

The OAC in 2015 AD

A perspective on the status quo in the OAC in the year 2015. More so, relating to its administration which in turn fundamentally impacts on its apostolic mission in a rapidly advancing technological age where the religious world is searching for the kind of answers for which the OAC seem ideally positioned to respond positively to. Therefore, how relevant is the OAC in society at a time (2015) when itself is apparently experiencing consistent negative growth as far as membership, finances and influence are concerned?

For the sake of Jerusalem, the prophet proclaimed ages ago, I shall not hold my peace. In the year 2015, with an OAC leadership apparently at a crossroads as far as the future of the church is concerned, the Forum (and other like-minded members/officers) feels equally compelled to extol: 'for the sake of the OAC it should not (and will not) hold its peace'.

Crisis

The OAC of today is no longer the church it used to be, is a comment that perennially seems to wend its way these days into conversations wherever elderly members (and officers) reflect on the institution they cherish so much. And, invariably they are left having to neutralize the lack of answers and a creeping sense of hopelessness with a steadfast belief in a better tomorrow. These developments rub off onto the younger generations who believe that they have something to learn from their elders. This is also the point of divergence between "white" and an older generation of "non-white" members/congregations because, despite all the cosmetic changes since 1972, it is an open secret that the two components differ markedly in their perception and views on fundamental principles of the apostle doctrine and how it is dispensed these days.

A sizable majority in the church, excluding top management of course, seems to realize that the OAC has a leadership crisis - a lack of sorely needed visionary, bold and dynamic leadership acumen to ideally position the church for optimal fulfillment of its apostolic mission in an enlightened and technologically advanced 21st century.

Quo vadis, Head Office? What about the biblical promise that we would do, and accomplish, more than Jesus and His first generation of apostles? Is the OAC losing, or has it lost, its lustre? The answers to these vexing questions seem to be blowing in the wind.

More and more, top management seems to resemble the image and proportions of the indomitable statue King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon beheld in his dream – a perceived indestructible colossus of tempered metal, but with feet of clay.

Excluded

Now, why the need for such an acerbic Forum tongue? Or, hanging out in public the "dirty linen" of the institution, the uninformed might ask? Can, or should, it not ideally be dealt with in camera? Unfortunately, it cannot be done in private because members/ congregations (and most officers) are constitutionally excluded from any process or structure where such issues can be dealt with formally and in mature fashion. Difference of opinion and freedom of expression are not

entertained and congregations (the shareholders and body of the OAC) have no meaningful say over the administration and funds of their own church – their own money. The proverbial tail (a handful of royally paid officers) seems to be wagging the dog.

And, is there no peaceful or civilized way in which members/congregations can formally change the current constitution of the OAC?. The simple answer is an emphatic NO. Apparent unbridled autocratic rule by an unelected apostolate seems to be the order of the day. The OAC have, since its inception a century ago, yet to accede to the formal drafting of a constitution by a fully representative commission of the Church and ratified by a conference/convention where all congregations are duly and directly represented. Democratic structures and governance in the administration of the church are after all these years still the unwanted guest, or the leper, at the gates of the mighty OAC.

The current constitution of the OAC appears to be at variance with crucial democratic precepts of the constitution of the country and the social conscience of the free (and religious) world. Contrary to the trying times of Jesus and the Jewish Council under the oppressive yoke of pagan Emperors of Rome, it is the leadership of the OAC in 2015 which seems out step with the law as far as human rights are concerned. Implying, that in 2015 Pontius Pilate and Caesar would probably have been on the side of the angels, while the leadership of the OAC finds itself in a morally reprehensible and “criminally” suspect disposition. And what would Jesus have made of this situation? Especially in view of His ire and resultant whipping of the “traders” in the temple?

Forum

Hence, the advent and continued existence of an entity such as the Forum within the OAC. An informal organ that came into being for the sole purpose of fearlessly articulating that which members/congregations (and most officers) cannot, and dare not, voice publicly. Consequently, there is no need for the Forum to concoct its own high-sounding, self-serving and moralistic rhetoric. Or, resorting to violent and allied subversive measures and actions. Otherwise, members/congregations in the OAC appear to be effectively muzzled. Self-respecting and celebrated church officers who go against the grain by taking a noble stand on issues, invariably run the risk of having their heads cut off unceremoniously, while recalcitrant members could face expulsion. What price silence and subservience, a stranger to the OAC paradise might ask?

