

## **Building community in an individualized world. Three marker posts**

In one of his published sermons the theologian Stefan Paas mentions the interesting change he has observed in the way people introduce themselves to strangers. His father only mentioned his family name: 'Paas'. That was enough in the communities in which he lived. His family name showed his roots and his position within the community. Stefan Paas himself used both his first name and his family name. When he moved to Amsterdam however, he discovered that most people – new neighbours etc. – only used their first name to introduce themselves. He was surprised by that and reflected on it. He concluded that this change in our presentation is an example of the move we have made: from 'we' to 'I'.<sup>1</sup> I do not need to explain this move any further, as everybody can give other illustrations of this (mind) shift in our society. Way less than before, we define our being from the perspective of one or more 'we's'.

Churches have to deal with this change. Community (building) is different from the past. It is unfruitful to deny this. It would isolate the church from dominant patterns in our society. At the other hand, churches cannot go with the flow of individualization and individualism. How can we find a fruitful balance? It is this search that is being discussed in this article. I start out with giving two examples that are illustrative of this mentality shift. One can criticize the events in both examples, but one cannot deny them. Both reflect our changed mental landscape. Next, I go to the perception of the church. Is it perceived as a hospital or a restaurant? Subsequently, the third and last part of the article consist of a proposal to set three marker posts, which might help us to set the boundaries within which we can build Christian community (communities) in our time and age.

### **1. From 'we' to 'I'. Two illustrations**

The Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PKN) is intensively looking for new ways of being church. More than 100 so called 'pioniersplekken' (literally, 'pioneer spots') have been started in the last 10 years.<sup>2</sup> There is an enormous variety in the ways all these new initiatives are set up or function, but they all do have the same basic philosophy: they want to get in touch with people who don't have a relation with the 'ordinary' church. This search for renewal also works as a boomerang that returns to the denomination as a whole. Serious questions concerning the organization of the church (participation, membership, office, sacraments etc.) have to be tackled. The PKN is taking the experiences in the pioneer projects serious. This results in proposals to give room within the denomination for new ways of being church and other ways to form community. It resulted in the publication of the report 'A Mosaic of Church Spots'.<sup>3</sup> The name of the report is meant to become a broadly accepted way to think and talk about the church. One of the ways to stimulate this, was the request to compose songs in which the concept of 'mosaic' had to be worked out. Two new songs were made and introduced. One of the songs, composed by a young woman, is based on Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Paul prays "that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people,

to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3: 17-19, NIV). The prayer of Paul concentrates at the body of Christ, the community of believers. Only together believers can grasp the love of Christ, a love that in the end cannot be grasped fully. In the composed song Paul’s words ‘wide, long, high and deep’ have been taken over as a refrain. However, there is one crucial difference. One of the verses starts with ‘I’: ‘I know how wide and long and high and deep the love of Christ is.’ While Paul is stressing the need to form a community to understand the love of Christ – a love that is beyond our understanding – the song talks about the individual who fully knows this love. This shows how deep individualism has gone into us. Even a composer who is asked to write a song about the (en)rich(ing) variety within the church, produces a song that is steeped in individualism. And she was totally unaware of it too.

A second illustration. The Remonstrant Church, a very small liberal Dutch denomination, started a remarkable campaign in 2014. That campaign centered around the slogan ‘Faith starts with you’. On billboards on railway stations and elsewhere several one-liners like ‘My god makes me think for myself’ and ‘My god believes in me’ were presented. The different one-liners were followed by ‘Faith starts with you’. The focus was fully on the individual. On the website of the Remonstrant Church, they state that believing is of course not primarily an individual issue.<sup>4</sup> In their public campaign however, they did bring faith as an individual thing. Their site has a button that people can click to ‘Become a Friend’. There is no button ‘Become a Member’...’ This illustrates how our society has changed; membership does not come natural anymore. Of course, the Remonstrant Church is willing to create healthy and lasting communities of believers, but the church is not connecting this desire with membership. The campaign was successful, the decrease in participation and membership that had been going on for years, came to an end (for the time being?).

