A grounded theory approach to the analysis of sermons on poverty: Congregational projects as social capital

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This article reported on the second cycle (selective coding) of grounded theory research of sermons on poverty in the South African context, with Matthew 25:31–46 as the sermon text. The *problem* which the author was researching pertained to the question: How do congregations in the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk) and the Uniting Reformed Church handle the care for the poor in *practice*? A theoretical sample of congregations with outreach projects to the poor and humble was drawn. After the analysis of the sermons was conducted, the next question to be addressed was: *What* are the categories and properties of the projects by congregations as the *how* of the care for the poor? New thinking on the issue of preaching on poverty is necessary because homiletic literature in this field of preaching does not address the *how* question. The author therefore described a theoretical framework for the interpretation of the projects, as well as an anthropological view of the communication occurring on an equal footing, with the givers in the projects functioning as social capital and the receivers (the poor and humble) as the participants with their own responsibility and freedom. The classification of the projects in categories showed that a wide variety of different types of projects to the poor have emerged from the sermons.

Introduction

In this article, I report on the second cycle of sermon analysis on Matthew 25:31–46, namely selective coding. The analysis is conducted by means of the method of grounded theory analysis in homiletics. For a description of this method of analysing sermons see Pieterse (2010:113–129). In this approach, the first cycle is an *open coding analysis* of sermons, which was completed in regard to sermons on Matthew 25:31–46 during 2010 (Pieterse 2011:95–112). The first round of sermon collection and analysis of the second cycle – that is, *selective coding analysis* – was conducted during 2011 and will proceed as a second round of sermon analysis in 2012. Selective coding has as its goal the facilitation of movement from concepts to categories in this bottom-up research for developing a theory for preaching on poverty, with Matthew 25:31–46 as the sermon text. The third cycle of grounded theory sermon analysis consists of theoretical coding (Pieterse 2010:124–125) and research on this final cycle is planned for 2012–2013.

In selective coding, I make use of the results of the first cycle of analysis that has led to the construction of the open coding analytical model (cf. Pieterse 2011:109–110). Twelve sermons, six from preachers of the Uniting Reformed Church (URC) and six from preachers of the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, DRC) from several provinces in South Africa, provided 44 sermon segments with 218 codes (by means of the open coding analysis) which have information on preaching to the poor from Matthew 25:31–46 as the sermon text. Initial main categories with their subcategories have emerged from the 218 codes, with 3 hypotheses emerging from this open coding analytical model (cf. Pieterse 2011:104–110). The third hypothesis was formulated as follows: If listeners (of the sermon) identify with the poor and humble in their own context, there is an appeal on them to *care* for the poor and humble (Pieterse 2011:110). This result also forms the basis for another goal of selective coding, namely refining the concept of *appealing to the listeners*, discovered in the first 12 sermons of open coding analysis (Pieterse 2011:110) – a refining which can now happen in the cycle of selective coding. I have decided to investigate this third hypothesis in the second cycle of selective coding analysis, a decision which is motivated by the fact that the third hypothesis has the potential *to generate new insights* for a homiletical theory of preaching to the poor, compared to more deductively oriented homiletical studies (cf. Pleizier 2010:133). During this second phase of sermon analysis, new categories may emerge and new properties of the categories may be discovered (cf. Pleizier 2010:132). 'Sampling and coding thus take place in close reflective interaction with the emerging framework' (Pleizier 2010:213). According to Holton (2007), selective coding:

> begins only after the researcher has identified a potential core variable. Subsequent data collection and coding is delimited to that which is relevant to the emerging conceptual framework [the core and those categories that relate to the core]. (p. 280)

The potential core variable in this case is *appealing to the listeners to care for the poor by the actions of the congregation*, which is related to the final appeal by the preachers from Matthew 25:31–46 in the 12 analysed sermons of the open coding cycle, as well as to the third hypothesis in the open coding analytical model. The *leading research question* of this research project is: How do preachers deal with sermons on poverty by using Matthew 25:31–46 as the sermon text? Directed by this research question and the third hypothesis mentioned above, as well as by the potential core variable of *appealing to the listeners to care for the poor by the actions of the congregation* evolving from this third hypothesis, I have embarked on a theoretical sampling of preachers and their congregations for selective coding, with the goal being to find congregations with outreach projects to the poor. Practical theology focuses on lived religion (cf. Ganzevoort 2009). The practice of projects by church members as outreach to the poor is seen as lived religion. A variety of projects can now be discovered which theoretically can enrich the core variable emerging in this research. New data provide resources for finding new categories besides the categories that have been formulated in the first cycle of research in the substantive area (cf. Pleizier 2010:135).