The Forum has deliberately kept a low profile over the last twelve months in order to assess how top management would react to the petitions already directed at them, but more so to see what Head Office of its own volition would do to take the administration of the OAC forward amidst the fundamental transformation the country is currently absorbing as far as democratic governance is concerned. Sadly, after twenty one (21) years of a more democratic approach to administration/governance in the country, the OAC still seems trapped in the starting blocks. Forget about actions; there is not even a hint about it in the daily OAC discourse. Implying, that the administration of the OAC must be a dinosaur from the pre-1994 AD era.

This paper, therefore, will once again highlight some of the salient issues members/congregations (the real church) ought to focus on. Followed by a series of papers unpacking the relevant issues in more detail. An initiative aimed at not just raising among members (and most officers) the level of understanding of issues, but also to assist in honing their debating and organizational skills.

Change

History, it is often remarked, tends to repeat itself, especially in circumstances where the leadership of the day either refuse (or are not capable) to recognize that change and transformation have become inevitable. One hundred years ago, the OAC was born out of such a set of circumstances. Therefore, what makes the Head Office of the OAC in 2015 think that it will escape its moment of truth?

Once every decade or more, it seems, there comes a year when change, reform, transformation or even mass destruction, grips society and the world at large in a pervasive manner and leaving in its wake a new dawn for renewal and endless opportunity. Judging by developments around the world, 2015 seems like such a time of epic proportions. Will the OAC, a powerful financial empire and one of the largest land barons of church real estate in the country be immune to such impulses? Highly unlikely. Simply because its leaders are no corporate or intellectual giants, and they have feet of clay.

Rubicon

The Rubicon (or River Jordan) the OAC leadership has to cross in order to set the church on a path to dynamic growth and development, is administrative reform and social transformation. The call for fundamental change in this regard, is not a new one. It has a legacy that reaches as far back as the nineteen sixties (1960's). The schism of 1972 presented an ideal opportunity for the incremental implementation of such a process. Instead, the OAC leadership appeared to have resolutely chosen to rather refine and entrench an outdated dictatorial/totalitarian system, the chickens of which seem to have come home already to roost. In 2015, the OAC not only seem to have stagnated as far as institutional development is concerned, but looks destined to become just another church with an enviable bank balance and an oversupply of church halls that are invariably ill-equipped to meet the societal development challenges of our age.

Ironically, members and congregations in the pre-1972 era had far more authority over their finances and general management than today. It was a far more decentralized dispensation than the highly centralized authoritarian regime of today. In fact, congregations way back then were ready for upgrading to the next level of having a more profound say over the management of the church at regional and national levels. However, a perceived dominant ultra-conservative white power clique apparently saw the aftermath of the schism of 1972 as their cue to turn the administration of the OAC into the current debilitating quagmire of apparent short term gain and glory for a privileged few at the expense of the long term best interests of the church at large. A leadership accountable only to themselves, and with the attendant benefit of determining and writing out their own pay cheques in the face of congregations (the church) looking on helplessly. No oversight structure where congregations are directly represented. Central to this scenario is also the management of public (trust) funds, which is open to question.

Skills deficiency

In 2015, the OAC leadership continues to be perceived as being intransigent and instinctively opposed to the principle of difference of opinion and freedom of expression. Unlike congregations

in almost all other major churches in this day and age, OAC members and their congregations have no meaningful say over the administration of their own affairs. Their daily existence (in minute detail) is effectively being governed by remote control from a Head Office situated many kilometers away. And all of this by a handful of individuals who cannot honestly vouch that they are acting in the best interest of a distant congregation. The net result of such an environment is a congregation (and local officers) not empowered to govern themselves, unlike the proven capabilities of the smallest and poorest congregations of other mainstream churches. Except for members who joined the OAC from outside, traditional members (and officers) lack basic church administration, conference and debating skills because they are deprived of the requisite exposure to such facilities. They exist and operate in a sterile environment where the necessary kind of growth and development capacity seem to have been reduced to one of the great taboos in the OAC. And despite this major structural flaw and negative disposition in the general make-up of the Church, OAC members are constantly encouraged from above to be proud of their unique brand of character and spiritual livelihood.

