...in our engagement with the services we bring, we are actually
offering that hope all the time (P2b, p2-3)”.

Other issues:

Issues which emerged less consistently were related to

a) how the opinions and ideas of young people could be taken seriously by those in leadership, how they could be included, “not just token sort of representation (P4b, p6)”, and be strengthened to have a sense of their own authority and where that can be utilized. Significant aspects were making a financial commitment at diocesan level to the involvement of young people in leadership and also the importance of being invited by those in positions of authority to participate and of that being recognized. Another aspect was active listening and response

“what made me feel that the youth were taken seriously (at an overseas conference) was ...I guess is the listening thing and actually responding to some of the comments that we made...and if they are serious I would expect some consultation with Generation Y about what they think and some response to that, not sort of that’s what they think but we won’t go there (P4b, p10)”;

b) how those in authority, because they are the ones in the position of power, need to initiate and engage with people at more personal, small group and, where possible, in a larger forum about some of the issues which are sensitive in the life of the church, about matters of conflict, difference theologically and in terms of life choices. This was in part related to those in leadership living in vulnerability, honesty, integrity and self-awareness.

c) how confidence can be strengthened to take up appropriate leadership in the church.

The development of confidence to actively contribute to diocesan bodies and to bring
transferable expertise from other contexts was noted on a number of occasions, more
so among women than men. A comment was made

“I am not always confident enough, and I think it is something I’ve often seen evident
in women in the church, particularly probably lay women...I see the fellas jumping in
and putting their hands up, and I see the women holding back and I am aware of that,
so I try not to hold back but I still think there is something of a lack of confidence in a
number of women” (P10a, p1).

Issues arising from exploration of the data:

Though the data represents a great diversity of perspective on leadership understandings and
practice as well as theological foundations, what became evident was the significance of
leadership in the life of the church at many levels. The impact of personal experience - of
transition, of context, of engagement with new awareness, was at times profound and far
reaching for people’s leadership practice. Another factor was the development and opening
out of participants’ understandings that occurred as a result of the engagement in the
interview process itself, indicating that the connecting of understandings of God and
leadership practice are intertwined but require time and careful consideration to be unraveled
and articulated.

Clearly secular leadership literature and models have been a significant background and
source of language to describe leadership activity in the church. Different contexts of
leadership required alternative approaches and there were occasions where expertise in one
context was not readily seen or experienced as transferable to another. The matter of how
difference, especially theologically, might be respectfully engaged was seen as a critical issue
for the health and ongoing creative life of the church, as well as for discerning appropriate
leadership for the future.

Two features are of particular interest for further development

1) though description could be given of leadership activity and its key qualities, making specific, rather than generalized, connections between leadership practice and understanding of God, particularly as triune, proved to be demanding and often not readily accessible; and

2) though some potential avenues of engagement and resources were noted for addressing the tensions, conflicts or matters of relational breakdown in the life of the church, both institutionally and locally, how trinitarian perspectives connect with these matters was not elaborated.
Chapter 6  Discussion of the Issues

Approaching the issues:

In discussing the issues raised by the data and research process, attention will be given to what influences and informs leadership practice in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, especially understandings of God as triune. Consideration will be given to the inter-relationship between these issues and key characteristics of leadership theory as well as aspects highlighted by the four proponents of a social understanding of the Trinity and understandings of perichoresis. Significant wider issues that arose from the data will also be addressed.

Consideration will be given to opportunities for strengthening the articulation of connections between theological understandings and leadership practice, with a view to generating constructive dialogue between disciplines.

Attending to the issues:

i)  Principles and influences that inform leadership practice

It is evident from the data that though the range of factors that influence and inform leadership practice are highly diverse, they are grounded in language connected with secular leadership and management models, acknowledged by Stevens (2006) as useful resources particularly for strategic management in diocesan life. Such language is both a ground for articulating practice and also a basis for dialogue within and beyond the church about leadership theory.

Descriptions of leadership were framed in language such as responsibility, competence,
knowledge and engagement, for example in having knowledge of church polity, policy and practice and of being competent in fulfillment or management of the tasks for which responsibility is carried. Approaches to managing the activities and behaviours of people involved in church life had resonance with Contingency Theory processes. Matters relating to strategic thinking, visioning processes, determining processes for future planning, enculturation and induction processes, using external expertise and consultants are terms that are congruent with models such as Charismatic and Transformational Leadership operative in wider society. Servant leadership was also espoused and described from Christian perspective yet not distinguished from the secular model so named.

Critique was voiced, such as ‘unease’ (P10) about leadership models which were not focused on empowering others and that an aggressive, combative, manipulative leadership style would contravene a leadership approach based in Christian belief (P12). Others expressed avenues of leadership which were felt to be undervalued in church life because they were not popularly understood as leadership or were not focused on change management – for example the teaching and preaching ministry which was understood to be vital in the formation of Godly character (P9).

Reference was made to leadership being experienced as ‘innate’ (P3). Writers such as Daloz Parks (2005) would disagree with this understanding, claiming that leadership can be taught, especially in enabling people to grasp the complexity of broad picture thinking. Given the expressed desire for developing understanding of what are experienced as different views of ministry held by the central administration and local contexts within the diocese, the capacity to appreciate nuanced difference as well as to teach and learn together for effective leadership is vital.
There were also instances where particular situations had provoked reconsideration of leadership style - for example in drawing on the Ordinal and reflection on other resources to clarify or refresh the purposes of the authority in which a priest stands in parish leadership, especially in situations where that is under challenge (P6).

