

Leonardo Boff: Ecclesiogenesis
The Base Communities reinvent the Church
Collins 1986

Institutions: codifications of successful attempts at self-preservation.
A large organisation can be renewed by a community but cannot become one.
Jesus was interested in institution and demanded that it live in love.
He sought to convert Israel not set up an alternative Church. This only happened as Church realised that Jews would not listen.

Church is privileged instrument of Kingdom.
But it is always *in via* incomplete. Always being born.
Its minimum element is Faith: in God and risen Jesus and so horizontally in communion with others who share that faith. [I John3, v6-7]
This faithful local group represent universal Church in limited way.
Better when they gather, celebrate salvation, offer selves in ministry.
Even better when leader symbolises unity with wider Church.

Implanting Church. Not transplanting!
Pentecost: Particular Church must help folk hear gospel in own cultural language.
Holy Spirit of Christ is present in history. Church gets amongst this presence and activity in order faithfully to name it and work with it. To render more explicit and conscious the presence of God's spirit.
This is the latent Church which is more than the clericalised institution.

Top down Church models God's grace as mediated only through Church.
We have the keys to the petrol pump & Xt's Spirit has no direct immanence.
Christ is on the outside of world.
But Christ is vital part of world and Church has discovered that not created it.
So Bishop must know his people not just his hierarchy since the Spirit works bottom up.

Pavement based Church must therefore:

1. define its own power structures afresh.
2. Celebrate the unity of faith and life.
3. raise social awareness.
4. identify causes of misery.
5. relate to popular movements
6. use politics as a mighty weapon.