## **2. Church as hospital and as restaurant**

In his book *Vreemdelingen en Priesters*, that came out about a year after the start of this campaign of the RC, the Dutch missiologist Stefan Paas writes in a footnote quite negatively about this campaign.<sup>5</sup> The book recently got translated in English, (*Pilgrims and Priests*), but this footnote was not included in the English edition.<sup>6</sup> Paas writes that the whole campaign seems to be an attempt to promote the own god as the best one (‘my God is also doing same sex marriages’).<sup>7</sup> Paas also criticizes the strong orientation on the individual. As a pioneer in Amsterdam he is very well aware of individualism and individualistic thinking and acting. He also knows that we have to start where people are, but the approach of the Remonstrant Church is not his approach. “Faith is certainly personal, but it is not individual. The idea that everyone should have his or her own, unique, high-quality experience of God is a product of a modern consumer-society rather than an authentic Christian thought.”<sup>8</sup> Personal experiences of God are scarce, in the field of religion most of us are not a virtuoso. We need others to mediate God. That

makes religious communication and exchange indispensable. “Relationality is essential for a Christian understanding of who God is”, Paas writes. This understanding finds its base in the trinitarian God: “Surely, community begins with and flows from God: Father, Son and Spirit are mutually related through eternal love. The three persons of the Trinity never exist or act in isolation; they always exist and act in mutual dependency.”<sup>9</sup> Not participating in a community of believers in general leads to a loss of religious experiences. “The more we are on our own, the more we will be metaphysically lonely.”<sup>10</sup>

Churches will keep on looking for community. However, this community does not need to be lasting or permanent and it is not limited to face to face communication. Digital community and communication are still relatively new phenomena. The impact of this revolution is yet hard to see. We live in a very dynamic era in which life changes from day to day. However, we keep on looking and longing for community and fellowship, but the way we do it is different from the past. A lasting connection with groups and institutions is no longer in our genes, so to say. How do churches react on this? Are they successful in finding new ways of building vital and fruitful community?

Stefan Paas is using the images of the hospital and the restaurant to illustrate the shift in the perception of the church. In former days for many people the church was as a hospital: it had to be there, in case of emergency. Normally one would not go there, only for rites of passage churches were necessary. Religion was what the sociologist Grace Davie calls *vicarious religion*.<sup>11</sup> A small group of faithful people ran the church so that other could use its facilities if needed. This mind-set was – and is? – quite widespread in the traditional churches, much more than in the free churches. But nowadays people don’t live within this mental framework anymore, especially the younger generation doesn’t. Paas uses another image to express this new attitude: the church as a restaurant. Just as we can choose between all kinds of restaurants, so we can choose between churches and other – secular and religious – providers of well-being, happiness and meaning. Going to church on Sunday does not mean that you will go a second time. If the food is okay, the waiters are friendly and the atmosphere is pleasant, you might come again, but there is no obligation. Restaurants don’t work with membership and long-lasting agreements. It is up to the client whether he will come or not. The metaphor of the restaurant has even implications that go further: becoming a cook or a waiter in a favourite restaurant is not an option one would normally think of. Going to church can be a positive experience that works out well in one’s life, but it does not mean that a lasting relation and commitment will come into being.

Both metaphors or images can be criticised from the understanding of the church as a community of disciples of Jesus Christ. For instance, while interfering with the table next to you is inappropriate in a restaurant, in the church we are supposed to step across all kinds of ‘natural’ borders. So, the perception of the church as a restaurant is untenable from its very being. The metaphor of the hospital is more appropriate<sup>12</sup>, but also not adequate to express the essence of the church. The question comes up whether we can find matching images. How can we create

contextual, lasting and fruitful faith communities, given our preference for individual freedom and the changing ways in which we communicate and relate?<sup>13</sup>

### **3. Three markers posts for the ecclesiastical search**

Churches have to find their way, manoeuvring between the cliffs of freedom and commitment. The theology of a church, its history and tradition and its social profile play a role here, and possibly other factors as well. In this chapter I do not want to prescribe or dictate a specific position (nobody would listen to that!). What is important here, is asking good questions. I think one of those questions could be this: if it is true that the Gospel is inviting us to radical and binding discipleship in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, how can churches reflect this invitation in the way they function? Shorter: how can churches and their members embody the way of life that Jesus is living and advocating?

The enormous challenge for churches is to start there were people are – how they think and live – without uncritically staying there by accepting the status quo. How can churches invite people to a way of life that has no natural counterpart in our society? This question is important and asks for a thorough reflection. I want to contribute to this discussion by proposing three theses. They can be seen as marker posts by which a building site is marked. The posts are not the building itself; they only mark the boundaries within which building will take place. They are not meant to standardise churches, but to provide basic principles that structure and ‘culture’ the faith community. Every metaphor has its limitations, also the one I use here. The three marker posts do not necessarily point in the same direction. There can be tension and friction. So, manoeuvring within the boundaries of the three asks for discussion and exchange.