In this article I proceed to:

1. describe the theoretical sample of preachers for this selective coding cycle of sermon analysis
2. describe the theoretical framework in which the results of care for the poor by means of projects by the congregations from the sermons in selective coding will be interpreted
3. provide the reader with a few examples of the significant segments from the sermons
4. develop categories of projects to the poor as the first results of this selective coding cycle of research.

Theoretical sampling

In selective coding, as a second cycle of research of sermons on Matthew 25:31–46, *new material* must be collected to capture new categories of the concept of *care for the poor by the congregation*, which has emerged from the open coding cycle (cf. Pleizier 2010:132). Properties of the categories should also be described in order to move the research forward in the direction of a theory for preaching on Matthew 25:31–46 in the context of poverty in South Africa. As such, the question becomes: *How* should the congregation care for the poor? And if that question is answered the next question will be: *What* are the categories and their properties of the *how* of the care for the poor? New thinking on the issue of preaching on poverty is necessary because homiletic literature in this field of preaching does not address the *how* question. A review of homiletic literature on the topic has shown this research gap (cf. Pieterse 2009:134–148), in that current literature states *that* churches should care for the poor, but does not say *how* (Pieterse 2009:134).

With this in mind, the *problem* that I now researched was the question: How do congregations in the DRC and the

TABLE 1: Demographic data of the preachers who participated in the second cycle research.

Name	Gender	Age group	Education	Province
URC				
Preacher A	M	elderly	high	Mpumalanga
Preacher J	M	young	high	Limpopo
Preacher P	M	middle	high	Western Cape
Preacher Q	M	middle	medium	Eastern Cape
Preacher R	M	elderly	medium	Eastern Cape
Preacher S	M	middle	medium	Eastern Cape
Preacher T	M	young	medium	KwaZulu-Natal
Preacher U	M	middle	medium	Gauteng
DRC				
Preacher M	M	middle	high	KwaZulu-Natal
Preacher N	M	young	medium	Gauteng
Preacher O	M	young	medium	Mpumalanga
Preacher V	M	young	high	Gauteng
Preacher W	M	middle	high	North West
Preacher X	M	elderly	medium	Free State
Preacher Y	M	middle	high	Western Cape

URC, Uniting Reformed Church; DRC, Dutch Reformed Church.

URC handle the care for the poor in *practice*? I trusted to find the answer in the sermons on the prescribed text from Matthew 25:31–46. As such, it was important to select sermons for congregations in which practical outreach to the poor in the specific contexts of the congregation takes place. This selection was done by means of theoretical sampling. Pastors who have studied with me have gone on to work in many places across South Africa. Upon consulting with them, they provided me with informed advice on which preachers I should approach for sermons in this cycle of research. The 12 sermons that were analysed in the open coding cycle were also taken into account along with the analysis of the 14 new sermons of the cycle of selective coding (7 from the URC and 7 from DRC). One sermon from the URC that was analysed in the previous open coding cycle was used again in the selective coding cycle (Preacher A). Therefore, I worked with a total of 26 sermons in my sample.

Theoretical sampling for new sermons to analyse is a deductive procedure directed by a hypothesis (cf. Glaser 1978:38–39). The selection of the preachers for new sermons on Matthew 25:31–46 was therefore guided by one of the concepts which was formulated in the open coding model and taken up in this second cycle (cf. Pleizier 2010:133). In this case, it was *care for the poor by the congregation* and was phrased as the last of the three hypotheses in the open coding analytical model, namely: if listeners identify with the poor and humble in their own context, they are appealed on to *care* for the poor and humble (cf. Pieterse 2011). I collected new sermons on this preaching text from new preachers during 2011, but also used some segments from the 12 sermons collected in the first cycle of collecting during 2010. The demographic information of the preachers who participated in this phase of the research is indicated in Table 1.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework functions as the framework in which the research results are interpreted in my process of

analysis; that is, namely within the dialectical relationship between the outreach of the members of the congregation and the poor and humble who receive it as responsible agents. My suggestion to the readers of this article is to implement these types of projects according to the spirit of this theoretical approach. Therefore it is necessary to describe the outreach of church members as social capital and the anthropological view of the poor and humble as receivers of the help that is coming to them. This theoretical framework can serve as the conditions for the encounter between the outreaching members of the congregation and the poor as receivers.

