Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice

How to understand our neighborhood

MATUL 500

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The Church and the City

❖ There are three different responses that any church can make to its city:

   ❖ The church **in** the city and **in** the community.

   ❖ The church **to** the city.

   ❖ The church **with** the city or **with** the community.

The church **in** the city

- ❖ Does not feel any particular attachment to that city; it is simply physically present.

- ❖ Struggles to keep its programs going but does not have a stake in that community.

- ❖ Does not identify with that community nor does it have any particular relationship to the people of that community.

The church **to** the city

❖ Provides services for the community

❖ Does good work and establishes programs for people in the community

❖ Perceives itself to be the savior of the community and to know what is best for the community.

The church **with** the community

❖ Enters into the life of that community and becomes partners with the community in addressing the community's needs.

❖ Helps form the type of community where there is justice for all.

❖ Perceives itself as a part of the community.

Social Analysis of our Community

❖ Jeremiah 29:7

> "Seek the peace of the city where I have called you; and pray unto the Lord for it: for in its peace you shall have peace."

What type of church de we want to be?

- ❖ How do we perceive ourselves?
- ❖ Do we know and understand our city?
- ❖ Do we know our community?
- ❖ Do we understand the anxieties and dreams of our neighbors?
- ❖ Do we pray for them?

Jeremiah 29:1-14

Become a part of the city

-- Build houses

-- Plant gardens

-- Get married

-- Have sons and daughters

Jeremiah 29:1-14

2 Understand the city

   -- The context

   -- Research to understand

   -- The complexity of the city

Jeremiah 29:1-14

3 Work for the city

    -- Shalom

    -- Seek the peace of the city

  -- The well-being, the prosperity of the city

Jeremiah 29:1-14

4 Pray for the city

-- A prayer like that of Abraham (Gen.18:2-33)

-- A prayer like that of the psalmist (Ps. 122:6-9)

Social Analysis of our Community

❖ Praying to the Lord for the city is understanding and knowing what is happening in her.

❖ This includes:

   ❖ Demographic Information

   ❖ Social Indicators

   ❖ Political and Economic Data

   ❖ Personal information

CHART B
DEVELOPMENT MODELS AND IMPLICATIONS

| Model:	Economic (1960s)	Social (1970s)	Political (1980s)
Economics:	Capitalization	Distribution	Transformation
Politics:	Stability	Aid	Mobilization
Culture:	Growth	Equity	Imagination
Transportation:	More Cars and Highways	More Purchasing Power	Mass Transit Systems
Health:	More Technology	Better Distribution of Services	Alternative Health Systems
Housing:	More Construction	Rent Control	Community Planning
Missions:	Vocations from the Middle Class	Work with the Poor	New Forms of Lay Ministry
U.S. Economic Crisis:	More Capital Formation and Consumer Austerity	Increased Regulation, Expansion of Social Welfare State.	Alternative Economic Structures

Social Analysis: A Tool for Pastoral Action

The pastoral circle has 4 important moments:

Praxis
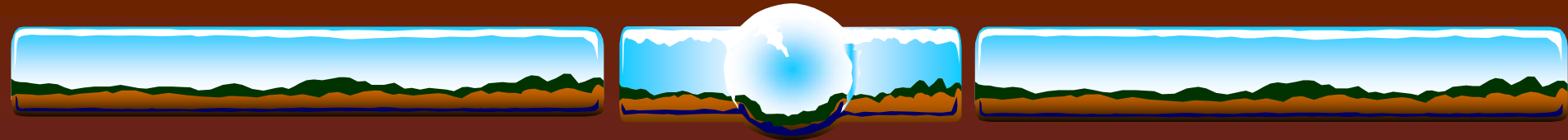
1. Experience

Social Analysis:
First Moment for Pastoral Action

1. <u>Experience</u>

-- The lived experiences of the people are the foundation for any pastoral response

-- What do the people feel?

-- What experiences are they going through?

-- How are they responding?
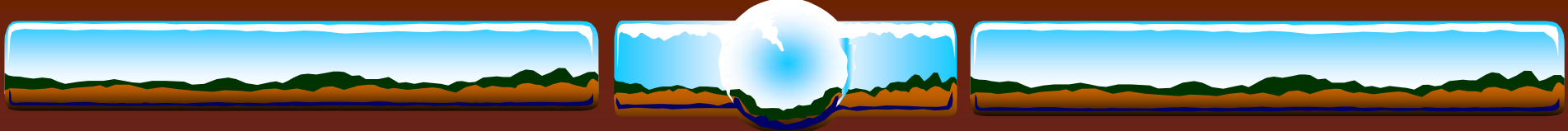
First Moment: Experiences

The experiences of the people are the ones that form the basis for personal data.

