

## **FAITH MOVES MOUNTAINS AND SOMETIMES REDUCES RECIDIVISM: COMMUNITY CHAPLAINCY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE RE-FORMATION IN ENGLAND AND WALES**

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**Abstract** *A renewal of interest is currently underway in the instrumental efficacy of religion to reduce recidivism to which the relatively new phenomenon of community chaplaincy that supports prisoners on release from custody is expected to contribute. After reviewing some evidence on the relationship between religion and recidivism that deserves critical respect, it is argued that the distinctive contribution of community chaplaincy to criminal justice re-formation should have two main features. The first is to provide supportive relationships within a pro-social context to people leaving prison, and the second is to draw attention to the unpropitious economic environment into which they will be released. Both features define the moral rather than instrumental obligation of community chaplaincy to ex-prisoners beyond the gate within the proposed payment by results culture.*

**Keywords** *Religion, multi-faith, community chaplaincy, recidivism, moral obligation*

### **Introduction**

Religious ministry to people in prison reaches back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Zimmer, 2005). Later the phenomenon of religion influenced the penal system in the United States where the linkage between religion and rehabilitation was manifested in the Calvinist New York silent system and the Quaker Philadelphia separate system (O'Connor, 2004). Religion was also influential in penal reform in England and Wales during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (Howard, 1777) and evangelical theology inspired the probation system which emerged from the police court mission of the Church of England Temperance Society (Whitehead and Statham, 2006). Additionally Gilbert (1966) asserted that various humanitarian institutions within Victorian society operated with a religious ideology. Accordingly there is a historical connection of considerable longevity between the spheres of religion, penal policy, and criminal justice formation.

The previous decade has witnessed a renaissance of the *religious question* within criminal justice in the United States (Sundt, Dammer and Cullen, 2002). It has also erupted into life in England and Wales within the context of structural re-formation associated with the

National Offender Management Service (NOMS), and the Green Paper *Breaking the Cycle* (Ministry of Justice, 2010) encourages the diversification of offender services through creating opportunities for the public, private, and third sectors. Within this marketised environment interest has been directed towards the efficacy of religion and faith-based interventions to rehabilitate offenders, which resonates with the Big Society of the Conservative-Liberal coalition government. Furthermore an extensive body of evidence has accumulated on the efficacy of religion and correctional programmes located within the United States as well as other countries (Aos, Miller and Drake, 2006; O'Connor, 2004, 2004/5; Johnson, 2011), according to which some studies 'have found a link between spiritual practice and reduced recidivism, but other studies have found no such link' (O'Connor, Cayton, Min and Duncan, 2007: 2).

The purpose and scope of this article considers some of the evidence on the relationship between religion, faith-based interventions, and crime reduction. By doing so it exposes surface tensions which impinge upon the rationale of faith communities, particularly the relatively new phenomenon of community chaplaincy which will assume analytical relevance later. At this point it should be clarified that community chaplaincy began in Canada during the 1980s and over recent years has taken root in England and Wales where it supports people leaving prison. Indubitably the dominant theme within contemporary criminal justice remains reducing crime, to which community chaplaincy is expected to contribute. However it will be argued that the religious question has significance beyond the narrow instrumental confines of achieving this often elusive objective. This includes a perspective often neglected which is the moral obligation of community chaplaincy to engage with people leaving prison through supportive relationships, but also to draw attention to structural and material factors in what is an increasingly testing economic environment. It is therefore timely to draw attention to the religious question through the lens of community chaplaincy within contemporary criminal justice. Before expanding upon these matters it is necessary to review some of the evidence on religion, deviance, and crime. In doing so I refer to the research environment within the United States but will also allude to some research produced in the United Kingdom.

### **Religion, delinquency, and criminality: some research evidence**

William Kvaraceus, Assistant Superintendent of Schools of Passaic, New Jersey, reached back to the 1930s to studies which examined the relationship between religious training, beliefs, and behaviour. His own study comprised 761 delinquents (563 boys and 198 girls) referred to the Passaic Children's Bureau during a five year period before 1944. Most of these delinquent youth claimed affiliation with a church, but only 54% attended regularly. Therefore with half the delinquents the church could not be expected to have much impact because of their tenuous links. At the same time:

*[I]t is significant that the 54% reported as regularly attending, in spite of this steady religious affiliation, did not appear deterred from exhibiting aggressive-delinquent behaviour. As various investigators have already indicated, this may point to the lack of any positive relationship between religious knowledge or attitudes and moral behaviour (1944: 286).*