Participants who were in either personal or work based periods of transition, or who referred to transitional periods in the life of the church, brought some different nuances. One situation highlighted a number of issues - what it is to not operate out of a former style of leadership; to feel a sense of dislocation; of how to focus energy on maintenance as well as new initiatives whilst undertaking the personal and spiritual re-working that transition requires; of the ‘drag’ of the institutional forms when something new is tried (P7). Another example was in deliberately taking a non-speaking stance in a public forum and reflecting on a different leadership role - of having influence as one being consulted and sought out for their opinion and of the power dynamics of the situation. This lead to some rich reflection about leadership - as enabling others, through organizational skills, dissemination of information, discussion and challenge, with individuals being encouraged to make their own decision. One strand of learning that emerged concerned working with integrity within a politicized system (P6).

ii) The understandings of God evident from the data

Application of understandings of God and leadership style to context

Finding language which carried the breadth and mystery associated with understandings of God was not easy for participants, which in turn led to the dilemma of expressing how relationship with and understanding of God impacted on leadership style or patterns. The data indicates that generally participants were more able to speak of how their understanding of God was applied to visioning, planning and teaching processes for ministry
in the organizational context in which they exercised leadership. In their leadership practice as an individual the connections were present though tended to be exploratory and tentatively expressed rather than intentional and clearly conceptualized. This was noted as being related to limited focused opportunity for such reflective process rather than capacity to engage with the conceptual frameworks involved.

However, a change in leadership style often went hand in hand with changed understanding, new insight or experience of God. Where the shift occurred from a disciplinary understanding of God to a more gracious understanding, a corresponding shift was described in style of leadership from being directive toward an outcome to a less interventionist, more facilitative leadership style, enabling people to trust both process and outcome. This shift and other occasions of new insight were often linked to an external initiative or observation of what was variously described as like a ‘holy spirit moment’ (P3) which had a significant impact. Reflection on and working with the impact facilitated a changed understanding or experience of God which in turn led to trust in an emergent process in a group or community discerning a way forward, as well as marking a significant change in leadership style. The interactive movements of this process are reflective of some of the noted perichoretic dynamism and interweaving.

Understanding of the Spirit as disturber (P2) yet also as empowering was connected with leadership patterns of risk taking and naming the issues confronting people or the church. Alongside this was the work of recognizing and affirming people’s strengths in order that they can have influence and be creative. Such descriptions occurred in relation to leadership in a breadth of contexts including large organizational structures, within parish life and in individual leadership contribution to corporate diocesan bodies.
Understandings of God as triune were frequently expressed in terms of community, making connections both within their leadership spheres and with the wider community. Some of the marks of community were to be vulnerable in stating one’s understanding knowing that there would be differences, being able to say when one didn’t know something, being open to hearing and seeking to understand different perspectives and discussing them, knowing that there would not necessarily be agreement. A further dimension was leadership taking place through framing, in different forms and emphases, the life of an organization or group in light of the Christian story (P2, P6, P9), as a way of generating and building community. One of the areas where there is blending of language is in understandings of community and Gunton (2003) highlights the need to be clear in both use and interpretation of the term between social marketing and theological trinitarian frameworks. Though he is very clear to differentiate between human and divine personhood, he speaks of the triune model as indicative for the reality of human interdependence, a ‘perichoretic reciprocity’ (p170), as we live out being Christ’s body in our world.

The need to find alternative language for trinitarian concepts was widely expressed in order that understandings of God’s nature and activity could be communicated. It was highlighted that reiteration and explication, even of the language forms alternative to the traditional ‘Father, Son and Spirit’, were needed in ongoing ways in the extrapolation of the Christian story. This was evident in explicating a community linked project using the language of creation, redemption and grace (P1). This search for language to open something of the nature of God to human understanding seems to parallel the example of the analogical language of the Cappadocians and is carried forward with Johnson’s (1993) similar concerns for our time. Her sense of holding the mystery as well as engaging in dialogue which invites enquiry about the nature of God becomes part of a process of engaging community rather
than repeating hierarchical patterns.

Jesus was understood to have lived the risk taking and direct speaking about the realities of people’s personal situations as well as in political and religious life. These characteristics were also seen as connected with the work of the Spirit in leaders’ interpersonal interaction at individual and group levels, in living a consistent life of integrity and self-awareness. LaCugna (1991) also focuses the work of Christ, in the power of the Spirit, as being the place for bringing about ‘communion between God and creature’ (p250) and the means whereby we, too, live the reign of God. This in turn connects with her understanding of ‘God for Us’ rather than communion being only known in the inner life of God as triune.

Participants tended to focus on the Son and Spirit when describing their own connection with trinitarian understandings. God the Father was experienced as more problematic, both in discussing their own views and in how they communicate understandings of the nature of God to others. God the Father generally remained undefined compared with Jesus or the Spirit. Reference was made to the impact, both positive and negative, of their own experiences of being fathered as well as their awareness of others’ family life experiences. Kilby discusses what she sees as the impact of projection for various emphases taken up by theologians espousing social understandings of the trinity. This certainly needs to be taken into account in how understandings of God as Father particularly are utilized in the conduct of leadership and in processes of explicating the place of trinitarian thought in relationships within the church and in its ministries.