Social capital of the congregations

It is necessary to conceptualise social capital as it is generated in the worship service, with its preaching dimension and in the voluntary actions of church members in projects by the congregation. The concept of social capital was introduced in the 1970s. One of the pioneers of research on social capital is Robert D. Putnam (2001). His findings on religion are interesting, for his research has shown that religious people are very active in volunteering work – they are social capitalists. Involvement in religion is a strong predictor of voluntary work inside and outside the church. Putnam distinguishes two types of social capital, namely *bonding* social capital, which tends to reinforce exclusive identities, and *bridging* social capital, which tends to bring people together across diverse and social divisions (De Roest & Noordegraaf 2009:216). A third type of social capital, called *linking* social capital, has been distinguished by John Field and which implies reaching out to people outside the community (De Roest & Noordegraaf 2009:216). Thus, three concepts in social capital come to the fore: bonding, bridging and linking.

Further refinement of the concept of social capital followed and a distinction was made between religious and spiritual capital. Religious capital is the practical contribution to the community made by faith groups. Spiritual capital energises religious capital by providing theological identity and a worshipping tradition (De Roest & Noordegraaf 2009:217). It is important to note that the theological tradition and the worship tradition play an important role in the motivation and inspiration of the social capital of that congregation. De Roest and Noordegraaf (2009) found in their research that there is a relationship between social capital, religiosity and volunteering in the Netherlands. Regular churchgoers do more voluntary work than other members of the church and non-church members. This is true inside the church and in outreach to people outside the church. They also found that churches are favourable settings for all kinds of social engagement and that religious-moral motivation works through networks of friendships between church members. Face-to-face relations in these networks translate the religious-moral motivation into social action (De Roest & Noordegraaf 2009:220).

Congregations are generators of social capital. Congregations possess infrastructure as well as material and human resources that are critical components of the social capital of congregations (Wepener & Cilliers 2010:419). It is therefore necessary that we interpret and describe social capital and its function in the South African context. There is a variety of descriptions and interpretations of this concept and so we must be aware of the danger of an insignificant intellectual discussion of social capital in our context. Wepener and Cilliers (2010) have made a good contribution in this respect. They decided to attach an added dimension to the 'linking' aspect of the three concepts identified above – bonding, bridging and linking:

> With 'linking' the possibility for ideological discussion and conflictual dialogue is held open. In other words, the dominant economic model and status quo are not protected in any way … Matters like equity and justice, power, and the redistribution of wealth and assets come into play. The one-way movement from those who 'generate' social capital to those who 'receive' it is transformed into an equitable partnership where holders of power (political, economic and social) are confronted and invited into a truly reciprocal transformation of society. This is not a neutral stance on, or discussion about social capital, but a process of linking in which ideological presuppositions are not only questioned, but also shattered and transformed. (p. 419)

Therefore, they add a fourth dimension to the three dimensions of social capital that are generally accepted, namely that congregations are spaces within which a new ethos is born and nurtured:

> an ethos that confronts structures and constellations of power, and works in collaboration with other relevant agencies towards a real transformation of society in terms of equity and justice. (Wepener & Cilliers 2010:419)

This line of thought regarding the equal participation between the church *for* the poor and the church *of* the poor in the exchange of social capital between one and the other is also promoted by Pieterse (2004:11–118). Congregations which reach out through projects to the poor should therefore meet with the leaders of the communities for which they want to reach out. Clear appointments should be made when and where the members of the congregation will meet with the poor and their leaders. Good relations should be established between the members of congregations undertaking these projects and the members of the poor communities, with a view to establishing a sustainable relationship over time.

Preaching as part of the worship service has a specific role in the generation of social capital in the worship service. It is the space where the congregation can be addressed on the need for care of the poor in the immediate context of the congregation. From sermons, the congregation can be made aware of the situation and the needs of the poor and humble in the vicinity of the congregation. As such, they can be motivated and inspired to participate in the projects of the congregation in which they can practice their care for the poor as social capital; the projects can be specified and the service groups for each project can be named.