Over two decades later Travis Hirschi (1969) theorised that young people do not offend because they have something to lose, a consequence of socialisation into the normative values of society which facilitate effective mechanisms of control. The salient factor for Hirschi's control theory is the level of attachment and commitment to, as well as belief in, the conventional moral order established through the structures of family, school, peer groups, and the workplace. Importantly, says Tierney, 'By asking the question, "Why do we not break the law", control theory is suggesting that something special happens to prevent people acting out whatever impulses they may possess' (2006: 205). Accordingly when exploring the religious question this *something special* incorporates religious attitudes and influences, the activity of a spiritual dimension, or perhaps church attendance which engenders conformity to acceptable moral and legal codes. Even though this thesis was questioned by Kvaraceus, perhaps Hirschi would lend it support.

Towards the end of the 1960s Hirschi and Stark (1969) wrote an intriguingly named paper, *Hellfire and Delinquency*. The research question was: can the prospect of hellfire for those guilty of falling short of acceptable legal and moral norms serve as a deterrent? The authors obtained data from a sample of 4077 students entering public junior and senior high schools of Western Contra Costa County, California, during the autumn of 1964, when they completed a questionnaire which included measures of delinquency and religiosity. Even though they acknowledged previous studies which revealed a weak relationship between church attendance and non-delinquent behaviours, Hirschi and Stark were clear that religion does not deter. They concluded that 'For all intents and purposes, then, church attendance does not affect acceptance of the moral values assumed to be important deterrents of delinquency' (1969: 205). This thesis received support from Burkett and White (1974), but also refutation (Albrecht, Chadwick and Alcorn, 1977), and conflicting findings emerged (Higgins and Albrecht, 1977). Nevertheless Jensen and Erickson (1979) indicated that church attendance had some impact upon delinquency.

Other studies suggested that being involved in religious activities was associated with not engaging in offending behaviour. Travers and Davies (1961) concluded that delinquents were much less orientated towards religion than their delinquent-free counterparts. This perspective received support from Rhodes and Reiss (1970) who claimed that delinquency varies with religious orientation and church attendance. For example:

*White boys with no religious preference have almost twice as high a delinquency rate (132/1,000) as all white boys having religious preference (72/1,000) after the rates have been adjusted for occupational status, subject and parent religious participation, age, and family structure (1970: 94).*

Therefore religious orientation cannot be discounted, even though caution was counselled when interpreting the findings. Nevertheless the authors stated that their study supported 'the notion that there is a 'religious factor' in delinquent and truant behaviour' (1970: 98; for a comprehensive review of the literature between 1913 and 1970 see Knudten and Knudten, 1971; Baier and Wright, 2001 cover the literature between 1969-1998; Johnson,

2011 has produced a systematic review of articles published between 1944 and 2010 which is the most comprehensive undertaken so far and is worthy of close attention).

Intriguingly Rodney Stark (1996) returned to the aforementioned *Hellfire and Delinquency* article he wrote with Hirschi nearly 30 years previously. The original article undermined the orthodox theological assumption, combined with control theory, that one would find a relationship between religion, church attendance, and delinquency prevention. Therefore 'the word quickly spread that kids on their way home from Sunday school were as likely to strip your car as were kids on their way home from the pool hall' (1996: 163). By the 1990s Stark advanced a modified position after clarifying that the earlier stance was misleading because social and moral contexts differ between geographical locations. This insight allowed Stark to press home a more sociological than psychological explanation of how religion facilitates conformity. In other words conformity occurs if one conceives of religion as a social structure, or group property, rather than an individual psychological trait. Consequently even though studies in Oregon and California did not find the hellfire effect, studies in other areas were more promising. The modified thesis was that 'Religious individuals will be less likely than those who are not religious to commit delinquent acts, but only in communities where the majority of people are actively religious' (Stark, 1996: 163). This resonates with differential association theory (Sutherland, 1939) where conduct is learned and reinforced by being exposed to a preponderance of specific cultural, spiritual, and religious influences.

