Towards a Theology of Mission and Evangelization in Kenya in a Post-Colonial Context: Challenges and Opportunities

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of St. Michael’s College and the Pastoral Theology Department of the Toronto School of Theology in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Theology awarded by the University of St. Michael’s College

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Abstract

This thesis is an attempt to understand the challenges and opportunities for a theology of mission and evangelization in Kenya in the post-colonial context. It begins by looking at the meaning and understanding of evangelization, and sheds some light on the paradigm shifts in mission and evangelization especially as it pertains to Kenya. It emphasizes that both David Bosch’s ecumenical paradigm shift in theology of mission and Bernard Lonergan’s shift from a classicist to an empirical notion of culture are important in directing and informing practical strategies for mission and evangelization today. It discusses some heightened tensions in theology of mission such as proclamation, dialogue and witness, and issues like inculturation and syncretism that have arisen in method and theology of mission, especially in Africa, following the Second Vatican Council. It also points out some significant challenges and opportunities to mission and evangelization in our present time. It argues that unless mission and evangelization begins to address the challenges that are confronting us today, it will continue to remain superficial and ineffective in people’s lives especially in Africa. Finally, it provides some practical insights that could be helpful to
pastoral agents and/or any other group of persons who are involved in mission and evangelization in Kenya.
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This thesis is dedicated to St. Gemma Galgani, C.P., (1878-1903), matron of my Passionist vocation.

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List of Acronyms

AA       Alcoholic Anonymous
AIDS     Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ATRs     African Traditional Religions
ARVs     Anti-Retroviral Drugs
CMS      Church Missionary Society
CORD     Coalition for Reform and Democracy
ECK      Electoral Commission of Kenya
HIV      Human Immunodeficiency Virus
I.E.A.C. Imperial British East Africa Company
KANU     Kenya African National Union
KARP     Kenya AIDS Relief Program
KES      Kenya Shillings
NARC     National Rainbow Coalition
NGO      Non-Governmental Organization
NYS      National Youth Service
ODM      Orange Democratic Movement
PNU      Party of National Unity
SCCs     Small Christian Communities
TJRC     Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission
TKK      Toa Kitu Kidogo
UNDCP    United Nations International Drug Control Programme
VTC      Voluntary Testing and Counseling
WHO      World Health Organization
General Introduction

Kenya held its fourth democratic parliamentary and presidential elections on December 27, 2007. After the incumbent president was declared the winner of the presidential election, there followed a prompt swearing-in ceremony at night. His opponents alleged that there had been wide-spread election manipulation, a claim supported by the international observers. Violent protests sprung up in different parts of the country immediately following the swearing-in ceremony. The people of Kenya woke up to a reality that no one imagined or anticipated. Fellow citizens, neighbours who had lived side by side for decades as friends and acquaintances, now suddenly turned against each other with weapons and violence. Those who had worshipped together now became fierce enemies because they had different political alliances and belonged to different ethnic tribes.

Those who sought refuge in church buildings, as in the town of Eldoret, for example, were burnt to death inside. These victims included children. Some victims were pulled from public transport vehicles or private cars and hacked or stoned to death. Some were killed in their own homes. Other demonstrators were shot at by the police in dramatic images captured by television cameras. In some areas, gangs took over control of the main highways and erected roadblocks. It was indeed a terrible time, and fear engulfed the whole country. Mombasa, Nakuru, Naivasha, Molo, Eldoret, Kericho, Kisumu and parts of Nairobi were some of the worst hit areas.

Over night, church leaders lost both their moral authority and their ability to guide the people. The masses were uncontrollable and would not listen to the voice of the religious authorities, many of whom were also caught up in the conflict and divided amongst
themselves. The situation throughout the country was chaotic. Fortunately for Kenya, the international community stepped in, and on January 20, 2008, former United Nations Secretary General Mr. Kofi Anan became the chief-mediator between the two major warring political parties. Unfortunately, by the time international mediators intervened, between late December 2007 and mid January 2008, more than 1,500 people had already lost their lives and more than 400,000 people had been displaced from their homes.

In the midst of such a crisis, a person of faith must ask: What is to be the true Christian witness and leadership of the churches in such a context? How is it that people who seem to be religious turn so quickly against one another in acts of violence? Where is Christ’s command of love of neighbour as oneself? Who is to blame? What is evangelization in such a context and how is it to be practised?

In his book, *Jesus and Ubuntu: Exploring the Social Impact of Christianity in Africa*, Mwenda Ntarangwi postulates that there are questions to be asked “of what role is being played by Christianity in Africa today and why churches play or do not play a positive role in the lives of individuals and societies in their respective locations in the continent.”¹ This will frame the broader context in which this thesis will seek to explore.

Robert Schreiter argues that “genuine preaching of the gospel will always change the culture, and that change involves more than calling individuals back to the behavioral norms of the culture. It is a change of horizon, which has to have social implications.”² However, in the late twentieth to early twenty-first century period, African countries have witnessed some of their most violent, dramatic and tragic conflicts, including massacres, political coups,

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deaths related to diseases such as HIV/AIDS and the Ebola virus, wide-spread corruption, economic crises, terror attacks, racial or ethnic violence, religious and sectarian tensions, and uncontrolled migration of peoples.

The fact of the matter is that these challenges affect the world and the issues cannot be ignored. Theologians must reflect theologically on these questions and respond appropriately to some, if not all, of these problems if the church is to have any positive effect on the concrete lives of people. How are we to foster a theology of mission and evangelization that brings forth healing, guidance, sustenance, reconciliation, empowerment and liberation, especially to the Kenyan people, in our present context?

The Second Vatican Council’s document *Gaudium et Spes* states clearly that “our generation, which has been marked by the persistent and acute hardships and anxiety resulting from the ravages of war and the threat of war, the whole human race faces a moment of supreme crisis in its advance towards maturity.” Pope John Paul II, on the other hand, encouraged Catholics to promote a “new evangelization, new in its ardor, its methods and its expressions.” Popes Benedict XVI and Francis have also extended that call in their own ways.

By taking such a bold and radical renewal of theological reflection on evangelization, we can adequately attend and constructively respond to the spiritual, intellectual, physical, and social needs of the twenty-first century humanity, most particularly in Africa.

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4 John Paul II, “Building a New Latin America”, *Origins* (11/1984, Volume 14), p.308. This was stressed by the Pope in his address to the Catholic Church in Latin America in 1984.
Thesis Question and Thesis Statement

This thesis will attempt to understand the theology of mission and evangelization in Kenya in a post-colonial context, i.e. in our present context. It will argue that unless evangelization begins to address particular contexts and specific challenges that are confronting believers particularly in Africa, it will remain superficial and ineffective in peoples’ lives. Evangelization in a world that is constantly changing, calls for a better understanding of the ‘signs of the time’, and the context in which we are living. However, equally important will be not just that evangelization is carried out, but how it is carried out in order to address the concrete concerns effecting the lives of the people. This ‘how’ is to be understood in part by what David Bosch refers to as a radical ecumenical paradigm shift in the theology of mission and what Bernard Lonergan calls a shift from a classicist notion of culture to an empirical one.

Genuine and effective Christian evangelization should give rise to an authentic and active Christian community and praxis. This will be more likely to bring forth wholeness, unity, healing, reconciliation and peace, not only to the pastoral agent but also to the whole Christian community, thereby improving people’s relationship with God, with one another and with society as a whole.

Significance of the Project

The objective of this thesis is to contribute to the awareness of the theology of mission and evangelization, particularly in Kenya, by invoking the key aspects of the Christian tradition, cultural resources and human experience in evangelization as foundations for research. While doing this, I am aware of the perspective of my own Kenyan background.
as the context for this study since even today Kenya is a multicultural society with people from different ethnic backgrounds and languages. The thesis is also intended to provide some practical insights which could be helpful to pastoral ministers and/or any other group of persons (i.e. among the laity) who are involved in the process of evangelization in Kenya today.

Methodology

To accomplish the task of this thesis, I will use the method and structure of research that is consistent with studies in the area of pastoral theology. I will begin by looking at the meaning of the word evangelization and its development. Then I will examine the transformation of method and the complexity of evangelization in the post-colonial context in the light of David Bosch’s ecumenical paradigm shift and Bernard Lonergan’s notion of the shift from a classical to an empirical notion of culture. I will analyse and examine some of the major tensions and issues that have arisen in theology of mission in the post-colonial context. These will then form the basis and background for approaching understanding of evangelization in Kenya in the current context.

I will bring these insights into creative and constructive dialogue (i.e. critical theological reflection) with evangelization in Kenyan in the post-colonial context. I will critically examine both the early Christian missionary approach to evangelization in Kenya and the post-colonial paradigm shift that is emerging. I will then present and examine some specific challenges to the theology of mission in Kenya today.
Finally, I will present and analyse some possible practical courses of action regarding the perimeters of evangelization and what can be done in order to carry out a genuine and effective Christian evangelization in Kenya in our present context.

In short, the method that I will use in this thesis will follow a process of attending to the Christian tradition, cultural values and human experience; appropriating these insights in the Kenyan context; and identifying appropriate pastoral responses to our present context (that is, experiencing, understanding, judging and acting) as clearly articulated and emphasized, for example, by James Whitehead and Evelyn Whitehead in their book, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry*.5

**Description of the Project**

David Bosch understands theology of mission in terms of historic ‘paradigm shifts’. A paradigm shift means a representation of how Christians understand and experience their faith in a particular context and within a particular period of time when it seems to be profoundly distinct from other periods.6 For Bosch, this did not mean that there was a qualitative difference between the old and the new; rather there was continuity. Accounting for that continuity, however, was another matter.