But, what is new? It sounds just like biblical Israel, who always lagged behind all the other nations as far as development and know-how were concerned. And then in 2015 we still go out into the world to invite people to make the OAC their new spiritual home. Better still, while the OAC youth are availing themselves of tertiary education in ever increasing numbers, their church leaders seem oblivious to the fact that this phenomenon could result in a cataclysmic changing of the guard in the church in the not too distant future. No discernible foresight, and apparently driven by a dogged penchant for short term comfort, power and money by a generation of leaders who are essentially in their twilight years. Quo vadis, OAC? However, dwindling membership/sealing figures unmistakably tell the story.

The future

The concern of The Forum about administrative reform is born of a deep and abiding love for church and its well-being. Even more so about the future of the church. A future that has to be profoundly different than the insular one the church fathers of the previous century envisaged. A future like the one the Apostle Paul wrestled over with his fellow brother Apostles Peter and James. A future that would be more conducive for the OAC to fulfill its prime obligation on this planet – to enhance its apostolic mission in a globalized world where science and technology are rapidly increasing its challenge to the veracity and legitimacy of religion (Christianity). The relevance of money, bricks and mortar to their calling have to be looked at differently in 2015 by those persons who are vested with the divine authority OAC officers so glibly lay claim to at the drop of a hat.

Administrative reform is the gateway to a better tomorrow for the OAC. At the risk of offending some quarters in the OAC, the church has to be reminded that it has yet to be sanitized of the last vestiges of apartheid. A quick tour around the country will undoubtedly confirm that there are still three finite worlds - black, coloured and white – effectively operating in the OAC as if apartheid is still the law of the land, Not just physically, but also socially, mentally and psychologically. The Forum is the first to recognize that it would essentially take more than one generation to accomplish this transformation, but what is unacceptable and morally repugnant is the current lack of the required degree of leadership to deal effectively with the issue. Deeds and example, not words and empty gestures, are called for at this juncture. To the shame of the OAC, other churches such as the

Dutch Reformed group of churches (former godfathers of apartheid) have made great strides in this regard. Upon a visit to the OAC in 2015, Jesus probably would have used an instrument far more lethal than a whip to chastise the leadership of the OAC over its neglect as far as this cardinal sin against the creation of His heavenly father is concerned.

“We cannot build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future”. This was how President FD Roosevelt of the USA inspired his nation and the free world when it was incumbent upon him to stand up and demonstrate leadership to a people whose values were under threat from destructive forces. Concerned members (and many officers) of the OAC are equally traumatized by the spectre of their church losing its traditional foothold in the religious world of today. The OAC leadership would do well to recognize that a Head Office alone cannot build a community, because this is what congregations and duly empowered local officers do best. There can be no fit-one-fit-all recipe. Like people, congregations also differ from place to place, while collectively pledging allegiance to the same flag flown by their Head Office. Therefore, the day is fast approaching when Pharaoh (Head Office) will have to “let My people go (grow)”.

Signs of our time

Congregations are the real shareholders in this company/business called the OAC and should be regarded as such. In the OAC of 2015, they are not. They have been reduced to the status of hapless spectators at their own events and management. Sadly, there also seems to be no indication of imminent change in this regard or even a hint of the necessary will among the leadership to address the issue. However, the rodents of time (zero/negative growth, dwindling finances, passive resistance, apostasy, etc) seem to have already started gnawing at the foundations of the fragile structures of the post-1972 OAC.

In the world of 2015, and especially within the OAC, the prospect of social upheaval and administrative chaos at congregational level can no longer be casually dismissed as far-fetched or an impossible notion. These are the signs of our time in South Africa and the developing world at large. And just before The Forum may probably be fingered for incitement and hate speech, Head Office has to be apprised of the fact that such rhetoric is no longer alien to discussions at foot soldier level in the church. After all, many of the citizens of this country who actively support political parties and vote in local and national elections also happen to be members (and officers) of the OAC. They are politically astute and streetwise when it comes to claiming and demonstrating their freedoms as creations of the Almighty. The OAC is a legal person, a hardnosed business entity with near ruthless managers and, therefore, not as untouchable as leaders would have members and congregations believe. Administrative decisions unilaterally taken over the heads of congregations, is political dynamite that is bound to blow up in the faces of men (leaders) who often selectively and conveniently wrap themselves in spiritual attire in order to escape scrutiny and possible sanction by congregations (the church and therefore their employer).