### **From religious sensibilities to faith-based interventions**

It is pertinent at this point to refer to Johnson (2004) who differentiates between two approaches which facilitates the transition from religious influences and affiliations, to specific faith-based interventions. First, *organic religion* directs attention to the impact of religious sensibilities on behaviour and asserts that 'consistent and growing evidence makes it increasingly obvious that religious commitment and involvement help protect youth from delinquent behaviour and deviant activities' (2004: 331). Even though adult research is less common than delinquency research in this field, he claims a similar pattern between the two age groups concerning the efficacy of religion. Second, Johnson turns to *intentional or programmatic religion* where interventions are designed specifically to address behavioural problems, such as addictive behaviours in prison settings to effect rehabilitation. Johnson clarifies that there are more organic compared to faith-based intervention studies, and the latter may have an advantage over secular programmes (2004: 333). Furthermore there are studies from the United States on the benefits of religion and faith-based programmes to reduce infractions during imprisonment. Clear and Myhre (1995) found that prisoner involvement in religious activities assisted psychological adjustment, and Clear et al. (2000) concluded that religious influences prevent dehumanisation. Other relevant studies include Camp et al. (2008), Clear and Sumter (2002), Mears et al., (2006), O'Connor and Perreyclear, (2002). Therefore the benefit of religion should not solely be judged by its rehabilitative efficacy after release from a custodial facility.

When turning from the benefits of religion within the prison environment to the impact of faith-based interventions beyond release, O'Connor and Duncan (2008) confirm that most

studies have appeared during the last ten years. However before alluding to these studies the caveat should be included that methodological problems have sometimes obstructed definitive conclusions of their impact. Some of these problems touch upon the ontological and epistemological complexity of isolating a specific faith component of an intervention within prison which transforms law-breaking into law-abiding attitudes (is it bible study, prayer, or pastoral counselling?). Related difficulties are not using random sampling, concerns over reliability and validity, an absence of longitudinal data, and the reminder that 'research methodology can have an important effect on research findings' (Johnson, Li, Larson and McCullough 2000: 46). Other methodological deficiencies are little use of control groups, self-selection bias (a positive effect could be explained by how participants are selected rather than programme effect), and limited measures of impact (Mears, Roman, Woolf and Buck 2006: 359). It is also important to clarify whether we are considering interventions with delinquents or adults, males or females, prison based and/or post-release impacts. Finally a faith-based intervention which specifically utilises bible study, prayer, perhaps spiritual counselling, is conceptually different to people of faith being motivated to provide assistance to offenders and ex-prisoners. These features expose research complexities which account for the inconclusive nature of some of the findings.

O'Connor and Duncan (2008) return our thinking to faith-based interventions in conjunction with 'What Works' by citing Aos et al. (2006) who reviewed the evidence on 'What Works' (and what does not) from 291 evaluations in the United States and other English speaking countries over a 35 year period. This review is significant because it constitutes 'the most succinct and methodologically sound summary of the research to date' (O'Connor and Duncan, 2008: 88). Pertinently it includes six evaluations of faith-based interventions, five of which were grouped together because they promoted Christianity amongst prisoners to reduce recidivism beyond the prison walls. Aos et al. (2006) concluded that four out of five studies did not have a programme effect: O'Connor et al. (1997); Burnside et al. (2001); Trusty and Eisenberg (2003); and Johnson (2004). One reason for this could be that they were not adequately aligned to the principles of 'What Works' (O'Connor and Duncan, 2008; O'Connor, Duncan and Quillard, 2006), and more research is required of sufficient methodological rigour. By contrast the Wilson et al. (2005) study did find a programme effect.

It is also pertinent to refer to Johnson (2011: 73) who has produced a comprehensive review of 272 studies on the religion and crime literature between 1944 and 2010. He found that 90% of these studies (247 out of 272) found an inverse or beneficial relationship between religion and crime. In other words as religion increased, crime and delinquency decreased. Even though most of the studies he cites were conducted in the United States, he also draws our attention to a handful of studies conducted within the United Kingdom which produced beneficial effects (Carr-Saunders et al., 1944; Christo and Franey, 1995; Clark et al., 1992; Cook et al., 1997; Francis and Mullen 1993 and 1994; Montgomery and Francis, 1996; Wright and Cox, 1971. Additionally one should also refer to Maruna et al., 2006; and McNeill and Weaver, 2010 include a discussion on *Religion, Spirituality and Desistance* at page 68 which is pertinent when analysing community chaplaincy).