*a. We do not choose each other.* Some years ago, the Dutch theologian Harmen van Wijnen did research among adolescents, who were meeting each other in small groups, either formed spontaneously or initiated by local churches. What he discovered was the power of spontaneous group formation. There is an invisible power that brings adolescents together. He presented this discovery as an important lesson for churches: do not primarily think in terms of organising and structuring meetings and other events, but try to see and value what already is happening ‘under the (institutional) radar’.<sup>14</sup> Churches have to stimulate and facilitate this kind of natural group formation. Van Wijnen’s plea is close to Pete Ward’s *Liquid Church*.<sup>15</sup> His plea is important and fruitful, but it also brings us in a serious ecclesial dilemma: What is the relation between spontaneous community building and social inclusion within the local church as the body of Christ? We have to admit that the two are in no way natural allies.

An important adage in the church is that we do not pick out each other. We are chosen. The first disciples were chosen by Jesus. It was a very diverse group and one can doubt whether Jesus honoured Jim Collins’ third principle of the five principles that move organisations from ‘Good to great’: ‘getting the right people on the bus’.<sup>16</sup> ‘First who, then what’ is a crucial element in Collins’ philosophy. When we read the Gospels, we do not get the impression that Jesus’ disciples were an excellent and well-balanced group of highly dedicated and motivated men.

From the very beginning the Christian movement has worked with limited, sinful people, who were also not each other's natural friends or soulmates. That is why we have to keep on honouring the biblical salutation 'brothers (and sisters)'. In Dutch it sounds either quite old-fashioned ('broeders en zusters') or – in a modernized version – a little forced ('broers en zussen'). Despite this uneasiness, we have to stick to our brother- and sisterhood: in the church as the body of Christ we are brothers and sisters, who – like biological brothers and sisters – do not choose their own siblings.

As human beings we are built for real community. This is however not only attractive. It also is confronting. True community is always ambivalent. We go for it and we run away from it. It gives us joy and pain. The church has to be 'a training ground' for brothers and sisters who want to grow in their common desire to follow Jesus Christ together. In our time of individual freedom and 'pick and choose' mentality, that truly is a countercultural phenomenon.

There are good reasons to be realistic about this. Most local churches are not representing a plurality of social groups. The Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PKN) for instance is in touch with only 2 of the 8 mentality groups, as distinguished by Motivaction, a Dutch research institute.<sup>17</sup> Within the PKN, *traditionals* and *post-materialists* are well represented<sup>18</sup>, while *post-modern hedonists*, *social climbers* and *convenience-oriented people* are strongly underrepresented. Inclusion and (unconscious) exclusion go hand in hand!

*b. Bonhoeffer's distinction between pneumatic and psychic community.* The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1944) has made a distinction that is helpful to reflect on the singularity of Christian community. Bonhoeffer writes that in the end true community in the church is only rooted in Jesus Christ. It is not rooted in our dreams or ideals. "Those who want more than what Christ has established between us, do not want Christian community. They are looking for some extraordinary experiences of community that were denied them elsewhere. Such people are bringing confused and tainted desires into the Christian community. Precisely at this point Christian community is most often threatened from the very outset by the greatest danger, the danger of internal poisoning, the danger of confusing Christian community with some wishful image of pious community, the danger of blending the devout heart's natural desire for community with the spiritual reality of Christian community. It is essential for Christian community that two things become clear right from the beginning. First, Christian community is not an ideal, but a divine reality; second, Christian community is a spiritual [in German: pneumatische] and not a psychic [in German: psychische] reality."<sup>19</sup> Bonhoeffer wishes that idealistic Christian groups soon will get disappointed: "The sooner this moment of disillusionment comes over the individual and the community, the better for both."<sup>20</sup> Ideals do not create healthy Christian community. "Christian community is not an ideal we have to realize, but rather a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate. The more clearly we learn to recognize that the ground and strength and promise of all our community is in Jesus Christ alone, the more calmly we will learn to think about our community and pray and hope for it. Because Christian community is founded solely on Jesus Christ, it is a spiritual and not a

psychic reality. In this respect it differs absolutely from all other communities. The Scriptures call pneumatic or 'spiritual' [in German: *geistlich*] what is created only by the Holy Spirit, who puts Jesus Christ into our hearts as lord and savior. The scriptures call psychic or emotional [in German: *seelisch*] what comes from the natural urges, strengths, and abilities of the human soul. The basis of all pneumatic, or spiritual, reality is the clear, manifest Word of God in Jesus Christ. At the foundation of all psychic, or emotional, reality are the dark, impenetrable urges and desires of the human soul. The basis of spiritual community is truth; the basis of emotional community is desire."<sup>21</sup>