Bosch therefore envisioned a scenario in which there would be both “continuity and change, both faithfulness to the past and boldness to engage the future, both constancy and

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5 James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry, Revised Edition*, (Kansas City, O.M: Sheed and Ward, 1995). The Whiteheads point out that the goal of developing a method of reflection in Christian life is not simply to help believers understand more clearly, but to help them to act more effectively. They therefore stress that in every age, the community of faith must discover the shape of its ministry. “We must discern how we are to be faithful to the gospel and effective in our mission: to celebrate God’s saving presence and to contribute, by word and action and sacrament, to the fullness of this presence”, p.3.

contingency, both tradition and transformation.”

Bosch combined both Thomas Kuhn’s scientific theory of ‘paradigm shifts’ and Hans Kung’s historical subdivisions of Christianity and carefully applied them to his theological reflection on mission in the post-colonial context.

Bosch further identifies different aspects of theology of mission in the post-colonial context as the following: the church-with-others; Missio Dei; the quest for justice; evangelism; contextualization; liberation; inculturation; common witness; ministry by the whole people of God; witness to people of other living faiths; theology and action of hope. He points out clearly that we should prolong the logic of the ministry of Jesus and the early church in an imaginative, creative and responsible freedom to our own time and context.

Bernard Lonergan captures this notion with his understanding of culture and the cultural shift, as well as his concept of conversion. He stresses that because the modern context is that which is characterized by dynamism and change, there is, therefore, a need to develop an increased awareness and method for engaging cultural, religious, social, linguistic and economic structures and ideologies in preparation for communicating the Gospel.

Lonergan had a conviction that there are various ways of saying the same thing or, more importantly, of being the same thing, and the modern context is that which allows for a variety of expressions. He argues that modern society had moved away from the premises and assumptions of earlier times, hence the great need for reformulation, adaptation and/or

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7 Ibid., p.366.
8 Ibid., pp.377-522.
9 Ibid., p.185.
inculturation of the Christian faith. He further stresses that the modern context involves “a world from whose progress we must learn, as well as a world we must teach and redeem in its decline.”

Lonergan understands theology as mediation “between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix.” This mediation is not just one-way as in the colonial model of mission, but it is two-way that involves listening to the culture deeply. It implies that there must be a continuous engagement between theology and the noble and genuine aspects in a given culture and in different religious traditions. When and where this occurs, both the cultural and the religious traditions are altered, restructured, renewed or transformed. Furthermore, a continual study of cultural shift from classicism to empiricism can assist pastoral agents in interpreting attentively, intelligently, reasonably and responsibly the different cultural milieus in which they carry out the process of evangelization.

Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder see the theology of mission as “continuation of the mission of Jesus Christ to preach, serve and witness to the justice of God’s ‘already’ but ‘not yet’ reign.” They refer to these three aspects preaching, serving and witnessing - as ‘prophetic dialogue’, the foremost characteristic of theology of mission in the post-colonial context.

Benezet Bujo views theology of mission in the post-colonial context as contextualization. He argues that African theology, “it is plain, must be contextual, that is, it

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12 Lonergan, Method in Theology, p.xi.
must take into full account the actual African situation.”

John S. Mbiti speaks of theology of mission as indigenization. Mbiti views Christianity as a religion that is coming to a people who are profoundly religious in their own way. He therefore asserts that African traditional rituals, ceremonies and festivals have significant components that could be incorporated into Christianity.

Other African mission scholars, for example, Laurenti Magesa, Aylward Shorter and Cyril Orji prefer the word ‘inculturation’ as “the most comprehensive theological notion encapsulating all elements of the changed face of mission theology.” Shorter asserts that “the whole purpose of inculturation is to make evangelization – the influence of the Good News – more effective in human development.” Orji argues that “without inculturation the Church is unrecognizable and unsustainable.” Emmanuel Lartey views theology of mission within the perimeters of its essential functions of healing, guiding, sustaining, reconciling, empowering, liberating and nurturing. It is within these perimeters of essential principles that I will analyse and evaluate pastoral implications of theology of mission and evangelization in Kenya in our present context.

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To concretize and elaborate the scope of theology of mission and evangelization in Kenya today, I hereby present a short case study on St. Maria Goretti Small Christian Community on the process of reconciliation and healing.

A Case Study on St. Maria Goretti Small Christian Community (St. Timothy Catholic Parish at Molo, Catholic Diocese of Nakuru, Kenya)

On 10 May 2015, I returned to the St. Maria Goretti Small Christian Community, which I had visited immediately after the 2007/2008 post-election violence. I have over the years often visited and participated in the life of a number of Small Christian Communities in Kenya in the Catholic Dioceses of Homabay, Kericho, Kisii, Kisumu, Nakuru and Nairobi.

My choice for this particular Small Christian Community was motivated by the fact that the Molo area was one of the regions most affected by the post-election violence of 2007/2008. Another driving factor was that during my last visit, sometime in the year 2010, I had worked briefly in the area and had observed how reconciliation and healing had become a prominent issue for the communities living here. It had also become a priority for the Catholic Church, particularly the diocese of Nakuru, to emphasize and encourage the process of reconciliation and healing among the different ethnic communities and peoples who make up the Catholic Church in Kenya. I wanted to observe how the Church and the people were trying to go about this process.

Quite apart from these factors is also the simple reason that the Passionist Missionaries, the religious congregation to which I belong, have a community here. At the peak of the 2007/2008 post-election violence, the Passionist house in Molo acted as a refugee
center to which many families who had been evicted from their homes turned for protection and security.

While presenting this example, I will use Lonergan’s four transcendental precepts, \(^20\) “Be Attentive, Be Intelligent, Be Reasonable and Be Responsible” as a normative tool and/or method that enables pastoral agents to reflect deeply on the theology of mission and evangelization.

“Be Attentive”

The St. Maria Goretti Small Christian Community is comprised of people from different ethnic communities. During my 2015 visit, a meeting was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. James and Teresia Njunge. Mr. Njunge is the chairperson of this small Christian community; it meets every Sunday afternoon at the home of one of its members. The language used was a mixture of Kiswahili and English. There were 38 participants present: 13 men and 25 women belonging to different ethnic communities like the Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Kisii, Kamba, Luo and Luhya.

Since the participants could not all fit into the living room of Mr. and Mrs. Njunje, the seats were arranged under the shade of a huge tree, which was within the homestead. The seats were arranged in a circular manner so that the participants were able to sit facing each other. There was also a small coffee table in the middle covered with a white cloth and on top of it were a burning candle, a crucifix and an open Bible.

The meeting began at 1.30pm with prayer: the spoken Sign of the Cross followed by a Hymn. The two members of the group in charge of the Scripture readings then stood up and

read the scripture passages for that particular Sunday. It happened that this Sunday was the 6th Sunday of Easter in Year B in the Catholic Liturgical Calendar and the three readings were: Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48; 1John 4:7-10 and John 15:9-17. All these readings were read by the first reader the initial time, but the second reader only repeated only the Gospel passage.

I give here only the text from the Gospel because it was the reading upon which the Bible reflections and sharing were all based.

Jesus said to his disciples:

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because a servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.

You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another. (John 15:9-17 NRSV).

“Be Intelligent”

After the Gospel had been read the second time, the participants were asked to repeat either a word or a sentence from the Gospel reading that he or she felt was resonating with him or her. For example, one would simply verbalize the words or a sentence saying, “love”, “joy”, “abide” or “I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another” etc.
When this was finished, Mr. Njunge, who was guiding the meeting, invited the participants into another session of Bible sharing and giving short reflections from different members of the group. The participants were asked to share briefly how each felt that he or she had been touched by the Gospel reading and what he or she has learnt from the reading that could assist him or her and the group as a community in going about their daily lives as Christians. However, this was more spontaneous and volunteers were asked to share. Only those who were willing to share and felt moved by the Holy Spirit to do so were encouraged.

It was during this period of the Bible sharing and reflections that an old lady I estimated to be about 80 years old shared that although she had found it difficult to forgive the neighbours who had killed both her husband and her only son during the post-election violence (for she knew them), the Gospel reading had encouraged her to ‘love one another’ and that she had learnt that she must be ready to forgive and to leave everything in the hands of God. She urged the group to love one another and to forgive the past since we are all children of the same God. She said, “Remember Jesus’ commandment that we should love one another and live as friends, as one family.”

This period of Bible sharing was then followed by the prayers of thanksgiving, whereby each member began a prayer by uttering the words “We give you thanks, Almighty God, for...” while mentioning a particular blessing that the person had received or experienced within the week, and at the end of each prayer, the group members responded, “We thank you, Lord.” They then said the Lord’s Prayer, the Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit...
When this prayer session was finished, Mrs. Eunice Anyango, the secretary of the group, took over and read to the members some agenda that they had, what they had to accomplish and what they still needed to do so as to improve their lives as a Christian community. She also read some other announcements from the Parish and explained how they were expected to participate in some of the parish activities as a wider family or community. The group was made aware of the two members (Mr. Kevin Onsongo and Mrs. Monica Kosgei) of this small Christian community who were sick, and Mrs. Anyango reminded her hearers that they, as a Christian family, needed to show their solidarity with the sick. It was said that the two had been admitted to Molo District Hospital and volunteers were requested to sign up their names and to agree on when (day and time) to visit those sick members.