- ❖ These experiences have to be understood in the richness of all their inter-relationships.

- ❖ This is the task of social analysis

Social Analysis: A Tool for Pastoral Action

Second Moment of the pastoral circle:
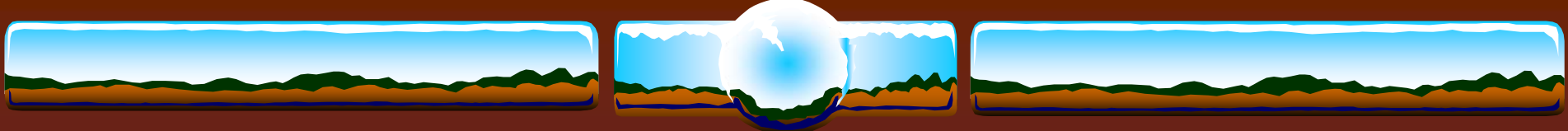
2. Social Analysis

Praxis

1. **Experience**

Moment 2: Social Analysis

2. Social analysis does the following:

-- Examines the causes, probes consequences, delineates linkages, and identifies actors

-- Helps you understand what is happening by looking at the big picture and making connections between the various experiences
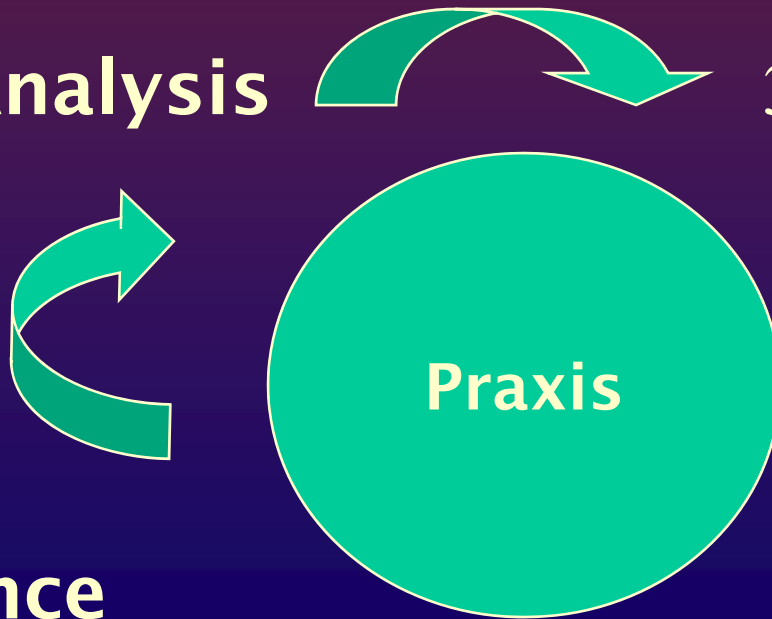
Social Analysis: A Tool for Pastoral Action

The third Moment of the pastoral circle:

2. **Social Analysis**

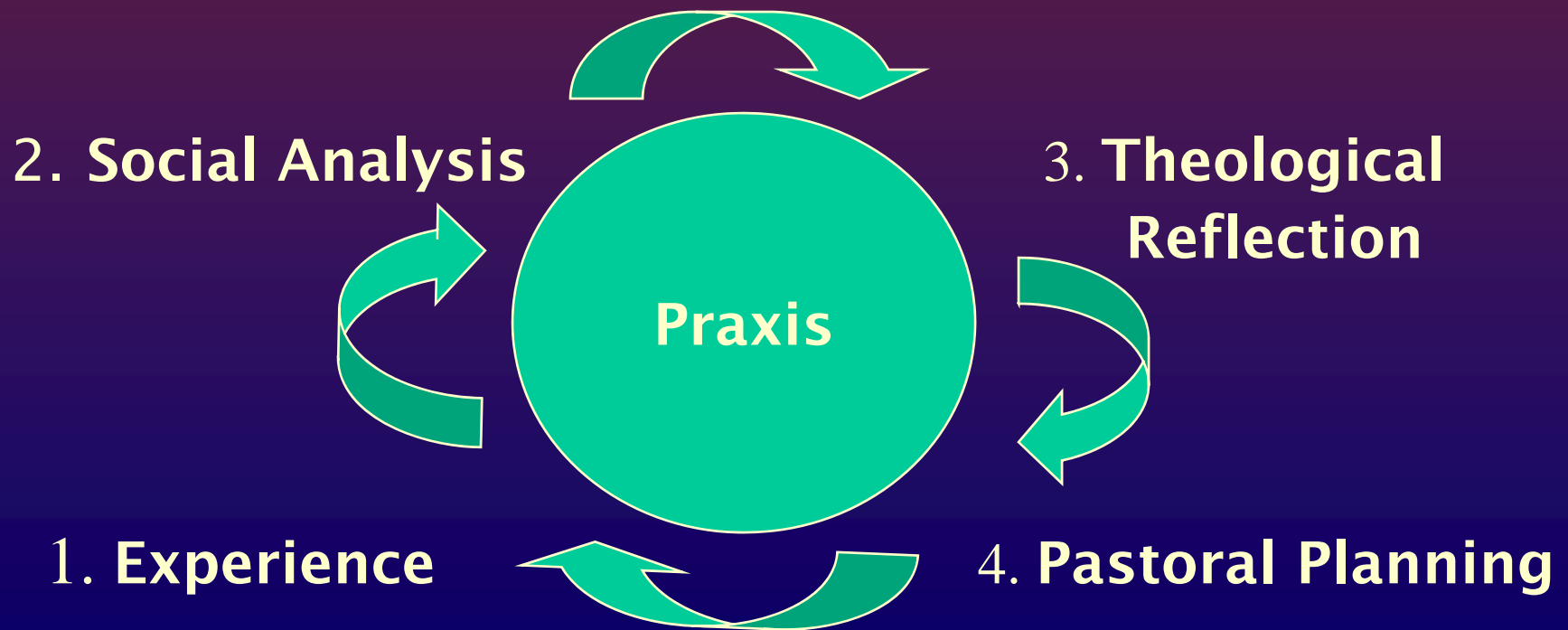3. **Theological Reflection**

Praxis

1. **Experience**

Moment 3: Theological Reflection

❖ The third moment is an effort to understand in a deeper way the experiences analyzed in light of a living faith, the Scriptures, the teachings of the church, and the resources of tradition.

❖ The word of God infuses questions into new situations, suggests new insights, and opens new responses.

Social Analysis: A Tool for Pastoral Action

The pastoral circle has 4 important moments:

2. **Social Analysis**

3. **Theological Reflection**

Praxis

1. **Experience**

4. **Pastoral Planning**

Moment 4: Pastoral Planning

Pastoral Planning is
the decisive element for any action:

-- Now that these experiences have been analyzed and there has been a theological reflection on them,

❖ How should we respond?

❖ How should that response be designed in order to be most effective?

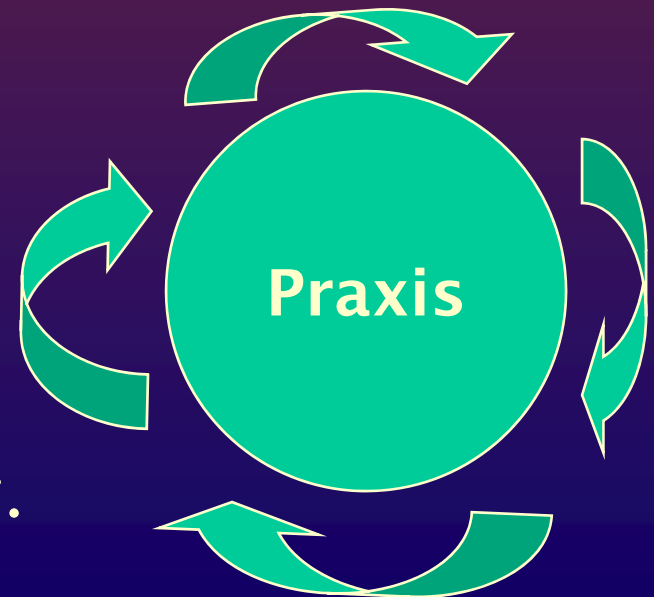# The Response:

❖ A response of action in a particular situation brings about

⬇

A situation of new experiences

⬇

These experiences call for more analysis, reflection and planning.

Praxis

Demographic Information

Principal Methods for obtaining demographic data:

❖ U.S Census Information

http://www.census.gov

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet

❖ United Way

Demographic Data

This data can tell us many things:

- ❖ population size
- ❖ racial and ethnic diversity
- ❖ age of population
- ❖ educational attainment
- ❖ marital status
- ❖ health of population

Demographic Data

❖ income

❖ employment

❖ crime statistics

❖ household information

❖ language spoken

❖ and much more!