It is not easy to translate Bonhoeffer's distinction into an instrument for congregational development. However, he helps us by making a connection between the 'pneumatic community' and intercession. "A Christian community either lives by the intercessory prayers of its members for one another, or the community will be destroyed. I can no longer condemn or hate other Christians for whom I pray, no matter how much trouble they cause me. In intercessory prayer the face that may have been strange and intolerable to me is transformed into the face of one for whom Christ died, the face of a pardoned sinner. (...) Intercessory prayer is the purifying bath into which the individual and the community must enter every day."<sup>22</sup>

According to Bonhoeffer, intercession is mutual community within the Christian community via 'the detour' of Jesus Christ. One can say that in this way Bonhoeffer is looking for 'triangles' in the church: the relation with my brother or sister goes primarily, or probably even exclusively, via Jesus Christ. This way of thinking is not currently dominating the ecclesial practice. Yes, there are warm personal relations in the church, and many kinds of manifestations of care and love, but they are not always 'pneumatic'. Quite often, the coffee after the church service is more a tie that binds than intercession is. The yearly flea market in the church is usually more popular than Bible study groups and prayer groups. In our days many churches are looking for ways to stimulate a 'pneumatic' climate. James Mallon's bestseller *Divine Renovation*, focused on Catholic parishes, is a good example of this endeavour, but it is also an illustration of how strong the 'secular' culture can be within parishes and congregations.<sup>23</sup> So, there are good reasons for serious reflection on Bonhoeffer's distinction. Not every church community is by definition Christian community!

Can Bonhoeffer really help us at this point? How real is his pneumatic community? His book *Life together* has its roots in Finkenwalde, the monastic community of theology students in which Bonhoeffer was one of the professors. So, the setting of his plea is not the ordinary congregation. Does this mean that his distinction is too ambitious and only achievable for the few religious virtuosi? Is his plea against an idealistic church itself, *nolens volens*, an expression of idealism? There are good reasons to ask these questions, but in my eyes his distinction is nevertheless helpful for our thinking about Christian community. We are always at risk of becoming secularized in our thinking about community building in the church. We need Bonhoeffer's distinction in order to be able to search healthily for (new) forms of real Christian community. As long as community is 'pneumatic', forms are secondary. In the end Christian community is always – in whatever form or shape – community with Jesus Christ.

*c. Providing room, but not endlessly.* The Egyptian church father Pachomius (292-346 A.D.), a convert, decided to go and live as hermit in the Egyptian desert. All kinds of people came to him for advice and intercession. After some time, a group of young men asked him to introduce them in the monastic way of living. He invited them to come live with him and to discover this way of living. Pachomius assumed that by just setting the good example, these men would follow him and grow into monastic discipline. But that did not happen. They were not very cooperative. Pachomius himself had to do all the hard work and the young men were not eager to change their lives. They were like tourists in a pension. Pachomius thought that his example of his humbleness would convince them and make them real monks, but in the end, he had to conclude that it did not work this way. So, he started to set certain binding rules for living together as monks in the desert. That was the beginning of a tremendous growth of monastic life. When Pachomius died, Egypt had lots of monastic communities. In some of them more than hundred monks lived and worked together.<sup>24</sup>