Therefore even though the accumulated evidence demands cautious evaluation, the relationship between religion and offending is not irrelevant for the academic community (Baier and Wright, 2001; Johnson, 2011). Notwithstanding the critical questions raised by Aos et al. (2006) religion has value within prison (O'Connor and Perreyclear, 2002), faith-based interventions can conduce to rehabilitation if coupled with substance abuse treatment, educational and employment services (McKean and Ransford, 2004), and aligned with the principles of 'What Works' (O'Connor, Duncan and Quillard, 2006). There is evidence that prison chaplains can positively influence post-release outcomes (Sundt, Dammer and Cullen 2002: 61), and religiously-inspired community oriented Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) located in Canada and other countries benefit sex offenders after release from prison (Wilson, Cortoni and McWhinnie, 2009). However the point at which prisoners re-enter society is critical. Accordingly it is expected that the relatively new phenomenon of community chaplaincy can make an effective contribution to post-release outcomes, to which I now turn.

### **Emergence of community chaplaincy: from Canada to England and Wales**

The renaissance of the religious question in England and Wales has occurred in conjunction with criminal justice re-formation stimulated by the National Offender Management Service, circa 2004. NOMS established the operational conditions whereby public, private, and third sector organisations can contest for the business of providing services to offenders, a principle enshrined within the Offender Management Act 2007. Even though the competitive dynamics of NOMS may enhance levels of performance in public sector organisations, previous New Labour governments increasingly encouraged the third sector, which includes multi-faith traditions, to get more involved. During the autumn of 2003 the Home Office established the Faith Communities Unit which was responsible for the document *Working Together*. It was asserted that:

*The Christian Churches have had an immense historic influence in shaping society, and make significant contributions in a wide range of areas such as community development, education, social inclusion and heritage. For these reasons, the Churches have made and continue to make a particular and distinctive contribution to the development and implementation of Government policy in certain areas* (Home Office, 2004: 7).

It was also being affirmed that government cannot promote citizenship, reduce re-offending, or promote community cohesion by itself, which is why it must seek alliances with, as one example, *The Faith and Voluntary and Community Sector Alliance* (NOMS, 2005). One specific manifestation of partnership is community chaplaincy which:

*[P]rovides a bridge between prison and the community. It takes prisoners from the gate and supports them as they start their new lives, building the links between churches and the community. There are now 10 community chaplaincies in existence and 11 more in development. Community chaplaincy is not the creation of Government. It has grown up from the grass*

*roots, and we must nurture it. It is an initiative to which many faith groups, not just Christian, are contributing (Clarke 2005: 7).*

Community chaplaincy originated in New Brunswick, Canada, in 1980, and there are currently 37 projects scattered across the country (Whitehead, 2011). It provides a faith-based focus for people leaving prison by delivering pastoral and practical services such as assistance with accommodation and addictions. The theologically informed gene code of community chaplaincy is given expression by utilising volunteers drawn primarily from faith communities to build bridges between ex-prisoners beyond the gate and the communities to which they return, facilitated by the principles of restorative justice (Snyder, 2001). Subsequently approximately 10 years ago it migrated across the Atlantic and by 2010 the Community Chaplaincy Association of England and Wales had established its own dedicated website providing details of 12 projects located at Feltham, Wandsworth, and Wormwood Scrubs in London; also Leicester, Manchester, Staffordshire, Nottingham, North East, Exeter, Lewes, Swansea, and Leeds. In fact more are being planned to create a national network of support for released prisoners which utilise the resources of local churches, as well as other faith traditions such as the Muslim community. As of autumn 2011 there were 18 projects which contain a core of 50 community chaplains as well as other paid staff funded by charitable monies (not the state), facilitated by over 400 volunteers as mentors. The vision is to *help ex-prisoners to achieve successful re-entry by offering support to desist from crime and to build a brighter future in the community*. It is important to elucidate that the offer of assistance begins ideally three months prior to release when community chaplains and volunteers, facilitated by prison chaplaincy, offer supportive relationships to prisoners on the landing.

Furthermore this initiative resonates with the Big Society articulated by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government formed in May 2010, in pursuit of a market-driven ideology that will enable the public, private, and voluntary sectors to compete with each other to provide offender services (Ministry of Justice, 2010). Therefore one should not underestimate the importance being attached to the involvement of community chaplaincy within the context of state and accompanying criminal justice re-formation which is currently underway. Community chaplaincy is separate from, but linked to, multi-faith chaplaincy arrangements within the prison system in England and Wales which provides services to prisoners of different faiths: Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh; the Salvation Army also provides chaplaincy services. Some projects are located within prison establishments (Swansea), others beyond the gate (for example at Leicester and Manchester). Critically they work alongside, utilise and mobilise community-based volunteers to achieve numerous objectives: to support people at the point of release from prison to lead a crime free life; build safer communities; protect the public and reduce the number of victims. Moreover these objectives will be achieved by responding to the accommodation needs of ex-prisoners; provide opportunities to achieve the requisite skills to enhance employment opportunities; advice on finances, benefits, substance abuse, physical and mental health issues; transform attitudes, thinking, and behaviours; to provide pastoral counselling and support consistent with the values traditionally associated with faith communities. It should be stated clearly that community chaplaincy does not evangelise or proselytise; its sensibilities respect the diversity of race and sexual