The relational nature of leadership process, human engagement and trinitarian understanding was a recurring pattern, though the tensions and conflicts in the first two aspects were not connected with the last. This is one aspect of critique of social trinitarian thought that Pickard
(2012) raises which appears reinforced by the data. Are there ways of re-considering these connections? One path alluded to in the data would be to explore the energies ‘disturbed’ by conflict or tension, that if faced and worked with can become places of creative tension, if not uniformity. One example is the awareness of the costliness – in dealing with anxiety and fear, power struggles and facing difference - involved in unraveling underlying divergent theological perspectives and their language forms, in order to come to a shared theology of ministry that informs decision making. A particular kind of openness, of vulnerability, of preparedness for reciprocity and the giving and receiving of energy, which Moltmann (1993, p. 173) speaks of as the love of the inner life of God, is what would be required by such engagement. If we are drawn into the inner life of God through the work of Christ (Tanner 2012) then surely our participation in the life of God is not only an eschatological hope or idealized, as is attributed to Moltmann, but to be painstakingly begun through such costly engagement which should not be avoided if we are to continue the activity of God in human history, the ongoing process of the economic Trinity.

The opportunity to participate in this research project was itself a catalyst for stimulating thinking about theological understandings and leadership. Participants’ comments indicated they welcomed the opportunity to explore and develop, sometimes for the first time, some of the connections between these two matters. This suggests that the connection between theological understandings and peoples’ leadership practice is one that they would like to explore further and that there has been little opportunity or impetus in the church to do this in an intentional way.

**iii) Significant wider issues**

*Theological foundations for decision making*
A gap was noted between awareness of theology being able to be brought to bear on personal or parish decision making and on the decision making at diocesan leadership levels such as Archbishop in Council or Synod. There was an expressed desire for space for reflective processes, prayer and meditation, as well as reflective silence, so that decision making could be considered in light of what was best for the life of the diocese or how congruent potential positions would be with other policies or values held by different parts of diocesan life, for example at episcopal, administrative and parish levels.

This raised the concern of how people can bring their theological understandings to the business agendas and decisions at diocesan levels when there appeared to be no space where a ‘theology of ministry’ for example could be worked through that would then inform decisions about development of ministries, including planning for the future.

A further issue was the seeming ‘split’ between theological perspectives and political and legislative activities in diocesan life, for example in how influence is brought to bear prior to and during decision making processes or how theological understanding might be embodied in legislative intentions, appreciating this was not possible in content, about matters relating to ministry activities particularly.

*Leadership, Authority and Power*

Issues of power and authority were understood in varying ways. Power was perceived as a significant influence in decision making or in behaviours or attitudes that impacted on others, often with negative connotation. There was also a sense that issues relating to power needed to be approached differently in a Christian context where openness and awareness of vulnerability were significant values. Authority was variously understood as related to formal
position, to knowledge base and recognized expertise.

For those who were ordained, this was primarily focused on the authority arising from one’s calling as an ordained person especially for those in parish or diocesan leadership, through the Ordinal and the particular responsibilities expressed in it which are declared by the Archbishop or Bishop at ordination or consecration as a Bishop. This was seen as particularly relevant in situations where others in a parish were seeking to exert influence and assert direction where this was regarded as inappropriate or not in line with an agreed direction.

Lay participants focused on authority arising from election or appointment to a position, from knowledge of diocesan processes or from the expertise they brought from other spheres of training or experience. For both lay and ordained members of Archbishop in Council, their sense of the basis of their authority to contribute to or to have influence upon debate or decision making was less defined and was in some instances impacted upon by the attitudes of those more senior or experienced in that forum.

Another aspect of authority was the changed status of clergy (P10), especially in relation to role clarity in episcopal leadership in pastoral and temporal decision making which in turn had impacts for lay people.

While there were difficulties experienced with a legislative approach to power and trust matters, it was recognized that such an approach had highlighted behaviours and relationships of those in leadership within the church which are not acceptable, and brought them to attention rather than their remaining hidden or ignored. The further question is how such awareness will enable more subtle matters to be addressed - of how power is exerted and exercised in the political life of the church and how influence is brought to bear on a range of
A further aspect of authority in leadership practice is the notion of ‘kenosis’, traditionally understood in terms of Christ’s ‘self-emptying’ in becoming incarnate, discussed by Herrick and Mann (1998) for leadership practice as ‘that we hand over the way in which we exercise authority to God and to the needs of the people we serve’ (p57). This notion has bearing on the standing back process of a designated leader when another has demonstrable gifts or knowledge necessary to the situation at hand. One example would be the process of training those for ministry where it is necessary to step back in order for the other to step forward to learn & take up their authority in preaching, presiding at the eucharist or in pastoral practice, or in how priest and lay people take up a future ministry direction. Is this what is occurring in the free flowing movement of authority in perichoresis? Is this what Servant Leadership is trying to grasp, the notion of working for the common good which is not necessarily led by one person all the time but that the designated leader may intentionally step aside in order to serve the greater purpose – a diaconal undergirding of a priestly role. The process of stepping back and forward appropriately is part of the dynamism of authority for leadership and potentially connects with the perichoretic movement, the differentiated plurality yet reciprocal relationality within the life of the Trinity and of making room for the other, known in salvation history and its continuing outworking for the whole of creation. LaCugna’s (1991) sense of authority of personhood being situated in ‘giving oneself away’ (p398) has resonance with this dynamic.

Two further aspects stood out in this ‘kenotic’ awareness – the first was the interrelationship between self-awareness, vulnerability and how authority was understood or taken up by participants and the second was my part as participant observer in the research and the necessary process of standing back in order to facilitate the leadership stances and theological
understandings of others to be made overt.

*Clarity and critique of language*

Fluidity of language across and within disciplines has been a recurring issue. This is highlighted where language from leadership contexts and models are uncritically appropriated into church contexts without consideration of their meaning in the initial context and in relation to theological interpretation. This has been taken up by Zaragoza in relation to Servant Leadership but in general is fairly silent in church circles. Evidence from participants’ use of this terminology indicates that awareness needs to be heightened about the potential confusion that such blending of terminology may precipitate. This is particularly so if dialogue is to occur between secular leadership and theological understandings.

