

Interviewer : James Tjibeba.
Interviewee : Rev. Purity Malinga
Place of interview: Edendale Methodist church
Date : 26-09-1994

Transcript of the interview with Rev. Purity Malinga, of Edendale Methodist church and Rev. M. Sibeko of the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

James : Purity could you tell me briefly about yourself, your background and christian affiliation?

Purity: I was brought up in a rural christian family from my parents and grandparents. I grow up attending church. I regarded attending Sunday school and church as a privilege. My parents were both members of the Methodist church. To attend the church console my soul. When I was at home I really missed the church. The upbringing at home was spiritual and enriching.

James : Are both of your parents still alive?

Purity: Yes

James : Tell me also about your level of education including your theological studies.

Purity: I went to primary school at home, Ixopo and did my secondary school education in Richmond. After completing form three I did my teacher's training course at Imbaletu and taught for five years at primary school and did my senior certificate through correspondence. It was during this time I got the calling for the ministry. I joined the church after realising the call in 1983. In 1984-86 I went to Fedsem-Pietermaritzburg for theological studies; 1987- july 1989 I went to U.S.A. for further studies and complete M.Div. degree at Hawvard school of theology. In 1989 I came back to South Africa and was appointed at Fedsem as lecturer till the close down of Fedsem last year. after Fedsem close last close last year the church send me to Edendale Parish.

James : Can you say something about the decision to become a minister especially you as a black women?

Purity: As I have said my first profession was teaching and I had always that feeling that God is calling for me to served for him in his ministry on a full-time basis. I have heard a women cannot become a minister, but I have avoided this rumours for number of years. I responded positive to the call and offered myself to ministry.

James : The time when you become a pastor what was the reaction of your family, close friends and male clergy?

Purity: Let me start with my family, when I began to write the

exams for the candidacy. I was fortunate because I was teaching at home and my family was around me. They did not like it at first, but was not an obstacle to that, as time went on they became supportive towards my decision, especially my mother. She got to accept it and support me fully.

About the reaction of other clergy for some it was just a joke they thought there was something wrong with me. They thought I did not know what I was doing. Some thought it was not a genuine call. There were few of course who were supportive and encourage me and treat me as a colleague.

James : How many years experience do you have as a minister?

Purity: I was accepted in 1981 and study for 6 years, and if you subtracted this 6 years I went to school than I gain real experience. In total it's 12 years.

James : How old are you now?

Purity: I am 36 years old.

James : During your ministry have you experienced any kind of segregation? For my colleagues at home, my being into the ministry was just a joke in the discussion where I work, the attitude of not accepting me was visible and concrete. It was clear that there was an attitude of not accepting me as an equal colleague. I am always feeling this attitude from my male colleagues. I am seen as a person with a lower status in my profession.

James : I am aware of the fact that you are not happy with the term "indigenous" clergy, but let me ask you is it easy or difficult to be an indigenous clergy nowadays. Briefly comment on this?

Purity: I think it is a challenge to be a black minister this days, with the changes in our country presently. For a long time we have oppressed, but now we are ministering to people who are for the first time experiencing the sense of being free citizens in their own country. At this stage I cannot say it is easy or difficult to be a minister today.

James : Any prospects for the future?

Purity: Personal- beginning of next year I am going to TECC in

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Johannesburg and looking forward to further my studies
towards Doctoral level.