Weakest link

As has often been stated by The Forum, the proverbial chain is only as strong as its weakest link. And the weakest link in the OAC invariably happens to be those neglected congregations with hopelessly ill-equipped officers somewhere in the almost forgotten backward Non-white townships all over South Africa. Nothing strange or alarming about this; it is part of the history of South Africa

(and the OAC). What is indeed alarming about the neglect of such congregations is the fact that they are being held ransom by the dictates of a perceived ultra-conservative white top management who runs the church as if it is essentially a white church, augmented by coloured and black affiliates. Even more chilling, is the complete absence (as well as the prohibition by top management) of a public discourse in the OAC about transforming the situation so as to bring the church into line with the constitutional dispensation of the country and the world society of the year 2015. In addition, the OAC leadership has an obnoxious past of tacit support for the precepts of the odious apartheid system. And as late as 2015, there are no easily discernible signs of a willingness to sanitize the public apartheid record of the Church. In fact, as things stand now, the current generation of OAC children are destined to inherit a divided future wreaking of some of the worst odours apartheid had left in its wake. This scenario smacks of a departing current older generation of leaders who seem intent on tossing an activated hand grenade back into the room before closing the door behind them. And to think they are ostensibly on their way to inherit soul salvation? Makes one think, hey?

Unfinished business

Unfinished business (constitutional, admin and spiritual) should, therefore, be the enemy OAC leaders ought to recognize as the single biggest threat to their personal prospects for soul salvation in the afterlife. And this statement need not be a riddle. After all, it is central to the testimony of the OAC to its members and the world at large.

Unfinished business:

Key issues which will be dealt with more extensively in follow-up papers:

- **Constitutional reform:** To establish and guarantee a culture of democratic governance at all levels in the Church. The principle of Own Affairs to allow members to take charge of congregational matters, and General Affairs affording due representation and participation by congregations in church affairs at regional and national levels. Accountability for all actions taken and a duly constituted representative oversight body as the final arbiter in the OAC.
- **Administrative reform:** A new dispensation that would accord members/congregations a meaningful say over the administration and well-being of their own church. Recognition and respect by top management for the integrity, status and authority of congregations.
- **Training and education:** The time is long overdue for the OAC to have in place credible and sustainable training programmes for officers and all other categories of auxiliary forces in the Church. Suitable programmes should be developed or acquired in order to equip those who are called to serve the Church in designated capacities. The OAC is a major corporate institution in the country and should, therefore, be served by members /officers who are “fit for purpose”.
- **Social reform:** Alleged residual traces of racism still prevalent in the OAC should be addressed forthwith. The Apostolate in 2015 should actively be seen to deliberately and decisively rid the Church of remnants of the “apartheid OAC” of the pre-1994 era. In the Western Cape, for example, the presence of a “black” apostle is not only long overdue but crucial for the best interests of the OAC. The current “white” and “coloured” incumbents (apostles) there are deluding themselves by apparently continuing to deny the existence of

this elephant in the room. All the other regions in the country have the benefit of being served by “black” apostles. Nothing racial here; it is the vital missing piece in the multicultural mosaic of the OAC community in the Western Cape. It will also provide the vehicle necessary to enhance the process of building a true rainbow OAC in the province. As more and more “black” members are moving into former “white” neighbourhoods (OAC congregations), it is only a matter of time before this phenomenon presents itself as a hot potato in the region.

And, as if by divine intervention, the chair of the Apostolate is back again in the Western Cape – the province with the abovementioned ‘racial elephant’ in the room. Looking at the bigger picture, was this changing of the guard not an opportune (strategically advantageous) moment for top management to have opted for a “non-white” incumbent as head of the OAC? Socio-politically in the country, the Western Cape Province seems to be heading for heavy weather as far as social (racial) transformation is concerned; the effect of which is bound to have a profound impact on the agenda and well-being of the OAC leadership. Looks like only a modern day Apostle Paul will be able to lead the OAC out of the hole it has pig-headedly dug for itself. Maybe, it is also time to revisit the findings of the OAC Commission of Inquiry by a sub-committee from Johannesburg in 2008, into the situation in the Western Cape. However, it is sincerely hoped that the return of the chair of the Apostolate to Cape Town will also serve to correct/repair some of what strategically went wrong during the last time it was seated in the Cape (1987 – 1999) – in hindsight, a dry season replete with a fair share of missed opportunities and strategic blunders as far as advancing the administration of the OAC was concerned.

The alleged continuing occurrence of racial incidents in the OAC is an issue that needs to be dealt with decisively. Maybe the time has now arrived for the introduction of a register to chronicle such incidents. And this time it cannot be a function of Head Office, as top management itself might end up in the dock more than often. This could be a rare/precious moment for members/congregations to start taking charge of Own Affairs in their respective neighborhoods. And if a moral crusade in this regard is required, there can hardly be a better way of starting to galvanize public opinion around “unfinished business” in the Church.