orientation (a Muslim community chaplain is based at the Feltham Young Offender Institution); and some ex-prisoners are involved with community chaplaincy in addition to statutory probation services because they were sentenced to more than 12 months imprisonment (Whitehead, 2011).

It is of interest to note that the Ministry of Justice Green Paper (2010) proposes a *rehabilitation revolution* by making better use of the expertise waiting to be liberated in the third sector, and that non-governmental organisations will be paid by results to reduce crime. However this presents difficulties, not least because of what is the sometimes inconclusive nature of the aforementioned research which highlights the complex relationship between religion and recidivism. Furthermore planned reductions in public spending and services between 2010-2015 which will affect disadvantaged communities, as well as unstable and short-term charitable funding arrangements for third sector organisations, will not make the task of reducing crime any easier to achieve. This is the prevailing context within which community chaplaincy is seeking to realise its vision of helping ex-prisoners to lead a crime free life. But how can we begin to conceptualise the distinctive contribution of community chaplaincy?

### **Moral case for supportive relationships**

Criminal justice systems comprise complex and contested features, one of which is arguably an instrumental rationality. In other words government expect their criminal justice organisations, such as prisons and probation, to be effective instruments of rehabilitative transformation and social control. Even though community chaplaincy in England and Wales cannot avoid being affected by this conceptualisation, it does not define its essential nature. Therefore the first point to emphasise can be illustrated by recalling what happened to probation towards the end of the 1970s when its rationale was being questioned within a rapidly changing political, social, and economic context. One solution advocated at this historical juncture was to separate care and control, which would release probation to become a court-based social work service with the remit to provide caring services to a disadvantaged constituency, namely offenders (Harris, 1977: 436). Even though this bifurcation was not pursued by policy makers, and the politics of modernisation subsequently transformed probation and other public services (Whitehead, 2010), a cogent case can still be made for the provision of care and assistance through supportive relationships with ex-prisoners, within a pro-social context, not least because they can be effective mechanisms in the process of changing anti-social attitudes, beliefs, and values into pro-social ones (O'Connor 2004, 2004/5). Consequently the Community Chaplaincy Association should consider fashioning a distinctive place for itself during the process of criminal justice re-formation. Specifically it can train and then mobilise volunteers as mentors; facilitate the capacity for good will within churches and other faith traditions to build supportive relationships with ex-prisoners beyond the gate. Arguably this is the terrain best suited to community chaplaincy which would leave public, private, and other third sector organisations to provide a range of services to ex-prisoners that address employment, accommodation, and substance abuse issues.

However the substantive point to advance is that empathy and supportive relationships are not solely provided to achieve a utilitarian means to-an-end objective, but rather



constitute an end-in-itself because it is arguably the right thing to do. In other words there is a moral as well as instrumental demand upon community chaplaincy to provide unconditional support to ex-prisoners, *regardless of the impact upon recidivism*. The dominant discourse of reducing crime is as understandable as it is desirable, but community chaplaincy operates within a theologically informed and value driven moral framework that reaches beyond a narrow utilitarian rationality. This differentiates its faith-oriented contribution from other organisations which should be clarified in what is becoming a crowded field of criminal justice operators being corralled into a market-driven iron cage.

### **Political engagement and social action**

The second substantive point engages with political and sociological analysis that prises open an appreciation of the material and structural arrangements affecting ex-prisoners upon release. A recent exposition of this perspective can be found in the work of David Harvey (2010) who situates the human condition within the changing fortunes of a capitalist economic system which, since the 1750s, has experienced periodic convulsions of which the latest began in 2007 and is currently imposing its strictures. Alluding to the Reagan and Thatcher decade of the 1980s, Harvey explains that the neoliberal agenda they pursued in response to the economic frailties of the previous decade was a class project designed to restore power to economic elites. It is cogently argued that this neoliberal project centralised wealth and power into fewer hands which widened the gap between rich and poor (Dorling, 2010; Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009). Within the contemporary context of neoliberal dislocation *and* resuscitation, the realignment of the state-finance-citizen nexus will affect the provision of public services through reductions in public spending which, in turn, is unlikely to reduce inequality. This is analytically pertinent when contextualising the work of community chaplaincy with people leaving prison.