Beginning Social Analysis: Questionnaire

❖ I. Social

A. What is the *demographic* character of the locality?

  ❖ Present population

  ❖ Growth rate (decline/increase)

  ❖ Projections toward year 2005/10

  ❖ Present geographic concentration

  ❖ Projected shifts in concentration

  ❖ Urban/rural differences

Questionnaire

❖ I. Social

    B. What is its *racial/ethnic* character?

        ❖ European ethnic groups

        ❖ Hispanics

        ❖ Blacks

        ❖ Native Americans

        ❖ Asians

        ❖ Other

Questionnaire

❖ I. Social

C. What is the *cultural* character of the locality?

 ❖ Ethnic heritages of population

 ❖ Character or "stamp" of the people

 ❖ Level of education

 ❖ Strength of community ties

 ❖ State of the arts

Questionnaire

❖ I. Social

D. What is the *class structure* in the locality?

  ❖ Underclass

  ❖ Low income service workers

  ❖ Blue collar workers

  ❖ White collar workers

  ❖ Managerial class

  ❖ Super-rich

Questionnaire

❖ I. Social

   E.   What are the dominant *social* issues in the area? Related to:

❖ Race	Migratory Labor
❖ The aging	Women
❖ Families	Youth
❖ Abortion	Schools
❖ Drugs/alcohol	Health Care
❖ Leisure activities	Crime
❖ Other	

Questionnaire

- ❖ **II. Economic**
  - A. What is the general economic *profile* of the locality?
    - ❖ Major industries
    - ❖ Agricultural situation
    - ❖ Natural resources
    - ❖ New technologies
    - ❖ Relationship to defense/military industries
    - ❖ Role of business and labor groups in community

Questionnaire

❖ II. Economic

    B. What is the economic *situation?*

        ❖ Self-reliance vs. dependency

        ❖ Growth rate

        ❖ Inflation; cost of living

        ❖ Unemployment

        ❖ Income distribution

        ❖ Strength of unions

        ❖ Labor/management relations

Questionnaire

❖ II. Economic

C. What is the *environmental* situation?

  ❖ Pollution: air, water, land

  ❖ Energy prospects, present and future

  ❖ Effectiveness of environmental regulations

Questionnaire

❖ II. Economic

    D.   What are the key economic *issues*?

        ❖   Flight of capital

        ❖   Urban gentrification and displacement

        ❖   Housing

        ❖   Tax bases

        ❖   Public services

        ❖   Other

Questionnaire

❖ II. Economic

 E. What is the relationship between the *local* economy and the *international* economy?

  ❖ Imports/exports

  ❖ Offices of multinational corporations

  ❖ Foreign-owned local businesses

  ❖ Runaway shops

Questionnaire

❖ III. Political

    A. What is the political *profile* of the locality?

        ❖ Relationship of political parties

        ❖ Existence of party "machines"

        ❖ Liberal/conservative divisions

        ❖ Voting registration/election turn-out

        ❖ Church/state relationship

Questionnaire

❖ III. Political

   B. What is the nature of its political *leadership?*

     ❖ Record of senators/representatives in Congress

     ❖ Record of state legislature and governor

     ❖ Record of local officials

Questionnaire

❖ III. Political

    C. What is the nature of its *informal* leadership?

        ❖ Names of "influential" people

        ❖ Socio-economic background of leaders

        ❖ Connections (business, family, etc.) with other influential groups or individuals

        ❖ Nature of power concentration

        ❖ Active interest groups and lobbies

Questionnaire

- **III. Political**

  D. What *non-political* factors have influence on political life?

    - Churches and synagogues
    - Media
    - Business groups
    - Labor unions

Questionnaire

❖ IV. Ecclesial

   A. What is the *religious climate* in the locality?

- ❖ Percentages of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, etc.
- ❖ Percentage of religiously non-affiliated
- ❖ Presence of religions/traditions/movements of other than Judeo-Christian origin
- ❖ Degree of ecumenical cooperation
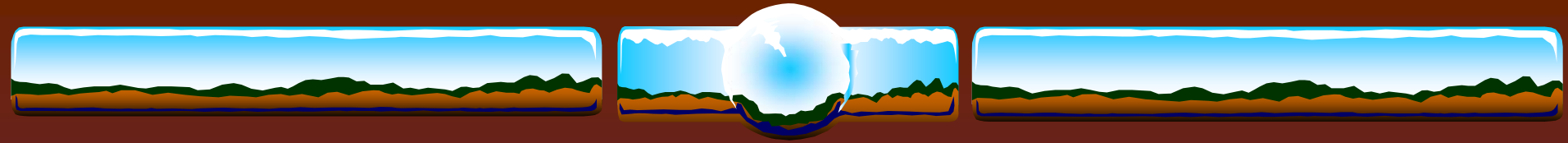- ❖ Religious affection/disaffection (provide reasons)

Questionnaire

❖ IV. Ecclesial

    B. What is the health of the *local* church?

        ❖ State of dioceses

        ❖ Character of bishops, church leadership

        ❖ Pastoral councils; participation of laity

        ❖ Morale/style of clergy and religious professionals

        ❖ Vocations (clergy, religious)

        ❖ Institutions—hospitals, schools, etc.

Reference:

Holland and Henriott, "Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice." Orbis, 1974.

Robert Linthicum