The lessons Pachomius has learned, are of long ago, but in my eyes, they are still very relevant for today. Where everything is allowed, nothing happens. We have to look for room that both gives leeway and limits. Within my denomination – the PKN –, a high degree of freedom is appreciated. We are free to participate or not to participate. We are free to take our faith serious, letting it be the core of our life, or to see it as an option that does not ask for real commitment. It brings me back to a question earlier in this article: if it is true that the Gospel is inviting us to a radical and non-optional community in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, how can churches reflect this invitation in the way they function without being coercive? Pastors in Amsterdam told me that most people outside the church, but also within their congregations, are allergic to any pressure. Putting pressure on people does not work and is not fruitful. One of the pastors said that ‘freedom’ is the idol of Amsterdam. In other parts of the Netherland there will be other idols, but it is a fact that a non-committal way of life is widespread in our society. Faith is an option (Charles Taylor) and this mentality easily leads to a non-committal attitude towards religion and its institutions and communities. How can churches find their way in this field of tension? Coercion and patronage are counterproductive, but a lax approach is not working either. A young couple contacted a local congregation to see if they could feel at home there and become members. They asked the pastor: ‘what do you expect of us when we become members?’ The answer was ‘nothing, feel free!’ But the couple said: ‘if you don’t expect anything of us, why should we become members?’

Can Pachomius be our teacher here? His monastery became vital after having introduced specific rules. By doing so he reduced and widened the religious landscape. Rules and other expectations both limit room and create room. This mechanism or paradox is of all places and all times. What doesn't cost anything is usually not that interesting. It does not challenge us and does not make us move. This general statement of ‘fruitful boundaries’, is certainly applicable to the gospel of Jesus Christ. In our dedication to Him we discover that our living space is getting both smaller and wider.

It is important to acknowledge at this point that the local congregation is not a monastery. We have to keep that in mind when we think about the future of the local church. But having said that, an important question remains: Which inviting rules and expectations can be helpful to deepen and widen the life of a congregation and of their individual members? Can we develop an expectant climate in the church?<sup>25</sup>

In the beginning of 2019, the Dutch translation of the book *Divine Renovation* was published. I did already refer to the book above. It is written by James Mallon, a Canadian priest.<sup>26</sup> In the Netherlands it has been reprinted three times already. Mallon is one of the first Roman-Catholic theologians who has looked systematically at the evangelical-protestant world in order to discover what in that world could also be fruitful for Catholic parishes. He is inspired by insights and practices like the Alpha-course and by church leaders as Bill Hybels and Rick Warren. His book is one big plea for a more expectant climate in every parish. “Clear expectations are the heart of every healthy relationship”, he writes in his paragraph about ‘Meaningful Community’.<sup>27</sup> His parish has written a brochure, meant as an introduction for people who are considering to become a member. Under five headings the brochure gives clear expectations for prospective members: to worship, to grow, to serve, to connect and to give.<sup>28</sup> Mallon defends these lofty expectations with words of Michelangelo: “The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it.”<sup>29</sup> It is important to note here that Mallon accompanies his expectations by eight promises, of what parishioners can expect from the parish in return.<sup>30</sup> That way, expectations go in both directions and that keeps them well balanced and healthy. This combination of promises and expectations keeps parishes and parishioners in good shape and helps them to evaluate their own functioning: do we still do what we have promised to do? It is a challenge for every congregation and every parish to think through if they really have this kind of two-way expectations and promises. It would be of great value to every local church to discuss this fundamental issue.

### **Finally**

There is much more to reflect on. The search for healthy Christian community and communities is an ongoing process in turbulent times. Old patterns are obsolete, new patterns have not yet crystallized. That makes our time exciting and challenging. If Jesus’ promise is true – “surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Mathew 28: 20) – there is a solid and promising ‘pneumatic’ basis for continuing to work on christian community formation in our days.