Another individual (Mr. Edward Kamau) was mentioned as a member of the group who needed some assistance; he needed food and help with housekeeping because he was old and living alone. The members also discussed how they could help other needy persons within their neighbourhood. Some volunteers offered to take some foodstuffs to Mr. Kamau and to assist him in cleaning his house. When this was done, there followed a moment for each member to pay a small amount of money Kenya Shillings (KES) 50 per each member which they do every week when they have their meetings.

Finally, the chairperson (Mr. Njunge) took over and asked if anybody within the group had any other business or information to pass to the group. He also introduced new members and those like me who were visiting to the group. The meeting ended at four in the evening with a shared meal of tea, bread and soft drinks.
“Be Reasonable”

It appeared to me that the theological reflection and Bible sharing were not so deep and that very little time was given for the moment of silence after the second Gospel reading. It also seemed that despite the difficult experience of the past post-election violence, the group appeared to be united and expressed love for one another in times of sickness, pain and suffering. These were evident in the way this Small Christian Community was able to identify the sick and needy in their community and their willingness to come together and to help, strongly convinced that God was calling them to do so.

It was also evident to me that this Small Christian Community of St. Maria Goretti had matured to openly share with the other group members their troubles as a family. They were convinced that God had called them to live together and lovingly as one family. When one member shared his or her story, the other group members listened actively and were ready to work out their own solutions to their problems.

This appeared to be a fairly well organized group with good, respectful, caring and active group leaders who were also sharing the various responsibilities within the group. The St. Maria Goretti Small Christian Community presented to me a good picture of being a Church in Kenya in our present time.

“Be Responsible”

The members clearly laid out a number of activities that they needed to carry out. They delegated volunteers to pay a visit to the two members of the group who were sick. They also volunteered to give their generous contribution to the other member of the group who needed food. They also resolved to visit among themselves more frequently in order to
strengthen their love for one another and to overcome their ethnic differences and divisions. They decided to contribute KES 50 every month in order to help the poor who were still living in the camp for the internally displaced persons in their neighbourhood.

I challenged them to be role models for other people living in this area through their commitment, support and love for one another. I also challenged them to have at least some period of silence (a minute or so) in between the scripture readings to help them reflect a bit deeper into what and how God is speaking to them through the scriptures.

Having reflected on the above practical example of St. Maria Goretti’s Small Christian Community, I now proceed to map out the structural outlook of this dissertation.

**Procedure**

The thesis is divided into four chapters, which include a brief introduction and scope of the thesis. The introduction includes a short case study, a thesis statement, the frame of the research question, the thesis objective, a description of the project methodology and the research outline of this thesis.

Chapter One outlines the broader context by presenting and examining the paradigm shifts in theology of mission in the post-colonial context. It will begin by looking at the complexity and difficulty that is encountered in attempts to define the term *evangelization* and at its development (as evangelization *ad gentes*, continuing growth in faith, and renewing faith of those who have lapsed). I will briefly look at the difference between mission and evangelization. I will look at different notions of understanding evangelization in the post-colonial context from the perspectives of David Bosch and Bernard Lonergan. I will also examine and analyse tensions (proclamation, dialogue and witnessing) and the two major
issues (inculturation and syncretism) that have arisen in theology of mission and evangelization, especially in the African context.

Chapter Two presents a general historical overview (cultural, religious, political and economic milieus) of Kenyan society. I will briefly examine the historical developments of the early Christian missionary evangelization in Kenya and analyse models of evangelization (carrying out Christ’s command, learning new languages, translation of the Scripture into local languages, building church structures, building schools and dispensaries, simple catechesis and baptizing the converts) that were used by the early missionaries. I identify aspects of the emergence of this new paradigm shift in mission and evangelization in Kenya in the post-colonial context and analyse its models (transfer of leadership to the indigenous clergy, celebration of liturgy, celebration of the sacraments, growth of small Christian communities and participation of the laity).

Chapter Three presents and examine challenges and opportunities to theology of mission and evangelization in Kenya in the post-colonial context. Some cultural, religious, political and economic challenges like ethnicity/tribalism and the 2007/2008 post-election violence, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, corruption, insecurity and increasing acts of terror, drug and substance abuse, youth unemployment, land issues, and leadership squabbles, to mention only a few, will be discussed. I will look at the opportunities and exigencies for essential principles of mission and evangelization in Kenya.

Chapter Four takes a critical analysis of the pastoral implications of theology of mission in Kenya. I will analyse the perimeter of theology of mission in Kenya with the help of Lartey’s seven essential elements of theology of mission: healing, guiding, sustaining,
reconciling, empowering, liberating and nurturing. This will then help us have an idea of how theology of mission has either helped or not helped Kenyan society. Deriving from Lonergan, Pope Francis, and Orji, and drawing upon my own pastoral experience in Kenya, I will also develop and examine two aspects of theology of mission and evangelization that I will call, authentic witnessing and effective collaboration. These two aspects, I believe, need be encouraged and strengthened in theology of mission in Kenya today.

Mission and evangelization in our present context need be modelled in life and action; just as the popular saying goes, action speaks louder than words. Authentic witnessing is being there for and with others, sharing one’s genuine and sincere love more especially with those who suffer. Meanwhile, effective collaboration is a way of relating and working together for the life of the church that calls for one’s conscious commitment to the common good and values.
Chapter 1

A Paradigm Shift in the Theology of Mission and Evangelization

Introduction

The world is becoming a global village as many people from different corners of the world travel, interact and intermingle with one another. Nevertheless, there is still a great diversity among the people of the world in terms of culture and religious traditions. As human persons, we adapt first and most to our immediate environment and “grow comfortable with our local language, the societal network of family, neighbourhood, church, the cultural heritage of specific viewpoint, mentality, belief.”21

When we enter an unfamiliar context, we more often than not suffer culture-shock. New languages and different rituals and ceremonies or liturgies might seem strange to us. Nevertheless, despite the different aspects of cultural pluralism, we come to realize that “the differences between our beliefs and those of others are not simply the result of ignorance or deceit. The pluralism we experience among us reveals the real but partial access that each of us has to the truth.”22

This chapter will outline the broader aspect of mission and evangelization in the post-colonial context by analysing and examining the shift in theology of mission and evangelization in our present context. It will be divided into four sections. In the first section, I will begin by looking at the complexity and difficulty that is encountered in attempts to define the term evangelization. I will examine its development, especially within the realms

of three main streams: as evangelization *ad gentes*, as a continuing growth in faith, and as a renewal of faith in those who have lapsed. I will then look briefly at the difference between mission and evangelization.

In the second section, I will examine the different notions of understanding mission and evangelization in the post-colonial context from the perspectives of David Bosch’s ecumenical paradigm shift and Bernard Lonergan’s shift to an empirical notion of culture. The third section will address and analyse some of the tensions, i.e. proclamation, dialogue and witness, which have become heightened in the theology of mission and evangelization in the post-colonial era. Finally, in the fourth section I will discuss the two major issues i.e. inculturation and syncretism, that have arisen in the theology of mission and evangelization, especially in contemporary Africa.

### 1.1 Evangelization Defined

Evangelization is a complicated word to define, for it has been used, and can be defined, in many different ways. To quote Michael Paul Gallagher, I can say that ‘evangelization’, like ‘culture’ is “one of those words that can be exasperating in its inclusiveness. It can seem to be a chameleon term that changes its significance depending on the user.”

Nevertheless, it still remains one of the most widely used words in theology of mission and in Christian circles.

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1.1.1 Etymology

The word evangelization comes from the Greek “εὐαγγέλιον or evangelium,” which denotes ‘Gospel’ or ‘Good News’. Gospel is the announcement of the good news of salvation to peoples. It is the declaration that the Risen Lord, Jesus Christ, is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. It is the proclamation of the reign of God’s kingdom on earth.

Alan Richardson and John Bowden describe evangelism as the proclamation of the gospel. They argue that evangelism is “not optional for the Christian church, which has a mandate from its Lord to proclaim the gospel.” It therefore follows that the task of evangelization belongs to all Christians, “who have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to be Christ’s witnesses to the end of the earth.” They further argue that the challenge to the church today is “how to do evangelism in a pluralistic world, how to be both ecumenical and evangelical at the same time, affirming truths of other faiths without compromising the uniqueness of Christ, [and] how to proclaim the gospel with integrity in a world which questions the validity of God-language.”

The New Catholic Encyclopedia defines ‘evangelism’ as communication of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Evangelization is the process by which a person is led to make a commitment to Christ, dedicate himself or herself to a Christian way of life and become a vital member of the local Church.

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25 Ibid., p.15.
27 Ibid., p.192.
28 Ibid., p.193.
result of evangelism includes obedience to Christ, incorporation into his church and responsible service in the world.”

1.1.2 Development

The word ‘evangelize’ dates from the fourteenth century. From the nineteenth century onwards, derived expressions have been used frequently by the Catholic Church, particularly in mission circles. Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, and Dermot A. Lane argue that the understanding of evangelization has renewed itself in recent years. They further emphasize that evangelization “places importance, but not prime importance, on the role of the church, correct understanding (doctrine), proper moral behavior, and Jesus himself.”

In the theology of mission, “evangelization” has been used within three main streams: 1) mission to the nations or foreign lands i.e. evangelization ad gentes; 2) a continuous growth in faith or the ordinary pastoral ministry of the church; and 3) as an invitation to all baptized Catholics whose lives do not reflect the demands of baptism or to those who have distanced themselves from the church.

1.1.2.1 Evangelization Ad Gentes

Evangelization Ad Gentes is the traditional nomenclature for mission to the nations or foreign lands. It understands theology of mission as an extension of the church to other

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32 Ibid., p.360.
nations.\textsuperscript{34} It implies that the task of the church is to proclaim the message of Christ’s salvation to those who do not know Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{35} From this proclamation, the church grew either by the conversion of individuals, and/or by the establishment of ecclesiastical structures in non-Christian regions, a custom popularly called “church planting”.