View of the poor and humble as receivers of help

In the dialectic tension between church members with their social capital and the poor and humble with their

dignity, freedom and own responsibility as human beings, the interaction should be undertaken on an equal footing. Therefore we need an anthropological perspective on both partners, but especially the receivers of help. The *theological* view of the neighbour, the fellow human being, is usually based on Genesis 1:27, which speaks of humanity being made in God's image (McGrath 1994:369). For human beings, creation means *freedom*, *dignity* and an assignment from God to care for all God's creation (cf. Berkhof 1973:146). Humans are created in the image of God, a creation which they have not lost. This is also the view of Alister McGrath (1994):

> The fact that humanity is created in the image of God is widely regarded as establishing the original uprightness and dignity of human nature ... Athanasius taught that God created human beings in the image of God, thus endowing humanity with a capacity which was granted to no other creature – that of being able to relate and to partake in the life of God. (p. 370)

In reformed theology, the doctrine of the covenant was refined by Berkhof (1973:146–155), who sees the relationship of human beings with God as an inter-subjective relationship of love, friendship, freedom and faithfulness. The theology of the covenant sees the personal relationship with God as a relationship in which benevolence towards all human beings and *responsibility* can flourish (Jonker 1989:198). In this relationship, as a result of the love and grace of God in Jesus Christ towards us, the love for God and the neighbour can be practiced. In the crucial text of Matthew 22:34–40 on the question of one of the Pharisees: 'Master, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' (v. 36), Jesus answered:

> Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. That is the greatest commandment. It comes first. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. Everything in the Law and the prophets hangs on these two commandments. (Mt 22:37–40)

The remarkable aspect of Jesus' pronouncement is that he combined Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 in his quotation of the two texts. The text of Leviticus 19:18 is now put on the same level as the text from Deuteronomy 6:5. Love for the neighbour is also part of the total will of God. This interpretation is in line with the emphasis of Matthew on justice and mercy towards other people. Our fellow humans should be seen as equal and therefore we should approach them with love and benevolence.

The *theological* view of human beings, regarding the specific issue that I am addressing here, is therefore that they are created by God and can live with him in an inter-subjective relationship of love as free, dignified and responsible people. This is also the manner in which human beings live together as neighbours in love, dignity, justice and peace. When we communicate with our neighbours on an equal footing in the outreach with congregational projects, we need to do it in the sphere of the values of the kingdom or reign of God. Therefore I am working with a dialogical theory of communication from a practical-theological perspective. This kind of communication between people has its roots in our theological tradition. Practical theology, seen as communicative actions in the service of the gospel (cf. Pieterse 1993:1–52), works in its communicative actions with people within the criteria of the kingdom or reign of God. These are, *inter alia*, love, justice, peace and responsibility for each other, living in the community of faith in love, care and hope (cf. Pieterse 1993:166). This is non-authoritative communication on an equal footing. Each person must have an equal chance to participate and act in the process of communication in service of the gospel. The participants have an inherent freedom to participate or not. Unconditional acceptance of each other is essential. The ideal situation of God's reign amongst people is a compass for our efforts in communication in our ministry – as it is in outreaches with projects to the poor (cf. Pieterse 1991:7–9).

Philosophical ideas on human beings strengthen the perspective that church members should treat the poor and humble to whom they reach out with help on an equal footing as fellow human beings with dignity, freedom and with an own responsibility. We find this line of thought in the communication theory of Jurgen Habermas, with his idea of non-dominant and free communication on an equal footing within an ideal speech situation in order to come to an understanding of each other's view and maybe – as an ideal – to come to a consensus (cf. Habermas 1982). Ricoeur (cf. 1994:291–293) sees the relationship between people as a dialectical tension between givers and receivers. Not only are the givers agents who act, but the receivers are also agents who act as responsible and free people.

Examples of sermon segments emerging from the analysis of the new sermons

After I had analysed the sermons of the selective cycle, I compared all the sermon segments of the 25 total sermons. The result of this comparison was a new cluster of categories in the process of looking for projects to the poor by congregations as care for the poor – the third hypothesis in the open coding analytical model (cf. Pieterse 2011:110).

What follows are some examples of significant sermon segments, according to my research question, which have emerged from the selective coding analysis. In all the 14 sermons collected in the cycle of selective coding which I have analysed so far, a similar kind of invitation is made to the listeners of the sermons, namely to participate in the projects of the congregation as an outreach to the poor communities.