A further dimension of this is the need to differentiate the purposes underlying secular leadership models where the focus may be on organizational marketing productivity and financial profit rather than on the values of spiritual growth and health or wellbeing for the common good.

**Potential avenues for development:**

*Avenues to be developed and re-engaged in connecting leadership practice and understanding of God*

Taking hold afresh, articulating, reflecting on and even developing the theological base from which decisions are made, as well as having a theology of ministry as a frame for decision making in leadership at both local and corporate levels within the church were significant themes emerging from the data. Council of the Diocese was thought to be an appropriate place where such theological discussion could take place and where there was a hope and even expectation of the integration of theology and temporal or business matters of the
diocese. This was perceived as a potential opportunity for addressing situations where a ‘split’ had been experienced between administrative policy and directives received from the administration which related to parish compliance. One example is parish strategy planning that required a ‘Mission Action Plan’ which includes theological dimensions as well as financial and other business considerations.

Two avenues were opened by the research that offer ways in which such matters might be addressed. The data highlighted a variety of processes utilized by parishes and institutions to take up future planning. Most, as would be expected, included honoring the past and the strengths it offered for the movement forward. A usual pattern was involvement of an external consultant as facilitator, with the background support of episcopal oversight. The leadership objective was primarily to enable the people to articulate for themselves their vision and the steps needed to bring about that reality. Such process draws on a number of leadership models at different phases but potentially values a more distributed leadership approach where the expertise of different members are called forth to serve the good of the whole visioning process, drawn together by a designated leader for that purpose. Following the consultative process the leadership roles would then need to be re-distributed in relation to specific responsibilities and abilities, formal positions of authority and how that is to be understood in the frame of the vision. What can so often occur after such a process, in a parish especially, is that leadership patterns are not reviewed and assumptions are made, rather than responsibilities articulated for the new situation proposed. This in turn raises some critical issues in relation to the role of clergy, how they understand their leadership in light of their understanding of God and of their ordination and likewise the place of the laity. It would be important that any ‘visioning’ process has a precursor about how leadership is understood, the theology that undergirds it and the decision making processes which are engaged in light
Another process of interest (P11) was one which potentially addresses influence of the “loud voices” and the power bases, especially those which sought to hold to past patterns of action, behavior or influence. This was a “listening” process run concurrently with the visioning process using an objective, external person who attended to comments and feedback about the visioning as it proceeded and who highlighted or noted the dynamics in comments made. In this noting of response, people became aware of dynamics which had its own impact for change.

Theological Reflection has been a part of preparation for ordained ministry for many years within the Supervised Theological Field Education programs in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne (STFE Manual 2011) and across a number of denominations. The extent to which it has been developed for lay people is more variable, though it has been central to the ‘Education for Ministry’ program. One of the difficulties is that once clergy have moved beyond their formal formation years of theological education and curacies, intentionality about focused theological reflection can be subsumed by the day to day demands of ministry unless such reflection has become a habitual, positive and productive source of sustained reflective practice for continuing learning in ministry. Focused, sustained theologically reflective practice attending to the depth and breadth of ministry issues is distinct from coaching programs, peer support groups and ministry appraisal, though there may be occasions when these processes use forms of theological reflection.

From the research data, the preference especially at institutional levels would be that such reflection be undertaken prior to any debate on an issue requiring discernment and decision making so that the primary theological foundations could be drawn out and where possible
consensus sought on which subsequent debate would be founded. Secondary theological issues could be acknowledged which may have influence on perspectives brought to the debate, but would be recognized by the group as a whole as not of primary significance. This would mean that there could be open and transparent acknowledgment of perspectives that might impinge on a debate, prior to discussion and decision making. This could potentially also allow for different meanings and emphases of theological terms to be explored in a context of respect and intentional engagement with one another, rather than in a context of adversarial debate and giving of opinion.

Processes of theological reflection could also be a means of addressing the difficulty of bringing theological perspectives to matters of administrative, political and corporate life in the Church, especially where the principles underlying decision making may be being assumed rather than declared.

Potential avenues for engaging in dialogue with and contributing to leadership theory:

*What do leadership patterns in other Anglican contexts have to offer?*

As noted in the background chapter, how trinitarian understanding pertained to the meaning and nature of the Anglican Communion, its order and unity, was the focus of a recommendation of the 1988 Lambeth Conference, resulting in The Virginia Report (1997). The Report was reconsidered in 2006 with the comment that its arguments had not been translated into practice in relationships within the Anglican Communion (IATDC Summary 2006). More recent reporting appears focused on dealing with areas of conflict and matters related to how different emphases within the Anglican Communion can remain in communion or covenant with one another. Trinitarian perspectives have become focused in such documents as the Cyprus Statement (2006) regarding shared doctrinal understandings.
between Anglican and Orthodox traditions, rather than their outworking in the actual practice of ministry or in leadership.