\textit{Lumen Gentium} (The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), promulgated by the Second Vatican Council, stresses that just as Jesus Christ was sent by God the Father, so is the Church being sent by Christ:

\textit{...the Son himself sent the apostles (cf. Jn. 20:21) saying, ‘go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days even unto the consummation of the world’ (Mt. 28:18-20). The Church has received this solemn command from the apostles and she must fulfil it to the very ends of the earth (cf. Acts 1:8). Accordingly, the Church never ceases to send heralds of the Gospel until such a time as the infant Churches are fully established, and can themselves continue the work of evangelization.}\textsuperscript{36}

Furthermore, evangelization understood as \textit{Ad Gentes}, expresses the Church’s belief that the proclamation of God’s reign on earth began with Jesus Christ himself when at the beginning of his public ministry (as presented in the Gospel of Luke 4:18-19), Jesus stood up in the synagogue and read the scripture passage from Prophet Isaiah 61: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour…” (Isaiah 61:1-2 NRSV). After rolling up the scroll, Jesus said to the people that this scripture passage was now being fulfilled in the people’s hearing and the eyes of all those who were there were fixed on him.

Donald Senior and Caroll Stuhlmueller argue that it was the person and ministry of Jesus that triggered the missionary consciousness of the early church. It was in Jesus that the “centrifugal forces we have detected in the Old Testament reach their point of explosion; in him the worldwide perspective of early Christianity finds its source”\(^{37}\) even though the “worldwide mission of the early church was not an explicit universal missionary program launched by him.”\(^{38}\)

Christ’s ministry marked a new dawn of God’s reign on earth. It presented freedom, joy, love, peace and life to the earth. It marked a beginning and a moment of God’s healing, liberation and restoration. In carrying out evangelization *ad gentes*, the church is fulfilling Christ’s mandate and mission.

1.1.2.2 Evangelization as a continuous growth in faith

The Second Vatican Council puts evangelization at the very heart of the Church’s mission and responsibility. Pope Paul VI in his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* emphasized that evangelization is “bringing the Good News into the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new.”\(^{39}\) It is indeed the ordinary pastoral ministry of the Church that must be animated by the fire of the Holy Spirit.\(^{40}\)

\(^{38}\) Ibid., p.142.
In October 2012, Catholic bishops worldwide gathered in Rome for a Synod on “New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith.” At the end of their meeting, the Synod Fathers declared in their message that:

Leading men and women of our time to Jesus, to an encounter with him, is a necessity that touches all the regions of the world, those of the old and those of the recent evangelization. Everywhere indeed we feel the need to revive a faith that risks eclipse in cultural contexts that hinders its taking root in persons and its presence in society, the clarity of its content and the coherence of its fruits... The changed social, cultural, economic, civil and religious scenarios call us to something new: to live our communitarian experience of faith in a new way and to proclaim it through an evangelization that is new in its ardor, in its methods, in its expressions.41

Defined according to this formulation, evangelization is a continuous renewal and growth in faith of all the believers in Jesus Christ especially in the midst of the challenges of our present situation.

Pope Francis repeats this definition when he writes that the Lord’s missionary mandate includes a “call to growth in faith... hence it is clear that the first proclamation also calls for ongoing formation and maturation”42 through dialogue and witnessing. This aspect is always an ongoing process and at times may prove to be a very daunting task. Francis further emphasizes that we can become fully human “when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being.”43

He explains:

43 Ibid., p.4.
Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God’s voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt and the desire to do good fades.\footnote{Ibid., p.1.} Evangelization, therefore, is a call to a continuous renewed encounter with God’s love, a love that restores meaning in people’s lives.

Pope Francis notes that the “joy of evangelizing always arises from grateful remembrance: it is a grace which we constantly need to implore.”\footnote{Ibid., p.6.} Just as Jesus Christ left for the apostles and the Church the sacrament of the Eucharist as a memorial of his paschal mystery, so also we should remember those who first brought the Gospel message to us. “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God” (Hebrews 13:7). He adds that a “believer is essentially one who remembers.”\footnote{Ibid., p.7}

1.1.2.3 Evangelization a renewal of the faith of those who have lapsed

In his 2010 Christmas address to the College of Cardinals in Rome, Benedict XVI spoke of the disordered moral state that the world finds itself in today, and of its effects within the Catholic Church. He stressed that the crises of today’s world, for example, sexual abuse of children by clergy, are signs of the “tyranny of mammon which perverts mankind.”\footnote{L’Osservatore Romano, English Edition, (December 22-29, 2010), p.13.} He stated that some of the pastoral challenges that the church is experiencing are a result of “a fatal misunderstanding of freedom which actually undermines man’s freedom and ultimately destroys it.”\footnote{Ibid., p.13.}

Benedict XVI argued that evangelization should be directed towards helping baptized Catholics who have lapsed in their faith. Evangelization, is an invitation for all the “baptized...
Catholics whose lives do not reflect the demands of baptism⁴⁹ to experience a new encounter with Jesus Christ so that it revives their joy and happiness in their baptismal commitment. It is a call to come back into the church and to become full and active members of the body of Christ.

Benedict XVI continued to emphasize that the church should be particularly concerned with those Catholics who have lapsed in faith and are drifting away from the church and the Sacraments. Benedict XVI emphasized that as members of Christ’s body, we have a duty to help lapsed Catholics encounter Jesus anew, to rediscover their joy of the Christian belief and eventually return to religious practice in the community of the faithful.

1.1.3 Mission and Evangelization

The two principles, ‘mission and evangelization’, though distinct; are also closely linked together. In fact, they overlap and can complement each other. They are so intimately joined that at times it is difficult to speak of one without mentioning the other. Together they embody the life of the church in the world and are not easy to distinguish, just as it is difficult to distinguish between our calling as Christians and our commitment to our Christian faith.

‘Mission’ is wider than ‘evangelization’ in the sense that evangelization is mission but mission is not merely evangelization.⁵⁰ Mission embraces the total task of the Church, that is, the salvation of the world – encompassing its relations ad extra. Mission is “the Church sent into the world, to love, to serve, to preach, to teach, to heal, to liberate.”⁵¹

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⁵¹ Ibid., p.412.
Bosch states that some scholars of theology of mission make a distinction between mission and evangelization based on global outreach and local outreach. All that is required for the church to be established among every group of people in the world – for global outreach – is mission.\(^{52}\) Evangelization, however, is local outreach to a particular local community, which might not necessarily require a lot of tools, roles and/or gifts to accomplish.

Others, however, make a dichotomy between evangelization and social action or between the “spiritual Gospel and material Gospel.”\(^{53}\) They use the word ‘evangelization’ either to refer to the process of spreading the gospel, or to the extent to which the gospel has been spread. In this sense, evangelization is viewed as having a two-fold function: 1) that of the process or means of spreading the gospel and of the geographical or territorial outlook. 2) that of presenting evangelization as an interior conversion and improvement of conditions, or as the vertical dimension of faith and the horizontal dimension of love.\(^{54}\) In order to have a proper understanding of evangelization, Bosch asserts that one has to overcome these dichotomies and the “oscillating movement of going from one extreme to the other”.\(^{55}\)

Furthermore, evangelization is integral to mission, being “sufficiently distinct and yet not separate from mission.”\(^{56}\) It is difficult to isolate and separate one from the other. In fact, they are like two faces of the same coin. Evangelization is “embedded in the total mission of the church, ‘our opening up of the mystery of God’s love to all people inside that mission’.”\(^{57}\)

\(^{52}\) Ibid., p.418.
\(^{53}\) Ibid., p.419.
\(^{54}\) Ibid., p.418.
\(^{55}\) Ibid., p.418.
\(^{56}\) Ibid., p.422.
\(^{57}\) Ibid., p.422.
1.2 Theology of mission and evangelization in the post-colonial context

1.2.1 David Bosch: The Ecumenical Paradigm Shift

David Bosch (1929-1992), a South African scholar of theology of mission, belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa. Bosch believed that the Christian church in general and the Christian mission in particular are confronted with challenges and never before with issues which demand adequate responses that are both relevant to the times and in harmony with the essence of Christian faith and tradition. He argues, given our modern context, that Christian faith must always be “rethought, reformulated and lived anew in each human culture, and this must be done in a vital way, in depth and right to the cultures’ roots.”

He points out that the theology of mission should help particularly pastoral agents be leaders of reconciliation, peace and justice in their societies as they seek to imitate Christ’s role and leadership. For Bosch, mission and evangelization should bring freedom (the spirit that opens one up to encounter with the other in love and service), not only for the pastoral agent, but also for the whole Christian community that he or she leads.

The theology of mission for Bosch is a total inclusion of both the vertical dimension of faith and the horizontal dimension of love. It is a process that involves proclamation, dialogue and witnessing. It has something to do with ministry to people who are not yet Christians and those who are already Christians and have lapsed in explicit participation and practice. In both cases, a new situation is always reflected and a new context encountered. It

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58 Ibid., p.192.
59 Ibid., p.463.
offers an opportunity to both individuals and communities everywhere for growth and ecumenism.

Bosch understands the theology of mission in terms of historic ‘paradigm shifts’. A paradigm shift meant a representation of how Christians understood and experienced their faith in a particular context and within a particular period of time that seemed to be profoundly distinct from other historical periods.  