Example of a sermon segment on food provision as charity:

> 'Our congregation has a wide variety of projects which reach out to people in need, e.g. providing food in the squatter camp. We invite you to participate on a regular basis and not only to sooth your conscience … We appeal to you to participate in the project you choose out of the published projects on a regular basis, even

when it feels not good anymore and the demands of it are too hard for you, still keep going. In this way your engagement with the poor and the needy becomes a lifestyle.' (Preacher O, Mpumalanga)

Example of a sermon segment on clothes provision as charity:

'The deeper and more intimate your faith in Jesus Christ is, the more spontaneous you will show the fruits of mercy and charity … [*Our congregation*] provides on a regular basis second-hand clothes and shoes as well as other utensils, such as kitchen utensils and furniture, when needed.' (Preacher X, Free State)

Example of a sermon segment on building relationships with the poor as a means of empowerment:

'We must start by serving each other irrespective of race, colour, rich or poor – *love your neighbour* … So start reaching out to those hungry people out there: the sick, homeless, unemployed, criminals, and the lot – go and start relationships with them.' (Preacher R, Eastern Cape)

Example of a sermon segment on financial support for the poor in order to empower them to help themselves:

'We are called by the soft voice of God, the One that calls us to a better future … a future full of hope! … Come and move with us! … We are involved in direct eradicating of poverty in three communities by means of financial support for them to get skills.' (Preacher N, Gauteng)

Example of a sermon segment on educational support as empowerment:

'Brothers and sisters, come and join us in practical outreaches to those in need. We as congregation are involved in the local primary school by providing for poor children to be able to stay at school … Two years ago we started to help poor children at the local high school to be able to continue their education.' (Preacher V, Gauteng)

Example of a sermon segment on medical support as empowerment:

'[*Our congregation*] provides on a regular basis … two nurses who care for sick people on a voluntary basis.' (Preacher X, Free State)

Example of a sermon segment on helping the poor to build houses as empowerment:

'We invite you to participate … in the project of our congregation where we help the poor in the Northern Cape to build houses.' (Preacher O, Mpumalanga)

Example of a sermon segment on self-help projects as empowerment:

'When we experience love and acceptance for who we are and we are welcomed in the lives of other people without conditions, we experience healing … Our houses and church must be places where people can find healing and where the light of heaven shines … Come and join us in helping a group of women to become financially independent by teaching them to make pearl necklaces and blankets which they can sell.' (Preacher Y, Western Cape)

The following section details the categories of congregational projects directed at the poor, which emerged from the comparison of the significant sermon segments from the total of 26 sermons in my sample.

Categories of congregational projects directed at the poor

The classification of categories which now follows is a list of categories emerging from the analysis of sermons on Matthew 25:31–42 in the first and second cycle of grounded theory analysis. The projects are from the sample of congregations I am researching. The list of projects which follows here emerges from sermons in the second cycle of selective coding and one sermon from the first cycle of open coding analysis (see Table 1).

Main category 1: Congregational projects of charity

Subcategory 1A: Food provision

1. Congregation provides food for mine workers when a mine does not function as a result of bad management (Preacher V). Property: Food provision for unpaid mine workers.
2. Congregation provides food for jobless people waiting in the street for piecework (Preacher M). Property: Food provision for jobless people waiting to be employed.
3. Congregations provide food for poor learners at schools (Preachers N, O, V and Y). Property: Food provision for learners.
4. Congregation provides food for a poor community (Preacher N). Property: Food provision for a community.
5. Congregation provides food for a home for adults with disabilities (Preacher N). Property: Food provision for a home as institution.
6. Congregation provides food for families (Preacher X). Property: Food provision for families.
7. Congregation provides food in an informal settlement (Preacher O). Property: Food provision in an informal settlement.

Subcategory 1B: Clothes provision

1. Congregation provides clothes for a poor community (Preacher N). Property: Clothes provision for a community.
2. Congregation provides clothes for families in need (Preacher X). Property: Clothes provision for families.