It is interesting to note some pointers from both The Virginia Report and the Cyprus Statement which may have relevance for engagement with leadership theory. Both documents provide a succinct overview of developments in theological understanding pertaining to areas that connect with trinitarian understanding and, less directly, with leadership practice. Both take up the significance and nature of the Trinity as expressive of unity and communion in the life of the church. Both take up matters relating to ecclesial structures and oversight (episcopate), certainly in relation to the specific role of Bishops but, in the case of the Virginia Report also in relation to ‘a recognition of God’s gift to the whole people of God of a ministry of episcopate, exercised in personal, collegial and communal ways within and by the whole company of the baptized; by principles of subsidiarity, accountability and interdependence; and by an understanding of the Spirit led process of discernment and reception’ (The Virginia Report 1997, Chap 5, p. 1). Each of these aspects is elaborated however the emphasis in episcopate is on the role of the bishop, with little development of the role of the whole people of God. As with the Cyprus Statement, the authority and special responsibility of the Bishop is seen as ‘maintaining and focusing the internal unity and communion of the local Church (The Virginia Report 1997, Chap 5, p. 2) in partnership with others and through the conciliar structures which in turn intends to maintain and be expressive of interdependence, and to be reflective of the Trinity.

A further area of discussion is that of reception, of how decisions and structures are received at various levels within the Church, especially in local churches – the places where the work of maintaining communion in relationships becomes vital for those in leadership. The Cyprus
Statement (2006) refers to varieties of reception, namely in relation to ecclesial structures, doctrine and matters of ministry and on what terms churches might arrive at mutual recognition ecumenically and at the local church level. The consultative processes to engage such receptivity to one another’s approach to these matters and to their outworking in liturgical practice are highlighted. There is a ready resonance with two spheres of this research project – first in understanding of reception within the nature of trinitarian community and second in the place of receptivity in leadership practice.

Receptivity is characteristic of the perichoretic relations within the Trinity, into which we are drawn through Christ, in interdependence of being, relations and purpose. Johnson (1993) in discussing the structure of trinitarian relations and her critique of the processional patterns of classical theology highlights the approach of Moltmann in reviewing the biblical material, demonstrating the shifts in the ordering and the nature of trinitarian receiving and giving. Moltmann (1993) also speaks of the distinctiveness and exchange of energies between Father, Son and Spirit in their relationship of love as receptivity to one another. Their receptivity of relationship – the Son receiving divine life from the Father, the Father receiving the self-giving obedience of the Son and the Spirit being the eternal interconnecting breath (p. 162-187), has a further dimension in the resurrection and its connection of heaven and earth. As Moltman expresses it ‘Jesus is risen into the coming kingdom of God. Jesus is risen into the innermost being of God himself. He has been exalted into the divine origin of the Holy Spirit’ (p. 88) and he continues ‘Through the sending of the creative Spirit, the trinitarian history of God becomes a history that is open to the world, open to men and women, and open to the future’ (p. 90).

This openness is what has significance for how we are called to live in relation to one another
and how we conduct our leadership in our world, in the community of faith and beyond. Receptivity to one another that is respectful and discerning, that is self-aware as well as attuned to the other, that is open to seeking shared understandings and purpose are characteristics consistent with a perichoretic approach where there is room for coming to clarity and movement that leads to congruent action. What must be included within this sense of receptivity is how authority and power is exercised and shared, especially where the focus is on well-being rather than productivity alone.

Exploring a trinitarian model by which to function was reported by Robin Greenwood (2002), in this instance at a diocesan level in Australia. He describes a model, distilled into eight features, which he encountered on his visit to Newcastle Diocese in 1999. However in following up this model with diocesan personnel in 2007 I discovered that, not unlike the redirection of energies in relation to the Virginia Report, a change of diocesan leadership had meant there had been no intentional follow through with the proposed model’s features but rather a different approach had been taken up for equipping the faith community, with a different focus of authority. This involved “Ministering Communities” (B. Farran 2004) being established in Newcastle Diocese through a discernment and training process for lay people to take up ordained leadership in rural communities in a non-stipendiary capacity. While this allowed for training of a diverse range of personnel discerned to be suitable for leadership by their own faith community, and who were subsequently prepared for such leadership, the model remained one of authority by ordination and position.

Greenwood (2009) and Holmes (2006) both take up how a trinitarian model can inform ministry practice and leadership in church and congregational community life. They highlight the need to reconsider what it is to be ‘church’ in our world, the theological criteria that
inform its structures and what it might mean to live relationally, in communion with one another in ways that echo and express a trinitarian understanding of God, including its practical outworking in their respective contexts. The focus of both texts is primarily on leadership at a more local level of community life. How, then, is the next step to be taken, which brings what has been learnt from experience at local levels into connection with leadership practices at more corporate levels of church life?

Stephen Pickard (2009), in exploring collaborative ministry, its theological and ecclesial foundations, discusses a range of issues for relational and collaborative working within church order. He speaks of a dynamic ordering of ministries which allows for complexity, makes space for expansion and is characterized by interdependence, founded in the ordering of divine life. He comments

As the ministries of the church serve this implicit divine order they enable the church to realize itself as the embodiment and witness to the reality of God in the world. But the ministries cannot do this if they are not properly coordinated as instantiations of God’s own ordering, that is, intrinsically related in a ‘mode of togetherness’ such that they raise each other to the fullness of the ministry of each. As the ministries are so interrelated they become participants in God’s own energetic ordering of the Church for the world (p. 143-144).

At a number of levels participants expressed desire for some ‘mode of togetherness’, especially in exploring the theological grounds for decision making, though it also triggered ambivalences about trust and receptivity toward the other in the processes to reach a position of unity in diversity.