This did not mean that there was a qualitative difference between the old and the new in the sense of there being no continuity. Accounting for that continuity, however, was another matter.

He injects into his arguments the concept of ‘paradigm shift’ borrowed from Thomas Kuhn together with Hans Kung’s historical subdivisions of Christianity and carefully applies them into his theological reflections on the theology of mission. He developed this theory in an attempt to demonstrate how the understanding of the theology of mission had changed over the years.

While acknowledging that Kuhn had limited his theory to the natural sciences and that there could be a risk in liberally applying this theory to theology, Bosch clarifies that his

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60 Ibid., p.186.
61 Ibid., p.188. While referring to Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Second Edition*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp.175-187. Kuhn had argued that natural sciences develop by a way of revolutions and that this takes place when “a few individuals begin to perceive reality in ways qualitatively different from their predecessors and contemporaries.” Even though Kuhn had limited his theory to natural sciences, and that there could be a risk in literally applying the theory into theology; Bosch, however clarified that his use of Kuhn’s scientific theory was “only as a kind of working hypothesis” and not literally as it was used in the natural sciences.

62 Hans Kung subdivided the entire history of Christianity into six major paradigms namely: the Apocalyptic paradigm of the primitive Christianity, the Hellenistic paradigm of the patristic period, the Medieval Roman Catholic paradigm, the Protestant or Reformation paradigm, Modern Enlightenment paradigm and the Emerging Ecumenical paradigm. For Kung, the six periods in the history of Christianity presented the way Christianity was lived and experienced at different given periods of time.
goal is to use Kuhn’s scientific theory of paradigm shift, “only as a kind of working hypothesis”\(^{63}\) and not literally as it was used in the natural sciences.

Bosch argues that in the natural sciences, a new paradigm “usually replaces the old definitely and irreversibly.”\(^{64}\) In natural sciences, nothing of the old paradigm continues to live on in the new paradigm, which is qualitatively different from the original. Bosch maintains that this is not the case in the theology of mission. In the latter, the old paradigm can and may continue to live on.

The old paradigm, as Bosch puts it, “seldom disappears completely.”\(^{65}\) Rather, it remains as the source of fire that keeps the new paradigm active and alive. John Dadosky, drawing on Lonergan, explains that being at home with both old and new implies that one who identifies with the new should at the same time strive to retain the tradition of the Church. He recounts a familiar tag regarding tradition “not as a preservation of ashes, but as the feeding of a fire.”\(^{66}\)

Bosch points out that one cannot understand the present without referring to the past. An attempt to interpret the past is also an attempt to understand the present and an attempt to define the future.\(^{67}\) The past, present and future are all interconnected in some sense, and so there is always a need for continuity. So much so that Bosch argued that the paradigm shift in theology of mission, implies both “continuity and change, both faithfulness to the past and boldness to engage the future, both constancy and contingency, both tradition and

\(^{63}\) Ibid., p.188.
\(^{64}\) Ibid., p.190.
\(^{65}\) Ibid., p.190.
transformation.”\textsuperscript{68} Historical deviations and distortions notwithstanding, when looked at from this point of view revolutionary movements in theology of mission are seen and evaluated neither in terms of the terror they spread nor because of the destruction they cause, “but rather in terms of the alternatives they are able to offer”\textsuperscript{69} to the Christians.

He further argues that the process of shifting from one paradigm to another can prove to be a long, painful and taxing experience. This is because we can be faced with two opposing forces: those of the old paradigm, e.g. the traditionalists protecting the status quo, and the forces of the new paradigm, e.g. the progressive, open to change. When these two forces come together as rivals, a collision may occur. Such an experience may stifle and slow down the movement towards a new paradigm. The experience can also make the process of achieving a new paradigm to be long and tedious, with some people who still operate in the old paradigm as “its trailblazers.”\textsuperscript{70} When a new paradigm shift does occur, it might again happen in such a very unprecedented manner that it may come as a surprise or shock-wave to others.

Bosch is critical of the traditional approaches to theology of mission, which sought to justify certain preconceived understandings of mission and evangelization. He argues that from the very beginning of his public ministry, Jesus Christ showed that his mission and evangelization were inclusive and not divisive. Jesus Christ accepted prostitutes, lepers and tax-collectors among his followers. Such people were regarded as sinners and traitors in Jewish religious and political systems. By accepting them as disciples, Christ had already

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., p.366.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., p.48.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., p.192.
brought a revolution, a paradigm shift from the way the other religious leaders in Israel had chosen their followers.

Paulus Pham, developing further Bosch’s thoughts on Christ’s acceptance of prostitutes and tax-collectors, argues that in this way Jesus Christ “showed that his mission was mainly to establish a new system for humankind: the system of gratis grace [sic], of unreserved forgiveness, which comes direct from God.”71 Pham explains that if Jesus Christ’s missionary paradigm was considered a ‘revolutionary’ event in the biblical context, then the missionary model that would later be operated by his followers in accordance with the ‘Great Commission’ was not going to be an easy process. The disciples had basically received some scathing lessons to follow from their master from the very beginning.72

Bosch emphasizes that the Easter experience ignited a new fire in the disciples, which also blazed in early Christian mission and evangelization. When the risen Lord appeared to them after his resurrection and commanded them to go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and to teach them to observe all the commands that he gave them (Matthew 28:19-20); they certainly began to understand how much their mission was going to require of them. Bosch argues that the disciples of Jesus “interpreted the cross as the end of the old world and the resurrection of Jesus as the irruption of the new - the resurrection was ultimately viewed as the vindication of Jesus.”73

72 Ibid., p.246.
Similarly, having been filled with the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), the disciples realized that they had been given the task and the responsibility to continue Christ’s message of proclaiming God’s Kingdom. The disciples were able to evangelize and to communicate the message of the Risen Lord to people of different tongues and languages without fear (Acts 2:5-12). Hence forth the disciples had the courage and the desire to share their faith experience with others. However, it is also equally significant to note that the disciples did not usher in a utopia with their new mission and evangelization. Rather, they “expressed an intense hope that had not yet been fulfilled.”\(^{74}\)

Bosch further argues that most of the first Christian community were Jewish men and women who still remained inside Judaism, active in temple and synagogue worship. But even though they themselves were Jews, the disciples found themselves in an environment where injustice, oppression, persecution and discrimination prevailed, so they started to proclaim also to the Gentiles, the imminent reign of the Kingdom of God and the immediate return of the Risen Lord at the end of time. The reign of God signified the overthrowing of the reign of evil in society and the liberation of human beings.

The conversion of the Gentiles into the Jewish Christian community created an unprecedented situation: a rise of tension between the two groups. As Bosch writes, “The Hellenists differed from the Hebrews at decisive points... by translating Jesus’ message into the Greek language, this community became the needle’s eye through which the earliest Christian ‘kerygma’ found a way into the Greco-Roman world.”\(^{75}\) The Gentiles had come to

\(^{74}\) Ibid., p.49.
\(^{75}\) Ibid., p.43.
believe that the Easter experience had by-passed the Jewish law and that “it would be the Spirit rather than the law that would guide the believers’ life.”

Bosch argues that it was Paul who became a catalytic factor: “He was the one who provided the theological basis for the Torah-free self-definition of Gentile Christianity.”

Lamin Sanneh expresses similar sentiments when he argues that the rise of the Gentiles created a profound theological repercussion, which fell to Paul to try to enunciate and systematize. Sanneh further asserts that:

...what is the case is that through the eyes of the Gentile church, Paul encountered an unsettling reality about the seriousness of God’s irrevocable desire to draw all people to the divine. The death and the resurrection of Jesus had inaugurated the new age in which Paul, like Peter, discovered on the Gentile frontier that ‘God is no respecter of persons but that in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him’ (Acts 10:34-35).

By accepting the Gentiles into the Christian community, Christianity broke free from its exclusive Jewish culture and embraced Hellenistic culture even to the point of complete assimilation. Dadosky, addressing the issue of the Council of Jerusalem, argues that the council decided that circumcision was too much of a problem for adult males and thereby had to redefine Christian identity in a pluralistic context: “...to invoke more contemporary nomenclature, was the inculturation of Mosaic Law within the an expanded Hellenistic context.”

Sanneh maintains that when Christianity expanded into Europe and from Europe into Asia and Africa, among other places, it was able to break out of its Western cultural

76 Ibid., p.43.
77 Ibid., p.44.
79 Ibid., p.29.
confinement by repeating the process by which “the church’s missionary center shifted from Jerusalem to Antioch and beyond.”81 Christianity, Sanneh emphasizes, “renders itself as translatable religion, compatible with all cultures.”82 Christianity has entered into a “multiple world of cross-cultural encounter with an open mind and firm faith.”83

Bosch, however, maintains that the modern shift that has taken place in the Church is unprecedented. He further identifies different aspects of theology of mission in the post-colonial context as: the church-with-others; *Missio Dei*; the quest for justice; evangelism; contextualization; liberation; inculturation; common witness; ministry by the whole people of God; witness to people of other living faiths; theology and action of hope.84 He viewed these aspects of theology of mission as pointers to the post-colonial context’s dire need to come together as a church, without ignoring the concerns of the other. According to Bosch, an integral mission and evangelization in the post-colonial context can be achieved only when these aspects are seriously taken into account. They are the pillars upon which the radical and new understanding of theology of mission and evangelization in our present context stands.