Consequently capitalist reconstruction (euphemistically the Big Society?) reaches into the lives of individuals, families, and communities, and is a vigorous dynamic shaping the work of community chaplaincy from London and Leicester, to Manchester, Leeds, and Swansea. Capitalism is a blessing and a curse; a blessing because it raises living standards and provides the resources for civilised life to be maintained, but a curse because its differential impacts create and perpetuate inequality amongst the most vulnerable sections of the community where one is most likely to find ex-prisoners. Even though I have just argued that community chaplaincy has an unconditional moral responsibility to engage with and provide support to ex-prisoners through pro-social relationships, equally it has a moral responsibility to challenge injustice, inequality, and disadvantage, the extreme expressions of a malfunctioning neoliberal political economy (Reiner, 2007). Any misunderstanding of this dual individual-social function risks religion in general, and community chaplaincy in particular, being reduced to an ideological apparatus of the state that legitimises the position that prevailing political, social, and economic arrangements are the only ones feasible. It may be suggested that one way of pursuing this dual function is, as an example, through Clinks which was established in 1998 to support voluntary and community organisations in their work with offenders. Clinks was also capacity building within community chaplaincy during 2006-2008 and significantly has a seat on the NOMS Management Board. Therefore community chaplaincy could work through Clinks to

communicate with policy makers within government the issues confronting ex-prisoners after release, as well as the structural obstacles inhibiting community chaplaincy achieving its vision. Another possibility, perhaps a longer term goal, is for community chaplaincy itself to acquire a legitimate position on the NOMS Management Board through which to advocate its moral responsibilities.

## Conclusion

This article has drawn attention to what can be constructed as an ongoing *religious question* within the contemporary criminal justice system. This can be illustrated by acknowledging its manifestation in the Kainos prison ministry (Burnside et al., 2001), Probation Service Christian Fellowship, Social Workers' Christian Fellowship, the Evangelical Alliance, Lawyers Christian Fellowship, the Prison Fellowship in the United States and United Kingdom, Alpha in Prisons, Daylight Christian Trust, the Prison Advice and Care Trust, as well as multi-faith prison-based chaplaincies within the prison system of England and Wales. Notwithstanding the complexities of the evidence on religious sensibilities, faith-based interventions, and recidivism discussed earlier, one should also draw attention to community chaplaincy as a multi-faith response to building a brighter future for ex-prisoners specifically beyond the gate. By so doing it is conducive to the Big Society and the rehabilitative revolution being pursued by the Ministry of Justice. But in being drawn closer to the centre of criminal justice operations the third sector, churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, in addition to community chaplaincy with their mentors and volunteers must avoid being absorbed to such an extent that it dilutes their independence, impact, and room for manoeuvre. The 18 projects alluded to above may increasingly be located *in* the criminal justice system, but they are not *of* it like state run prisons and probation structures primarily because of their voluntary and charitable status. Therefore are community chaplaincies content to be involved in the state's rehabilitative revolution, or are there distinctively different features it brings to the criminal justice table? Does it want an enhanced role within a system that ostensibly controls the vulnerable poor, or voice political concerns on their behalf within a recessionary environment? What will community chaplaincy have to be and to do, to remain true to its theologically informed and faith-based values?

Immanuel Kant, speaking from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, would remind communities of faith that there are limits to human knowledge and especially knowledge of God. Nevertheless there remains the inescapable voice of duty and corresponding moral obligation as a categorical imperative, which provides access to another world. Accordingly this *other world* invites community chaplaincy to break free from a narrow conceptualisation of payment by results as this mode of thought reduces criminal justice operations to homo economicus and the position that what is meaningful must always be instrumentally useful. By contrast Kant affirmed that there is a higher moral truth, the operation of a moral law (Steiner 1973), which continues to demand a response to human need as an end-in-itself but also to challenge the socio-economic dynamics of criminal and social *in-justice*. This is the broader but also the distinctive vision that community chaplaincy can bring to criminal justice re-formation during 2010-2015 and its prophetic voice should declare it. Therefore the *religious question* remains a pertinent feature within contemporary criminal justice which should be afforded critical respect.

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