Areas in which leadership practice is potentially being considered are in new developments or forms of church, referred to variously as fresh expressions, emerging (UK) or emergent (USA) church. Gibbs & Bolger (2005) describe the leadership task in such contexts as a more facilitative role as emerging churches have experimented with the idea of leaderless groups
commenting ‘The leader’s role in such groups is to create a space for activities to occur’ (p. 192). The bases for leadership in the emerging church movement includes leading by gifting, based on committed interest and on a person’s track record within the life of the community and working within a team. This is closest to a distributed leadership model, with fluidity of responsibility according to expertise. Decision making is undertaken by building consensus among a community of leaders with an emphasis on collaboration and facilitation. What is not discussed is how evaluation of processes or programs is undertaken and how learning from this might be incorporated into subsequent work patterns, nor how conflict is approached and managed in such a context.

**Reflecting trinitarian relationality:**

A recurring theme in the data was the connection between understandings of trinitarian relationality and relations within the community of faith which in turn highlighted that relationship within the inner life of God was understood as connected with human relationship. Some of the characteristics noted were dynamism, engagement, openness and honesty, generosity and being hospitable, the connection of God’s love and judgment, of connectedness with all of creation, of the redemptive being what transcends our humanity. These features tend to counter Pickard’s (2012) view of a social understanding of the Trinity as being hierarchically focused and that this trinitarian perspective is not solely concerned with the internal life of the church but with a desire to live authentically together as a way of being Christ in the world.

While it was possible to explore participants’ understandings as described above and in the findings, it was beyond the scope of the work and the time allowed to take these lines of enquiry further. However this pointed to the need for further research about such connections
and participants were clearly receptive to further opportunities to explore how leadership practice might reflect trinitarian relationality.
Chapter 7  In Conclusion

Fulfilling the aims of the project:

In this exploration of leadership and understandings of God undertaken with lay and ordained Anglicans in the Diocese of Melbourne, it became evident that leadership practice in the life of the church was highly significant at many levels. The engagement with the lived experience of participants proved to be a dynamic process consistent with a qualitative approach.

Secular leadership models and management terms were the predominant resources used for describing leadership practice, with limited critique, especially theologically, of their divergent meanings or purpose. Findings indicated that such practice was informed by a diverse range of factors, expressing a variety of leadership understandings as well as theological foundations. Personal experience of transition, of particular contexts and engagement with new awareness were some of the significant influences of people’s practice of leadership, with far reaching impact.

Influence of understandings of God was apparent, particularly for planning or teaching purposes, though connection with personal conduct of leadership tended to be more exploratory and tentative. Trinitarian perspective was often described in more diffuse forms, expressed in terms of community or for the framing of organizational life.

Clearly participants experienced the positive impact of this opportunity to speak about their leadership experience. It created a unique space to give voice to their leadership style, to describe their experiences of leadership in diocesan life and begin to articulate the
interlinking of their theological understandings with these.

**Considering a theoretical framework:**

The research indicated characteristics of a theoretical framework for connecting leadership practice and theological understanding. A social understanding of the Trinity and understandings of perichoresis have been used as a resource for reflection, not as a blueprint for this interconnectedness.

**Strengthening articulation of the theological perspectives that underlie leadership practice**

Creating focused reflective opportunities is essential for strengthening the development of connections between theological understandings and leadership practice. This was embodied in the interview process itself through intentional reflective practice informed by theology. How theological concepts and language that communicates more broadly are brought to bear on the actual practice of leadership are significant issues. One significant opportunity is within existing formational structures for ministry. There is also a developing opportunity for theological colleges to contribute to professional development for clergy and lay ministers. Both contexts would need to extend the rigor of sustained, intentional reflective practice from a theological basis, as well as developing awareness of leadership theory, its purposes and meanings, especially where theological language has been appropriated.

A further aspect of this is developing understandings of and establishing patterns for appropriate collaboration within the hierarchical leadership structures that are inherent in Anglican Church order, but which have also faced change in relation to role clarity for clergy and lay people in the light of societal shifts. Exploring the impacts of conflict for leadership as well as the meaning of ‘friendship’ (Pickard 2012, 2009) would be components to be explored, both theologically and for actual practice.
Another strand which is interlinked with leadership practice and theological understandings but which was not able to be developed further in the project was the intentional ‘stepping back’ processes inherent in training others in ministry and the theological undergirding and leadership models that pertain to it. It would be important to address these issues in formational supervisory training for ministry and in professional development for clergy and lay people who are involved in the oversight of others.

**Dialogue with and contribution to leadership theory**

It is necessary for the church to articulate the theological bases which underlie its leadership practice to foster dialogue with and contribute to secular leadership theory and practice. One of the key elements for those processes is attending to fluidity of language. This is particularly so where there has been appropriation by secular leadership contexts of theological language without reference to its original meaning or context. Christian contexts likewise have uncritically appropriated secular leadership language and models, generating a blending of terminology with blurring and potential confusion resulting. Clarification of terms and meaning is necessary if dialogue is to take place between secular leadership theory and theological understandings. Equally important is the need to differentiate the purposes underlying secular leadership models with their focus on organisational marketing productivity and financial profit rather than on the values of spiritual growth and health or wellbeing for the common good.

**Engaging with and generating networks beyond the Diocese of Melbourne**

Being involved on the faculty of Trinity College Theological School has already offered avenues for conversation with those in leadership with the Diocese and beyond. As the
Provincial theological education provider, Trinity also offers opportunity for ongoing networking and provision of professional development specifically focused on the interface of theology and leadership practice through occasions such as clergy conferences for the Province, targeted teaching occasions and Summer Schools. This will also offer an interdisciplinary approach theologically as others on the newly established faculty can contribute perspectives toward the intentional reflective process. This will be the starting point from which issues can be extended to other dioceses and from which networks in fields beyond the church can also be engaged.