Complicating the issue of contemporary mission and evangelization is the notion of inculturation, the expression of the Christian faith in cultural meanings and accretions of the local context. Bosch views inculturation as one of the aspects through which Christian faith can be lived anew in each human culture. For Bosch, inculturation is “one of the patterns in which the pluriform character of contemporary Christianity manifests itself.”85 Christian

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82 Ibid., p.56.
83 Ibid., p.50.
85 Ibid., p.458.
faith, Bosch maintains, “has always been inculturated in a great variety of liturgies and contexts as expressed in the Acts of the Apostles and in Pauline epistles.”

Bosch argues that inculturation remains a tentative and continuing process, “not only because cultures are not static but also because the Church may be led to discover previously unknown mysteries of faith.” He stresses that the relationship between the Christian message and culture is to be “a creative and dynamic one, and full of surprises.” Bosch believes this was a renewed characteristic of this new paradigm shift in the missionary thinking of the theology of mission.

Bosch argues that this new shift in missionary thinking made possible new emphases in the theology of mission: 1) other religions were no longer thought to be entirely false; 2) mission work meant less preaching and a broader range of transformational activities; 3) the accent was now on salvation for life in the present world; and 4) the emphasis in mission had shifted from the individual to society.

He observes that seeing other religions as not intrinsically evil did not necessarily mean the end of mission and evangelization. Although other religions were not regarded as evil, they were still being undoubtedly viewed as vastly inferior to Western Christianity. The new view was that “Christ did not come to destroy other religions but to fulfill them.” Furthermore, he argues that the move from preaching to social concerns revealed that each

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86 Ibid., p.458.
87 Ibid., p.466.
88 Ibid., p.466.
89 Ibid., p.329.
90 Ibid., p.329.
individual was profoundly influenced and shaped by his or her environment, and that it made little sense to attempt to change the individuals while leaving their context untouched.\footnote{Ibid., p.330.}

This was so because Bosch believes that theology of mission and evangelization viewed from a particular context and:

...as that dimension and activity of the church’s mission which, by word and deed and in the light of a particular context, offers every person and community, everywhere, a valid opportunity to be directly challenged to a radical re-orientation of their lives, a reorientation which involves such things as deliverance from slavery to the word and its powers; embracing Christ as Savior and Lord; becoming a living member of his community, the church; being enlisted into his service of reconciliation, peace, and justice on earth; and being committed to God’s purpose of placing all things under the rule of Christ.\footnote{Ibid., p.430.}

Furthermore, Bosch believes that evangelization is a call to reconciliation by being attentive and taking responsibility for one’s actions. It is a \textit{metanoia}, a “total transformation of our attitudes and styles of life”\footnote{Ibid., p.423.} and a conversion, which is a turn from a life characterized by sin to a new life characterized by forgiveness and love. Evangelization is an invitation to a life of joy and hope. It should never coax or threaten people into believing. Rather, they should reawaken and guide people to discover God’s grace, the gift of God’s love within them, which is trans-cultural.

Bosch also argues that mission and evangelization are not a judgment on those who do not ascribe to the particular belief or faith we do. Rather, it offers people salvation as a present gift that mediates to them “a transcendent and eschatological salvation”\footnote{Ibid., p.424.} by bringing hope and meaning into the meaninglessness of their lives. Evangelization, he stresses, cannot be divorced from preaching and practicing of justice. It is “enlisting people for the reign of

\footnote{Ibid., p.330.} \footnote{Ibid., p.430.} \footnote{Ibid., p.423.} \footnote{Ibid., p.424.}
God, liberating them from themselves, their sins and their entanglements, so that they will be free for God and neighbor.” It calls individuals to a life of openness, vulnerability, wholeness and love, which is praxis.

1.2.2 Bernard Lonergan: The Shift to an Empirical Notion of Culture

Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984), a Catholic Canadian Jesuit theologian and philosopher, reflecting on mission and evangelization writes:

I do not think any Catholic would exclude all change on a priori grounds. Even the most embattled conservative would grant that circumstances alter cases, that positive Church law has not the same immutability as divine law or natural law, that besides the substance of things there are the accidents; that, salva substantia, the accidents may at times be modified, provided, of course, that the change is made prudently and, above all, that one keeps ever in mind that human nature is always the same.

This is why Lonergan holds that the whole church should rise to the level of times and be ready to learn from the modern developments. He believes that since there are many cultural differences among those to whom Christ’s message is communicated; pastoral agents are therefore called to continuously engage and attend to the noble and valid aspects in culture, if they are to remain relevant in mission and evangelization.

Lonergan understands culture, as Thomas J. Farell and Paul A. Soukup put it, “meanings and values of a group of people in any place.” This means that there are various cultures. There is no such a thing as universal or one culture to which all people are supposed to conform. Rather, he understands culture in two ways: the classicist notion of culture and the shift to an empirical notion of culture that constitutes a paradigm shift.

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95 Ibid., p.428.
1.2.2.1 Classicist notion of culture

The classicist notion of culture conceives culture as universal, permanent, normative and traditional. To say universal means culture does not change.99 Lonergan writes:

Classicist culture contrasted itself with barbarism. It was a culture with a capital “C.” Others might participate in it to a greater or less extent and, in the measure they did so, they ceased to be barbarians. In other words, culture was conceived normatively. It was a matter of good manners and good taste, of grace and style, of virtue and character, of models and ideals, of eternal verities and inviolable laws.100

Classicist culture was thus the culture that had operated for centuries in the Western world, specifically the European world. To the extent these attitudes are still prevalent, the risk is that when pastoral agents carry out mission and evangelization with such a notion of culture, they can easily become rigid, inflexible and non-accommodative to other cultures. They can view themselves as superior and bringing salvation to the ‘uncultured’.

When this is allowed to take place, the outcome may be a scenario in which people from other cultures are made to assimilate the ‘universal’ or new culture presented to them without asking questions. In fact, classicist notion of culture stresses not facts but values, and its assumptions are those of stability, fixity and immutability.101 These attitudes permeated the colonial missionary paradigm.

1.2.2.2 Empirical notion of culture

The empirical notion of culture, on the other hand, denotes that something (value) is found in every people, for in all people there is some apprehension of meaning and value in their way of life. The starting point is a context ‘from below’, not from ‘above’ as in the

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classicist notion of culture. The empirical notion of culture is that which knows about other cultures; it relates them to one another genetically and knows all of them to be human-made.\textsuperscript{102}

The empirical notion of culture is historical, progressive, modern, dynamic and liberal. It views culture as dynamic and open to change. Here, culture is seen as progressing, declining, shifting, developing and going astray. This, therefore, makes empirical notion of culture to be far more open, better informed and more discerning than the classicist notion of culture.

However, Lonergan cautions that care should be taken so that the ‘new’ empirical approach is not made into a device for reducing doctrines to probable opinions.\textsuperscript{103} He maintains that there still remains a need for a foundation and a critical stance, even for the empirical culture. It therefore does not matter even if that foundation is going to be a quite different foundation.\textsuperscript{104} The empirical notion of culture does not mean that the old foundations or doctrines no longer apply because they are false, but “because they are inadequate and no longer appropriate.”\textsuperscript{105} That is why the need for new critical and firm foundations and desire to be open to different situations becomes significant.

Lonergan argues that the modern context is characterized by historical consciousness, dynamism and change. This implies that there is a need for an increased awareness among pastoral agents to be sensitive to the cultural, religious, social, linguistic and economic structures and ideologies of those to whom the gospel is being preached. Lonergan stresses

\begin{itemize}
    \item \textsuperscript{102} Lonergan, \textit{A Second Collection}, p.92.
    \item \textsuperscript{103} Ibid., p.63.
    \item \textsuperscript{104} Ibid., pp.63-64.
    \item \textsuperscript{105} O’Callaghan, \textit{Unity in Theology: Lonergan’s Framework for Theology in its New Context}, p.222.
\end{itemize}
that modern society had moved away from the premises and assumptions of earlier times,\textsuperscript{106} hence the need arises for a reformulation, adaptation and inculturation of the Christian message in the values and meanings of the specific context.

Similarly, there is a pressing need in today’s society for “fostering of an acceptance and appreciation for persons who are different from us.”\textsuperscript{107} Lonergan writes:

...the Church has always felt called to herald the Gospel to all men of all cultures and all classes. But the full implications of this mission were hidden by the classicist notion of culture. For that notion was not empirical but normative. It did not study the different cultures of mankind but simply set up its own ideal and generously offered to instruct others in its own ways.\textsuperscript{108}

For Lonergan, this is a call for the church to move from that classicist notion of culture to an empirical notion, which is the notion that affirms many cultures. It is the empirical culture that enables studies and comparisons of different cultures. The empirical notion of culture affirms that all cultures are man-made and are therefore subject to development and to decay.\textsuperscript{109}

Lonergan stresses that the modern context “is a world from whose progress we must learn, as well as a world we must teach and redeem in its decline.”\textsuperscript{110} He therefore thought pastoral agents should not be only teachers, preachers or guiders, but also learners, so that they are able “to avoid the manner of always arriving on the scene a little breathlessly and a

\textsuperscript{108} Lonergan, \textit{A Second Collection}, p.141.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., p.141.
little late.”

Dadosky clarifies this point when he asserts that “as a learner, the Church requires listening, dialogue, preparation, careful study and reflection.”

Dadosky further affirms that “mutual self-mediating relations, as graced, express that the Church can learn from the other and be enriched in her own self-understanding by that encounter.” Therefore, forcing one’s religion on others to be assimilated may “foster intolerance e.g. fundamentalism or triumphalism.” He also maintains that “there can also be a risk that too much tolerance may also lead to the opposite extreme or distortion or relativism, syncretism.”

