



**cllr maphetle maphetle
executive mayor of potchefstroom
parish rally – lutheran church
banqueting halls
sunday 02 july 2006
09h00**

Dr Seobi;

Pastor Matlala;

Pastor Kgomongwe;

Pastor Mandleleni and their spouses;

Mr Ross Mokobi;

Mr Willy Nokoane;

Distinguished guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

When my office informed me about this visit – I was totally pleased when told about the kind of a service that I will attend. The reason I am saying this is because I have been visiting local churches for the past few months – in my endeavour of introducing myself to the church fraternity, but also to highlight the role between the church and government [in this instance – the Potchefstroom Local Municipality].

The church is God's agent of transformation in the world. Through it, the gospel reaches the ends of the earth. We as the Potchefstroom City Council seek true partnerships where local churches can make a long-term strategic impact in specific areas of our municipality. We all know that our sole mandate [as a municipality] – is the provision of basic services to our people.

Our objectives include amongst others – the provision of electricity, water, sanitation, infrastructural developments like roads and more employment to our community. When one looks at all these aspects – one would realize that there are other facets of our being as people, which are not covered. What is a community with all these above-mentioned – but without morals and values?

How can our children know the value of protecting their own facilities, when they are not reminded of their responsibilities as children and citizens of this country? That is why I said earlier – the church is a God’s agent of transformation in the worlds! The Potchefstroom City Council is committed to ensuring that the church fraternity reaches its goals of restoring and maintaining social morality. What is a community without God?

We believe that our responsibility is to continuously consult with our local churches – and find out about their short term and long term missions, programmes and strategic cross-cultural focus. Anyway – at all levels of society, belief in God was not a matter of choice, it is a matter of fact!

Let me just tell you what I know about the church... Firstly, First, there were the routine church services, held daily and attended at least once a week, and the special festivals of Christmas, Easter, baptisms, marriages, etc.. In that respect the medieval Church was no different to the modern one. Secondly, there were the tithes that the Church collected, usually once a year. Tithes were used to feed the parish priest, maintain the fabric of the church, and to help the poor.

Thirdly, the Church fulfilled the functions of a 'civil service' and an education system. Schools did not exist (and were unnecessary to a largely peasant society), but the Church and the government needed men who could read and write in English and Latin. The Church trained its own men, and these went to help in the government: writing letters, keeping accounts and so on. The words 'cleric' and 'clerk' have the same origin, and every nobleman would have at least one priest to act as a secretary.

Today – the struggle of the people of South Africa in the apartheid regime was won because of the involvement of the church. Many churches around the country were used as places of safety and many negotiations were held between the church community and the then apartheid government. Many of our political heroes, who are now in government, could not have made it – if it was not of the protection from the church and God.

Our government needs you – church people! Our municipality would be worthless if trying to operate outside the church borders. We do not want to be like other cities and towns without advices and blessings from our ministers. History had taught us – that such cities and towns suffer tremendously. There is no growth, development and their communities are bitter and unsettled.

These are situations that we do not want in Potchefstroom. I will soon be reviving the Advisory Committee for Religious Leaders – to frequently advise us, as a municipality, on issues that affects our people. I am humbled by this invitation and hope that we will jointly build a better Potchefstroom.

This City is known to be the best in the province and beyond – and this legacy must be strengthened to be enjoyed by our children in years to come. Many of us here want to leave an inheritance for our children, and not empty coffers or broken and unmanned infrastructure. They should cherish the history and be proud of us.

Please enjoy the hospitality of the people of this City – and hope to see you again in the future. God bless you.