**Engaging difference for the future life and leadership of the church**

Respectfully engaging matters of difference, especially theologically, was seen as a critical issue for the health and ongoing creative life of the church, as well as for discerning appropriate leadership for the future. Working toward a ‘theology of ministry’ that frames decision making and leadership at all levels in diocesan life would be one way of attending to areas of expressed tension, fear and the power issues involved in facing underlying differences in theological perspective and language forms. To undertake this work, it would be necessary to enter into it with openness, vulnerability and preparedness for reciprocity, for giving and receiving. This is a potential place of creative tension – of rediscovering a unity that does not need to be uniformity. One place where such work would best begin is in small group processes where trust can be established and where positive impacts can then opened to wider spheres in the Diocese.

**Transferable learning and building an inclusive leadership base**

There is also a place for targeted professional development in relation to transferable learning where experience and expertise from other contexts can be brought to church contexts, with
appropriate reflective critique and intentional theological grounding. Inherent in the educational process would be drawing out the teaching already received in the community of faith and the interaction between the Christian story, including trinitarian perspectives, and leadership practice. It would be important that such professional development be offered from a base recognized by the Diocese though responsibility for it may be delegated to wider agencies. It would also be important that a breadth of theological positions be available so that issues of difference, as mentioned above, could be addressed in a safe environment for appropriate discussion.

Such a context could form a framework from which those in positional authority offered invitational ‘hospitality’ for people’s further involvement in the life of the church and where confidence is built for the inclusive contribution of generations and genders for leadership in the church – an important issue for the church’s future.

**Mutual responsibility and shared accountability**

Various forms of consultative process are already in use in the Diocese, more particularly in parish strategic planning processes, to engage the balance between ‘top down and bottom up’ decision making. What has often been the missing element in these processes is the theological foundation or ‘theology of ministry’ which needs to provide the essential framing for planning, not simply as acceptable espoused statements but foundations which are true for actual practice. One of the elements noted in an extended Community of Practice approach (Bate 2004) was the use of narrative and engaging story to address issues and review practice for enabling change and potential new structures. This is a process that could be fruitfully developed for a variety of diocesan contexts and which also offers ways in which people’s expertise can be recognized through leadership distribution. One option might be to use such
a process prior to the initial consultative process for or in review of a ‘Mission Action Plan’ so that issues that needed attention could be noted or addressed, freeing the planning process from what may be significant but not central issues. The narrative process could also be utilized following the formation of the Plan where readjustments are needed for varying leadership responsibilities so that these can be appropriately shared, fostering mutual collective responsibility and accountability.

**Areas for further exploration:**

There are a number of areas requiring further attention or which are indicators for further research.

Two matters of diocesan life were highlighted by the project as requiring further attention. The first was seeking ways to appropriately bring theological understandings to diocesan business, legislative and political agendas and the second, addressing the subtler aspects of leadership and use of power - of how power is exerted and exercised in the political life of the church and how influence is brought to bear on a range of situations. Both of these matters are complex, requiring particular expertise in a range of areas.

The project only allowed for initial exploration of the connections between trinitarian relationality and relations within the community of faith, which highlighted that relationship within the inner life of God was understood as connected with human relationship. Participants in the project noted some characteristics of these connections which demonstrated views of trinitarian understanding not focused solely on the inner life of God. The impact of such views was not preoccupation with the internal life of the church but rather a desire to live authentically together as a way of being Christ in the world. This certainly
warrants exploration through further research, especially in light of literature about how social trinitarian perspectives have been foundational for congregational life (Holmes 2006).

One of the gaps noted in a number of more recently developed models for leadership, from Christian perspective especially though by no means exclusively, was the lack of recorded evaluation of the impacts of the leadership structures or processes introduced and their effects, as well as the learning from their experiences. Another missing aspect is how conflict is addressed. One such example is the leadership model described by Gibbs and Bolger (2005) in the emerging church context where there is fluidity of responsibility according to expertise and decision making through consensus building.

**The impact of the project for my ministry:**

My learning from this process has been the heightening of my own commitment to grounding formation and education of others for ministry in sustained, intentional reflective practice that is theologically based. At a recent group process in a seminar for those engaged in ministry in which I took part, another participant raised a question about our ‘core business’. I found myself responding quite passionately that any secular group could speak about their core business but what is more important is to say how our understanding of God informs what we do and how we go about it. It made me acutely aware of how close this issue was to my research and how much more work there yet is to be done to enable and encourage people so that their theology becomes the frame from which thinking begins about ministry and the actions of leadership for it.

I found that enabling people to voice their understandings of God and to begin or further develop connections with leadership practice in various spheres of their life within and
beyond the church to be a privilege and powerful in what it revealed, of its vulnerabilities, frustrations and profound places of learning. I heard the search and sometimes struggle to find appropriate language to speak of the mystery of the trinitarian God, yet together appreciating its place in Anglican tradition.

The search and struggle to voice what was deeply understood of God yet also enacted in relation to others through leadership became the essence of the dance – to allow the nature of God to inhabit our steps, through God’s movement and energies, so that we might engage with one another in our world for the common good.


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Nichols, A 1991, *David Penman - bridge-builder, peacemaker, fighter for justice*, Albatross Books, Sutherland, N.S.W.


Robertson, D 2007, *Collaborative ministry*, Bible Reading Fellowship, Oxford.


Sendjaya, S & Sarros, J 2002, ‘Servant Leadership: it’s origin, development and application in organizations’, *Journal of Leadership and Organizational studies*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp57-64.


Thunberg, L 1995, Microcosm and mediator – the theological anthropology of Maximus the Confessor, Open Court, Illinois.