Lonergan clarifies that with the shift from classicist notion of culture to the empirical notion of culture, we are not departing from the older doctrines, but only from the older manner of speech. This is because for Lonergan, the old doctrines remain true, but our understanding of them may develop. It is like two individuals looking at the same object but from two different perspectives or angles.

Lonergan also stresses that in acknowledging other religious beliefs (that is, the possibility of genuine faith in other religions), we are also acknowledging what is termed faith, which is being in love unrestrictedly. He argues that the signs of times presented to us in the modern context are not:

...a set of premises from which one may proceed to draw syllogistic conclusions. They are data, in which good and evil intermingle and call for discernment. Their

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113 Ibid., p.748.
114 Ibid., p.755.
115 Ibid., p.755.
116 Lonergan, Method in Theology, p.123.
Significance is that when good and evil have been distinguished by holy, intelligent, learned reflection, then relevant action proceeds to fostering the good and offsetting the evil.117

This is in fact the reason why pastoral agents in our present context need to interpret the signs of times attentively, intelligently, reasonably and responsibly. It is indeed in recognizing the dynamic nature of culture that we are allowing ourselves to examine our experiences, which gives us the opportunity to critique our own cultural and religious traditions.

James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead emphasize the point of examining one’s experience when they write that this is what “encourages the community of faith to actively engage cultural information and resources in its mission and ministry.”118 However, Jim Kanaris and Mark J. Doorley argue that it is not enough to believe that the “trans-cultural potential to know other beings and cultures is that which marks us as authentically human.”119

It is in fact, this shift from classicist notion of culture to the empirical notion of culture that invites pastoral agents to be more attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible to the different cultural milieus in which they are carrying out the process of evangelization. It also encourages them to become more involved in the lives of those to whom they are ministering. Lonergan’s intention in explicating the movement from classicist

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118James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead, Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry, p.55. See also Timothy P. Fallon and Philip Boo Riley, Religion and Context: Recent Studies in Lonergan, (Lanham, M.D.: University Press of America, 1988), p.54. “To mediate Christian faith with the contemporary cultural matrix is for it to participate in the emergence of a new matrix informed by cultural values suited to the proportions of the global social relations that they are to order... The integrity of culture is a function of the concrete unfolding of cosmological and anthropological insight and truth; the inauthenticity of culture is a function of the breakdown of this unfolding due to the displacement of the tension toward one or other pole.”
notion of culture to the empirical notion of culture was to allow a completely different starting point for mission and evangelization, one where the local context provides the questions for theological reflection.

In articulating this paradigm shift, Lonergan promoted a dynamic and ongoing development of the human person’s individuality and community, one necessary for today’s pastoral agents if their method of evangelization is to have any relevance. Furthermore, having the capacity to examine one’s own cultural assumptions allows one to call into question one’s own world-view, thereby improving the perspective through which one makes sense of his or her own life and the lives of those around him or her.

Patrick Corcoran argues that Lonergan’s generous pluralism is a welcome change from the rigid exclusiveness of many theologies of the past, but that as a method of identifying theological truth, it presents challenges. He further argues that one may in the end have no more ‘objective’ criterion than the shared sense of authenticity in a complex of life and doctrine, which is communally explored in a life-style and thought.\(^\text{120}\)

In response to such arguments, Michael C. O’Callaghan explains that Lonergan did not suggest that ‘modernity’ is equivalent to ‘goodness and authenticity’, but rather that adaptation and inculturation by the church, theology and pastoral agents have to be done critically and carefully – in dialogue with the local context.\(^\text{121}\) One must recall the invitation by Lonergan to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible and loving.\(^\text{122}\)

\(^{120}\) Corcoran, *Looking at Lonergan’s Method*, p.81.


The force of Lonergan’s pluralistic account depends on his own conviction that there are various ways of saying the same thing; or, more importantly, of being the same thing, since conversion is really a process of transformation. He sees the modern context or our present time, therefore, as one that allows for a variety of expressions and is characterized by fluidity.

Lonergan argues:

...while a classicist would maintain that one should never depart from an accepted terminology, I must contend that classicism is no more than the mistaken view of conceiving culture normatively and of concluding that there is just one human culture. The modern fact is that culture has to be conceived empirically, that there are many cultures, and that new distinctions are legitimate when the reasons for them are explained and the older truths are retained.

In trying to engage a particular culture, pastoral agents must proceed by being sensitive to that particular culture through first trying to listen and understand in a laborious way.

According to Lonergan, the process of evangelization should enlighten, unify different cultures and seek to learn from them inasmuch as “it does not destroy or uproot them or replace them by some other alien culture.” It is therefore the task of evangelization to explore, discern and to discover the noble and authentic aspects of different cultures and religious traditions.

Pastoral agents are in danger of falling back into a language of the classicist’s notion of culture, and thus run the risk of not being grounded in the lived experience of those to

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123 Corcoran, Looking at Lonergan’s Method, p.82.
whom the message of the gospel is proclaimed. There must always be a call to be open to God’s gift of the Holy Spirit. And the Spirit, as we know, blows wherever it wills (John 3:8).

1.3 Heightened tensions in the method and theology of mission

Bosch’s ecumenical paradigm shift and Lonergan’s movement to an empirical notion of culture, bring to light challenges in mission and evangelization that were easily avoided by the classicist notion of culture. How to carry out proclamation, dialogue and witness represent major tensions that have heightened within the theology of mission in our present context. These tensions are both historical and theological. They are historical in the sense that they present to us both the past and present historical developments in theology of mission and evangelization. Theologically, the past historical developments are reflected upon in the light of God’s Holy Spirit, who empowered and guided the early missionaries in mission and evangelization, and the shift to acknowledging that God is already present in culture rather than missionaries bringing God to a culture.

Proclamation, dialogue and witness are also theological realities in the sense that they help us to understand reflectively the implications of theology of mission and evangelization in the post-colonial context. These realities, though distinct; are also closely linked. At times they overlap and complement one another.

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1.3.1 Proclamation

For many decades, mission and evangelization have focused on the people in non-Western lands like Africa, Asia and Latin America. The theology of mission was seen in terms of European or otherwise Western missionaries going to these lands in order to announce the Good News to the ‘heathen’ or ‘pagan’ world. This was so much so that Christian Europe viewed itself as already evangelized and/or civilized, and that mission and evangelization were for the sake of the un-evangelized and uncivilized others (i.e. the classicist notion of culture).

This attitude partly gave rise to the great “missionary movement that had begun, by Protestants, at the beginning of the nineteenth century.” In fact, the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century were periods of mission ad gentes. As Stephen Bevans puts it, “It was a heady time, one of optimism and belief in inevitable progress.” The motivation was to conquer others for Christ and to civilize them. This was seen as a fulfillment to Christ’s mandate to go and to make disciples of all nations, baptizing and teaching them to observe all that he had commanded. (cf. Mt. 28:18-20).

Bosch argues that “mission stood as the sign of the world conquest, and missionaries were referred to as ‘soldiers’ or Christian ‘forces.’” The ‘primitive’ cultures had to be won for Christ and new territories created for the colonial powers. In the process, the early

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127 Pope VI, Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelii Nuntiandi, #22 remarked that proclamation, which consists of Kerygma (that is, proclaiming Christ to non-Christians or unbelievers), preaching or catechesis, occupies such an important place in evangelization that it has often become synonymous with it.
Christian missionaries not only brought the Gospel to the ‘pagan’ world “but also in many instances believed and then imposed their Western version of the gospel on those being evangelized.”\(^{131}\)

As stated in the previous section, the Western culture and the gospel were viewed as one and the same while the cultures of others were deemed to be barbaric. Conversion to Christianity meant, in a sense, denouncing one’s cultural heritage or traditional values and embracing the Western, namely European culture. This particularly affected Africa, as John Baur aptly puts it, “Perhaps the most serious missionary mistake was the principle of tabula rasa. They, as Europeans, thought that the Africans had no proper religion, and that their hearts were blank pages.”\(^{132}\)

Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder describe proclamation as “the communication of the Gospel message, the mystery of salvation realized by God for all in Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit.”\(^{133}\) They emphasize that it “is an invitation to commitment of faith in Jesus Christ and to entry through baptism into the community of believers which is the church.”\(^{134}\) The early Christian missionaries had a burning zeal to share this Good News with all people, though they also had their own human limitations. But inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, Christian faith flourished and prospered in different parts of the world through the work of those courageous men and women.

\(^{131}\) Ibid., p.339.
\(^{134}\) Ibid., p.357.
Bevans and Schroeder explain further that proclamation on the one hand is telling “the story of Jesus, his life, ministry, death and resurrection, and it introduces this man whose life and person were so transparent of God. This is the gospel about Jesus.” On the other hand, it is also telling the gospel of Jesus, that is, “how his parables called his disciples to be forgiving, how his miracles called them to be agents of healing and wholeness, how his exorcisms called them to be opposed absolutely to evil in every form, how his inclusive lifestyle called them to be inclusive.” They continue to emphasize that it is not simply telling a story about the past because Jesus Christ is alive and his message continues to challenge unjust secular and religious structures in our present context.

Proclamation is therefore understood as converting and baptizing others to the confession of “faith that Jesus Christ is the one and only Saviour of all humanity.” As we read in Saint Paul’s letter to the Romans that “all who are guided by the Spirit are children of God; for what you received was not a spirit of slavery to bring you back into fear; you received a spirit of adoption, enabling us to cry out, Abba! Father!” (Romans 8:15).