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- <sup>1</sup> Stefan Paas & Siebrand Wierda, *Zinvol leven. Prediker*, Zoetermeer 2016<sup>5</sup>, p. 44 (sermons on the book of Ecclesiastes)
- <sup>2</sup> Protestant Church in The Netherlands, *Fingers Crossed. Developments, lessons learnt and challenges after eight years of pioneering*, Utrecht 2017, See <https://www.lerenpionieren.nl/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Fingers-Crossed-fresh-expressions-in-the-Netherlands.pdf> (October 2, 2019)
- <sup>3</sup> René de Reuver, Martijn Vellekoop, *Mozaïek van kerkplekken. Over verbinding tussen bestaande en nieuwe vormen van kerk-zijn*, Utrecht 2019 (published by the PKN) See <https://www.protestantsekerk.nl/thema/mozaiek-van-kerkplekken/> (October 26, 2019)
- <sup>4</sup> <https://www.remonstranten.nl/wat-geloven-wij/?gclid=CKmar9Xtl80CFfYy0wodNpwMUA> (August 28, 2019)
- <sup>5</sup> Stefan Paas, *Vreemdelingen en priesters. Christelijke missie in een postchristelijke omgeving*, Zoetermeer 2015, p. 78.
- <sup>6</sup> Stefan Paas, *Pilgrims and Priests. Christian Mission in a Post-Christian Culture*, London 2019
- <sup>7</sup> In the Dutch original: ‘mijn god trouwt ook homo’s’
- <sup>8</sup> Paas, *Pilgrims and Priests*, p. 271
- <sup>9</sup> *Pilgrims and Priests*, p. 286
- <sup>10</sup> *Pilgrims and Priests*, p. 275
- <sup>11</sup> Davie, Grace, ‘Vicarious Religion: A Methodological Challenge’, in: Nancy T. Ammerman (red.), *Everyday Religion. Observing Modern Religious Life*, London 2006, p. 21-35
- <sup>12</sup> Pope Francis uses the metaphor of the church as a (field) hospital after a battle. In Dutch: ‘Ik zie het heel duidelijk: wat de Kerk vandaag het meest nodig heeft, is het vermogen om wonden te helen en om de harten van de gelovigen aan te wakkeren, dit tesamen met nabijheid en medevoelen. Ik beschouw de Kerk een beetje als een veldhospitaal net na een slag.’ See <https://streventijdschrift.be/interview-met-paus-franciscus/> (October 9, 2019)
- <sup>13</sup> An overview of models and approaches is presented in Sake Stoppels, *Oefenruimte. Gemeente en parochie als gemeenschap van leerlingen*, Zoetermeer 2013, in particular chapter 2. See also the three models Henk de Roest distinguishes in his book *En de wind steekt op! Kleine ecclesiologie van de hoop*, Zoetermeer 2005, in particular the chapters 1 and 7.
- <sup>14</sup> Harmen van Wijnen, *Faith in Small Groups of Adolescents. Being together as a basic given*, Delft 2016
- <sup>15</sup> Pete Ward, *Liquid Church*, Peabody (Ma) 2002. Dutch edition: *Kerk als water. Pleidooi voor een vloeibare manier van kerk-zijn*, Kampen 2003. See also Pete Ward, *Liquid Ecclesiology. The Gospel and the Culture*, Leiden/Boston 2017
- <sup>16</sup> Jim Collins, *Good to Great and the Social Sector*, 2005, p. 13
- <sup>17</sup> See <https://www.motivaction.nl/en/mentality/the-mentality-groups/> (October 16, 2019)
- <sup>18</sup> Traditionals are the ‘hard core’ of the PKN churchgoers and volunteers, while their ministers and other professionals are mainly post-materialists (research 2004). These different mentalities guarantee some tension!
- <sup>19</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life together and Prayer Book of the Bible*, Minneapolis 2005, p. 34
- <sup>20</sup> *Life together and Prayer Book of the Bible*, p. 35
- <sup>21</sup> *Life together and Prayer Book of the Bible*, p. 38,39
- <sup>22</sup> *Life together and Prayer Book of the Bible*, p. 90
- <sup>23</sup> Fr. James Mallon, *Divine Renovation. Bringing your parish from maintenance to mission*, New London 2014. When Mallons needs more room for his growing Alpha-course, he claims the parish hall on Monday-nights. However, this hall has been the meeting place of the parish based card club ‘for ages’, so it causes a very serious uproar. “We don’t need to know about Jesus. What we need is cards”, p. 9
- <sup>24</sup> Christopher Jamison, *Levenslessen van een abt. De 7 stappen naar een leven volgens Benedictus*, Tielt z.j., p. 153, 154. Translated from Christopher Jamison, *Finding Sanctuary. Monastic Steps for Everyday Life*, London 2007
- <sup>25</sup> More about this in Sake Stoppels, *Oefenruimte. Gemeente en parochie als gemeenschap van leerlingen*, Zoetermeer 2013, chapter 5
- <sup>26</sup> Fr. James Mallon, *Als God renoveert. De parochie van onderhoud naar bloei*, Baarn/Antwerpen 2019. Translation of Fr. James Mallon, *Divine Renovation. Bringing Your Parish from Maintenance to Mission*, New London 2014
- <sup>27</sup> *Divine Renovation*, p. 157
- <sup>28</sup> *Divine Renovation*, p. 157-159. The expectations are worked out here.
- <sup>29</sup> *Divine Renovation*, p. 159
- <sup>30</sup> *Divine Renovation*, p. 157