- **Welfare:** As the Forum has stated so often before, it is high time for the OAC to start taking care of its own “needy members of society”. The OAC is a major pillar in society and should therefore pull its weight. Lamentably (if not tragically), the seat of the OAC at public conference tables for community development around the country has been empty for more than a century. It is so embarrassing to witness how other churches invariably have to stretch their already meagre resources in order to dispense aid to persons belonging to a church (OAC) that is often perceived as a “selfish” financial giant. OAC members (officers included) often comprise a large constituency in queues at public welfare and health institutions. The OAC is reduced to shame and ridicule when it is noted how even the smallest and poorest of other churches valiantly attempt to play their part in alleviating pain and suffering in the respective communities where they are situated. In this regard, the OAC and its leadership in their response to this noble calling, invariably seem to prefer to adopt

the posture and mentality of the High Priest and the Pharisee when they encountered the gravely wounded person along the Jericho Road.

And when the OAC leadership eventually recognize and accept the significance and strategic advantage of a properly constituted welfare department in the management of the Church, they would do well to also recognize and accept that congregations have to be duly represented at all levels of such a structure, including direct representation in the ultimate oversight body. Nothing sinister though; just for the sake of transparency and accountability – all part of the required checks and balances. And, because it is the right thing to do.

- **Cultural development:** The multicultural dimension of the OAC lends itself to be by far its greatest asset and strongest selling point, if only top management (Pharaoh) would “let My people go (grow)”. Contrary to the eerie signals emitted via the body language of Head Office and some of the senior church officers, the OAC of the year 2015 AD is not a “white” church. At least not anymore, given its apartheid past. The strength of the OAC lies in the confluence of the cultures of the white, black and coloured strands that make up this unique community of apostolics. The sooner the OAC family makes peace with this truism, the sooner they will become that “shining city on the hill” which will, like Zion of Old Testament glory, be the envy of the world. There is need for the establishment of a permanent structure (and substructures) for the development and management of the cultural dimension of the OAC. It is vital for the growth and future development of the Church.

Members/congregations who had the privilege of being part of the flock of the late Apostle Robert Lombard in the pre-1972 era in the Western and Eastern Cape, can testify about the value and virtues of a multicultural OAC community at work. Unstoppable a force were they when they sang and performed for a leader whom they fondly and unabashedly cherished as “ingonyama” (the lion), because he was a leading promotor of multiculturalism. And needless to say, it was also a golden era for the region, marked by profound growth in the OAC when we did not count in single digits at sealing services (as seems to be the case in 2015), but families who made up the hundreds at a time. Of course, this progressive trend in the OAC came to an abrupt end in the early 1970’s (heady days of apartheid) with the highly questionable (and not properly explained until today) removal from office of the Apostle Lombard. Since then, no apostle has been able to equal or surpass this achievement; leaving the OAC the real loser. However, it now looks like “back to basics” ought to be the marching order for the day for members and officers of the OAC as they head into the 21st century.

- **The role of women in the OAC:** Long a taboo topic in the OAC, the role of women as leaders in the Church cannot be ignored, or postponed, anymore. If the salaried leadership of the OAC in 2015 are still averse to dealing with this issue, then they need to be succinctly reminded that they are not serving the best interests of the Church. In fact, continued neglect of this “unfinished business” could be viewed as part of a subversive agenda by a faction who cannot let go of a morally bankrupt social past in the OAC leadership.

The Apostolate and officers who support the status quo regarding the role of women in the OAC as late as 2015, are also out of step with the biblical trend on this issue. They would do well to go and read their bibles again. The closest confidantes of Jesus and who stood by Him until his last moments on the cross were women, while the “brave” (male) disciples were in hiding. And it was a woman again who came to apprise them of His resurrection and had Peter and them meekly following her to witness the empty tomb. The list is endless.

- **Youth Development:** If the post 1972 leadership of the OAC had bargained on escaping the impact of socio-political transformation of the South African society, they were wrong. It is coming and administratively the OAC will never be the same again. What about credible and sustainable youth development structures and programmes in the OAC? More challenging for Head Office will be the fact that such a dispensation can only succeed if the youth are allowed to run their own programmes. No unilateral meddling by ‘old-timers’. The OAC leadership will have to learn to trust their youth. Local, regional and national structures would have to be in place to give effect to this initiative. Youth seminars, congresses, conventions, inter-denominational liaison are but some of the exciting adventures awaiting them. Not to mention the positive spin-offs that could be in store for the evangelical mission of the Church.