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The research project is entitled **Engaging the Dance – exploring leadership and understanding God as triune.**

The overall aim of the project is to explore what informs the leadership practice of lay and ordained Anglicans in Melbourne, especially the place of their understanding of God as triune. The themes which emerge will be considered in relation to social Trinitarian understanding and other church models. A theoretical framework will be proposed for future ministry leadership practice.

I am now seeking 10-12 (maximum 15) participants, lay and ordained, who are in significant leadership positions in the Diocese, as indicated in the Yearbook of the Diocese of Melbourne 2006.

I will be interviewing participants in two semi-structured, in-depth interviews, each of up to one hour duration. Participants will also be invited to provide material and other artifacts which they perceive demonstrate their understanding of their leadership practice and what informs such practice. At the time of transcription, names will be removed to ensure anonymity and maintain confidentiality.

I write to invite you to be a participant in this research project.

**If you are interested in receiving a Participant's Information and Consent Form, please fill out the form below and return your response in the stamped addressed envelope attached.**

Thank you for being prepared to consider this invitation.

Yours sincerely,

The Reverend Cecilia Francis
Researcher
I am interested in becoming a participant in the research project entitled:

Engaging the Dance – exploring leadership and understanding God as triune.

I would like to receive the Participant’s Information and Consent Form.

My contact details are as follows:

Name (in block letters): .................................................................

Address: ......................................................................................

.................................................................................................

.................................................................................................

Postcode: ........

Telephone: ....................................................................................

Signature: .................................................................Date: __/__/____
PARTICIPANT’S INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project: Engaging the Dance - exploring leadership and understanding God as triune.

I am writing to follow up your indication of being prepared to consider being involved in the above research project.

This Research Project will explore what informs the leadership practice of Anglicans in Melbourne, especially the place of understanding God as triune.

One of the theological resources developed over many centuries of Christian tradition is an understanding of God as triune. Trinitarian theology is central to Anglican liturgical practice and one strand elaborated in recent years is a social understanding of the Trinity.

In recent times, leadership and organizational life have become matters attracting wide concern, both within and outside the Church, with proactive response, rather than reactivity, becoming the focus of conceptual development and commentary.

Parallel with these is debate within the church on leadership, how it is expressed and who is suitable to exercise such leadership. As an Anglican priest exercising leadership in various capacities, I am concerned that the church has tended to rely on secular leadership theory rather than drawing on theological resources to inform its leadership practice.

This project takes up two significant aspects – that the church articulates theological perspectives that underlie its leadership practice and that the church might engage in dialogue with and contribute to leadership theory.

It is intended that the outcomes of the project will contribute to the education of those who carry significant leadership in the life of the Church, through presentations to and discussion with Anglican leadership at Diocesan and Regional levels and with Anglican Theological Colleges in the Diocese with a view to the material contributing to the preparation of students preparing for ministry leadership in Anglican contexts especially. The researcher will also endeavour to engage with and generate networks amongst those who are working with leadership issues in other Dioceses in the Province of Victoria, in other Australian Dioceses such as Newcastle and Riverina, and where possible with the wider church and in dialogue with those in secular leadership contexts.
The research will be conducted as follows:

- Each participant will be interviewed on two occasions by me. Each interview will be of up to one hour duration and will take place at a mutually agreed time and location;
- The interview will be audio-taped and then transcribed by a professional transcriber employed by me;
- Participants will be invited, at the first interview, to provide written material or other artifacts which they perceive demonstrate their understanding of their leadership practice and what informs such practice. This material will be collected and returned by me and a receipt provided;
- The total time needed from each participant will be no more than 2-4 hours;

No risks are anticipated beyond the experiences of everyday life.

The information participants provide will be dealt with in the following ways:

- It will be analysed for identification of themes and categories, including repeated concepts and language forms. Emergent themes will be considered in relation to social Trinitarian understanding and other church models. A theoretical framework will be proposed for future ministry leadership practice;
- Participants confidentiality will be protected, with all tapes and transcripts de-identified using a code which will only be known to me;
- Audio-tapes and transcripts will be kept separately in locked cabinets;
- The transcriber will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement;
- If public records are used, e.g. minutes of meetings, complete anonymity of participants cannot be guaranteed, though de-identification procedures will be used;
- Confidentiality is subject to legal limitation such as freedom of information and the requirement for mandatory reporting of certain offences by the researcher.
- At the conclusion of the project all data will be provided to the MCD in electronic format to be retained by the MCD for five years and then destroyed;
- Participants will be informed when the thesis is available.

You have a right to withdraw from participation in this project at any time.

You can also insist that information arising from your participation is not used in the research project, provided you exercise this right within three weeks of completing your participation in the project.

Any questions regarding this project may be directed to the MCD Administration,
(03) 9853 3177

If you have any complaints or queries that the researcher has not been able to answer to your satisfaction, you may contact the Liaison Officer, MCD Human Research and Ethics Committee:
phone (03) 9853 3177, email hrec@mcd.edu.au.

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Appendix 3

Statement of Agreement to Participate:

I…………………………………………………………………………………..(the participant)
have read and understood the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in the research project, realizing that I may withdraw at any time.

I agree that any information provided by me or with my permission during the research project may be included in the thesis, presented at conferences and published in journals on the condition that neither my name nor any other identifying information is used.

Name of Participant (in block letters):…………………………………………………………………………………..

Signature:………………………………………………………………………..Date: __/__/____

Researcher’s name (in block letters):…………………………………………………………………………………..

Signature:………………………………………………………………………..Date: __/__/____