Main category 2: Projects of empowerment

Subcategory I2A: Relationships with the poor

1. Congregations form relationships of love, compassion and respect with the poor (Preachers J, R, S and X). Property: Relationships of love, compassion and respect.
2. Congregations form relationships of mercy and care with the poor (Preachers A, B, C, K, P, Q and T). Although I collected the sermons of Preachers B, C and K in the first cycle, I analysed them in the second cycle, which is why they have been included here. Property: Relationships of mercy and care.
3. Congregation forms relationships of prayer with taxi drivers and passengers during Passover (Preacher O). Property: Relationships of prayer.
4. Congregation forms relationships to solve poor people's

problems (Preacher O). Property: Relationships of problem solving.

Subcategory 2B: Financial support

1. Congregations provide financial support for poor inhabitants of old age homes (Preachers M, N, W, X and Y). Property: Financial support for people in old age homes.
2. Congregations provide financial support for the training of pastors for poor communities (Preachers M and O). Property: Financial support for training of pastors for poor communities.
3. Congregations provide financial support for the salaries of pastors and missionaries (Preachers M and O). Property: Financial support for pastors and missionaries.

Subcategory 2C: Medical support

1. Congregations provide help in preparation of medicine at state clinics (Preachers O, W and Y). Property: Medical support at state clinics.
2. Congregation provides voluntary nurses for sick people in the congregation (Preacher X). Property: Medical support for people in the congregation.

Subcategory 2D: Educational support

1. Congregations provide money and food for poor learners in nursery, primary and high schools (Preachers M, V, X and Y). Property: Educational support for nursery, primary and high schools.
2. Congregations provide money, clothes and food for orphans in children's homes (Preachers M, O and Y). Property: Educational support for orphans in children's homes.

Subcategory 2E: Building support

1. Congregations provide help in building houses in institutions of rehabilitation (Preachers M and U). Property: Building support in institutions of rehabilitation.
2. Congregations provide helpers for the building of houses and start a vegetable garden to care for orphans (Preachers A and O). Property: Building support in housing for orphans.
3. Congregation provides helpers in establishing a bakery and manufacturing of crafts for poor people (Preacher O). Property: Building support for a bakery and crafts manufacturing.

Subcategory 2F: Self-help support

1. Congregation provides helpers for training women to sew, make blankets and necklaces to sell (Preacher Y). Property: Self-help training for manufacturing goods for sale.
2. Congregation provides helpers to teach women to read and write (Preacher M). Property: Self-help teaching to read and write.

Discussion and conclusion

These projects all take place in the immediate context of a specific congregation. Although many congregations run the same kind of projects they do not overlap, because each one happens in the context of the vicinity of each specific congregation. These types of categories of projects by congregations in their outreach to the poor, inspired by preaching on the text from Matthew 25:31–46, bring something new into homiletical literature on preaching to the poor. My survey of the literature in Pieterse (2009) has shown that homiletical literature is calling for preaching on poverty, but does not say clearly how to preach on poverty (cf. Pieterse 2007:134, 144; cf. *inter alia*, Babinsky 1997; Bosch 1991; Botman 2000; McMickle 2007; Menking 2006; Myers 1999; Nel 2005; West 1999).

The sermon analysis of this second cycle of selective coding produced a variety of projects directed at the poor as social capital by church members. My subsequent classification of them shows a wide spectrum of different types of projects practiced by church congregations in my sample. I plan to collect more sermons during 2012 through this selective coding cycle in order to see if the types of projects by congregations are saturated. This classification of projects has the potential to form a basis for the third cycle of theoretical coding.

From the sermon analysis of this first round of selective coding also emerged an enrichment of the central concept of *appealing* to the listeners found in the first cycle of open coding analysis, namely invitation to care for the poor by means of projects by the congregation. The central or core concept (appealing to the listeners) is now enriched to the following formulation: *appealing to the listeners as an invitation to care for the poor by means of projects by the congregation*. All the significant sermon segments, from the 26 sermons in line with my research question, are related to this new central concept.

The classification of projects emerging from the sermons in the sample represents potentially new aspects of a homiletical theory on preaching on poverty, especially when Matthew 25:31–46 is used as the sermon text. The sermons are effective in inspiring church members to action by engaging in the projects directed at the poor as social capital. Churches with projects in their immediate contexts are becoming missional churches (cf. Hirsch 2006). These new aspects of a homiletical theory will be researched in the third cycle of grounded theory analysis, namely theoretical coding.

Acknowledgements
Competing interests

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