Sunday school: In the absence of religious instruction in the formal school curriculum, Sunday school now has a unique opportunity to step into this vacuum. Frankly speaking, current OAC Sunday School teaching still has a long way to go as far as preparing the children for the challenges facing a transformed OAC. Gone should be the days when Sunday School is used by ‘eager beavers’ as a convenient stepping stone to higher office in the Church. Suitably qualified and dedicated personnel will ensure that the Sunday School becomes a pocket of excellence in the OAC and an element that will certainly enhance the apostolic mission of the Church.

- **Spiritual:** It is no secret that the OAC of 2015 readily lacks the spiritual prowess of the powerhouse it used to be, and was renowned for, in the pre-1972 era. The apparent lure of money, status and the elusive levers of power so desperately pursued by a privileged myopic minority, seems to predominate. It is also a subject of constant enquiry these days among people/friends outside of the OAC who have always been keen observers of the programmes and actions of the Church. However, the Forum at this stage prefers to concentrate on administrative reform first, as it believes that it is the logical path to pursue in order to restore the OAC to its former glory and thereby set it on course again to achieve its ultimate goal on this planet in this day and age – the fulfillment of the apostolic mission about which OAC members and officers so glibly testify and sing and play/act.

But, it does not absolve the Forum from the moral obligation of having to remind the apostles and their host of officers that they should lead by example. They should practise and vividly demonstrate that what they preach and exact upon their followers.

Vision

An apparent pervasive inability at practically all levels in the Church to coherently and insightfully articulate the current administrative architecture and policies, strategies, programmes and actions of the institution should be cause for concern. The alarm bells instantly go off when officers are confronted and caught flat-footed by the simple questions: “what do you want to accomplish in your parish during your tenure in office”, or, “how do you see the Church or your congregation ten years from now”? This pitiful situation should be attributed to the totalitarian nature of the leadership style of top management who in so many ways still seem stuck in a pre-World War 11 mode.

The OAC seems to be fast losing traction in the religious world of today. However, unbeknown to most of them, more and more Christian churches these days seem to be adopting aspects and elements of the OAC gospel which they vehemently opposed/rejected as recently as the turn of the century. And while the OAC may take the credit for it, this positive development should also goad it into action to always keep one step ahead of the rest, as it is supposed to do.

And this is why the Forum, “for the sake of Jerusalem”, cannot hold its peace. Currently, it seems to be the proverbial lone voice in an OAC desert trying to call the house to order. If top management has succeeded thus far by keeping body and soul together with its now perceived archaic management style and policies, then good luck and thank you very much to them. But, it cannot be the wave of the future. And, therefore, cannot be condoned as serving the best interests of the mighty OAC in 2015 AD.

Dialogue

The call by the Forum for the establishment of a culture of healthy dialogue and democratic rule in the OAC is essentially about the future and a sustainable administrative system to underpin the apostolic mission of the Church.

Contrary to popular teaching in the OAC, the past cannot be ignored because it determines the present and enable us to optimally plot and plan for the future. And as long as members of the current ageing top leadership seem to espouse such unhelpful and counter-productive views, it becomes incumbent upon the younger generation to step up to the plate and assume responsibility for their future and that of the Church. Consequently, the current policies and management style of the Apostolate and their executive officers are not sustainable in the world of 2015 and beyond. And, therefore, the OAC seems to be dispensing lucrative salaries and perks to officers who are not serving the best interests of the Church.

However, it is hoped that follow-up papers in the above regard will assist in stimulating and enhancing the debate which seems to have already commenced over a wide spectrum in the OAC. Members/congregations would do well to enhance their understanding of issues by including discussion of the abovementioned topics in their usual discourse. It should also improve their performance on the field of testimony on Monday and Thursday nights, because they would be empowered to deal more effectively with the kind of questions they usually encounter about admin matters of the OAC. After all, the OAC belongs to its members/congregations and not just a cold-blooded Head Office.

Challenge for the OAC in 2015 and beyond

A Head Office having to prepare for “letting My people go (grow)” and members/congregations empowering themselves to ultimately “take back their Church”.

Author: W Johanneson

Secretary: The Forum

Bellville

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