Andrew Wallis asserts that, as for the Africans, “they have responded to the Gospel from where they were, not from where the missionaries were; they have responded to the Christian message as they heard it, not to the missionaries’ experience of the message.” From this, I can say that dialogue, as I will discuss below, is conducted from within as a communal enterprise. Dialogue takes particular religious and/or cultural contexts seriously. However, Bevans and Schroeder affirm, while quoting the late Archbishop Marcello Zago,

135 Ibid., p.357.
136 Ibid., p.357-358.
137 Ibid., p.358.
that “proclamation presupposes and requires dialogue as a method in order to respond to the requirements of those to be evangelized and to enable them to interiorize the message received.”

It should be mentioned here that for many centuries ‘local churches’, especially churches in Africa, did not exist. As Bosch argues, “What one had, at best, were affiliates of the universal Church. The ‘mission churches,’ in particular, had to resemble the Church in Rome in almost every detail; they were ‘missions’ churches of the second class, daughter churches, immature children, apostolic vicariates...” For example, the celebration of the Eucharist for Catholics was to be in Latin, even though the indigenous people understood little of what the priest was doing. Those who were converted to Christianity were to be made ‘perfect’ Catholics, ‘perfect’ Anglicans or ‘perfect’ Lutherans etc.

1.3.2 Dialogue

The shift to the ecumenical paradigm shift and empirical notion of culture require listening to a culture and therefore dialogue. It presumes missionary activity is no longer a one-way but a two-way street. Listening is a methodological necessity of the paradigm shift in the post-colonial context. It is the beginning of open discussions about adaptation, inculturation and ecumenism in a given context. As Bevans and Schroeder state:

Dialogue is the practice of openness to, fairness and frankness with, respect for, sincerity toward and appreciation of people of other Christian Churches or other religious ways, those who hold to a particular ideology (e.g. Marxism), those for

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whom faith commitment is meaningless (e.g. secularists), or those who have no faith at all. This definition implies that religious dialogue can be like a two-way street. It involves giving and receiving, that is to say, it is a give-take relationship and listening requires great effort.

Because of this, dialogue demands a deep and sincere commitment to learn from the other. It urges one to be ready to be changed by the other. In entering into dialogue with the other, one has to be fully prepared for conversation in different contexts. Dialogue becomes that sacred space where we encounter each other or one another in an atmosphere of respect, truth, openness, vulnerability, attentiveness and humility.

In dialogue, mission and evangelization take the responsibility of not only acknowledging the good that is found in other religious practices and cultures of diverse peoples, but it aims to heal, ennoble and perfect that good in the culture for the greater glory of God. Dialogue clears the suspicions and misunderstandings that may occur between different groups or cultures. Dadosky brings this point home when he explains that one cannot have a serious encounter with another culture without “being changed”, i.e. having one’s worldview challenged, expanded and/or enriched.

In his letter of May 20, 1982 to the Pontifical Council for Culture, John Paul II wrote that “A faith which does not become culture is a faith which has not been fully received, not thoroughly thought through, not fully lived.” Scherer and Bevans, quoting from John Paul II’s Apostolic exhortation, Redemptoris Missio #55, assert that dialogue, “understood as a

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method and means of mutual knowledge and enrichment, is not in opposition to the mission
*ad gentes*; indeed it has special links to that mission and is one of its expressions.\(^{145}\)

An example of dialogue in mission is the first African Synod, which was held in Rome in 1994. The central theme of this ‘The Church in Africa’ Synod was that of dialogue. The Synod was centered on inculturation of Christian faith in Africa. Baur makes this clear while quoting John Paul II’s Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa: the Church in Africa*, as he writes, “Our local Churches must be involved in the process of inculturation, respecting the compatibility with the Christian message and communion with the universal Church.”\(^{146}\)

This process of inculturation has not only provided an avenue for a continued dialogue between the church in Africa and the West, but it has also promoted the dialogue between Christianity and African traditional religions. It has recognized that for the Christian faith to be fully lived and accepted in Africa, the church must listen to the various cultures and take whatever good they have to offer both to the local Christian community and universal Church.

**1.3.3 Witness**

Christian evangelization, Avery Dulles asserts, “is a lifelong process of letting the Gospel permeate and transform all our ideas and attitudes.”\(^{147}\) Christian evangelization seeks to renew the entire life of the person, Church and society. It aims at giving rise to a new


\(^{146}\) Baur, *Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History*, p.418.

person, a new church and a new society. It involves a process of reflecting upon what one reads in scripture in the light of one’s context, belief, transmission, and practice of it.

It is an act of internalization that should give rise to a new awareness and new consciousness. Internalization should give birth to public witness as one’s response to issues of justice, peace, reconciliation and ecumenical collaboration in society. As Bevans and Schroeder suggest, “perhaps the Church’s greatest problem today is that its witness does not measure up to its teaching; it does not always ‘practice what it teaches’.” They emphasize that they speak of witness more in terms of lifestyle and presence, which can be that of individual Christians, of a local Christian community, of an institutional church and/or of Christian communities who are bearing witness together.

In the Gospel of John, when Philip the apostle asked Jesus, “Lord, show us the Father and then we shall be satisfied;” Jesus said to him, “Philip, have I been with you all this time and you still do not know me? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father...” (John 14:8-9). This response of Jesus to Philip is what witness means. It means being one with the Other (God) in such a manner that the image and likeness of God becomes the image that is visible in the believer. It means to be one with Christ who is the “image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15; Philippians 2:6) and to reflect that same image to others. It also refers to an imitation of Christ even unto death as expressed in the lives of the martyrs.

The World Council of Churches Document of 1979 stresses this point when it asserts that as Christians enter dialogue with their commitment to Jesus Christ, time and time again

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149 Ibid., p.353.
the relationship of dialogue gives opportunity for authentic witness. \textsuperscript{150} Witness is an example of a life that is totally dedicated to Christ and to the loving service of one’s brothers and sisters.

    Witness is an active participation in the life of the Church and community \textit{with} others, not \textit{for} others. It is often said that action speaks louder than words. Witness always and everywhere calls for exemplary actions. Witness, in a sense, is love in action. It is loving one’s neighbours, brothers and sisters even to the point of offering one’s life for them (John 15:13).

    Quoting John Paul II, Dulles writes that “people today put more trust in witnesses than in teachers, in experience than in teaching, and in life and action than in theories. The witness of a Christian life is the first and irreplaceable form of mission.”\textsuperscript{151} Witnessing is being there with the other and sharing one’s genuine and sincere love with those who suffer.

    In the Acts of the Apostles, Jesus promises his disciples that they will receive the power to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth when the Holy Spirit comes upon them (Acts 1:8). Subsequently the disciples became courageous witnesses of Jesus Christ. Christians ought to allow their lives to be permeated always by the Holy Spirit so as to be ready to promote justice, peace, reconciliation, unity and charity in our present context.

    The essence of the Christian faith is not found in the externals of religious tradition and practice but rather in the on-going process of becoming Christ-like to the other. Steven Boguslawski and Ralph Martin express this clearly when they write that many people today:

\textsuperscript{151} Dulles, \textit{Evangelization for the Third Millennium}, p.92.
...seem to recognize that no matter how profound the theological formulation may be, no matter how solemn the ritual act may be, no matter how lofty the traditional practice may be, no matter how scrupulous the canonical prescription may be, these in themselves do not constitute the essential core of the Christian faith. They seem to understand that the essential core of our religion is the fire of love (the Spirit) offered to each man and woman by a loving Father. It is this fire of love which constitutes the axis from which all religious acts flow.¹⁵²

Lonergan stresses that for one to communicate the truth, he or she must have come to know it and to live it: a person “cannot lead another to share what oneself does not possess.”¹⁵³ In witness, one must be light in order to lead others to the same light.

1.4 Two major issues arising in theology of mission and evangelization, particularly in Africa, after the Second Vatican Council

The Second Vatican Council made some significant changes for the Church in a number of key areas. First of all, there was a change in the Church’s understanding of itself and its relation to the modern world. The Council had moved away from the classical expression of the Church as the perfect society or the kingdom of God on earth and described itself as a “Sacrament” to the world. It stated categorically that, as a Sacrament, the Church is “a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all.”¹⁵⁴

A second significant change was the Second Vatican Council’s more positive appraisal of both non-Catholic Christians and of believers in non-Christian religions:

...the Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. She has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which

¹⁵³ Lonergan, Method in Theology, p.362.
¹⁵⁴ Austin Flannery, Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents - Lumen Gentium, #1, p.350.
although differing in many ways from her own teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all…\textsuperscript{155}

The Second Vatican Council recognized “rays” of religious truth outside the Catholic Church, and thus it created new opportunities for ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue. It also offered an opportunity to be open to the developments in modern society and to enter into a dialogue with the modern world on a number of different problems.\textsuperscript{156}

A third important change was the Second Vatican Council’s reformulation of Catholic liturgy. This innovation made an immediate and powerful impact on the lives of Catholic faithful. The old liturgy, thought to be unchangeable by many Catholics, was replaced by a new liturgy in which the priest faced the congregation and celebrated the Mass, not in Latin, but in the people’s vernacular or local language.\textsuperscript{157} Also of great significance was the new way of understanding the role of the laity in the Church. For example, laypeople were encouraged to participate fully and actively in the liturgy.\textsuperscript{158}

In transforming what had seemed to many for centuries to be the Church’s unchangeable face, and by opening up an opportunity for a radical restructuring of the Church’s relationship with the modern world, other religions, and even science, the Church had made an unprecedented move. It had experienced a paradigm shift into a new way of understanding the Church and into recognition of “a new age of human history”.\textsuperscript{159}

Karl Rahner saw the Second Vatican Council as having even more importance than the participating council fathers realized or even intended. Rahner argues that with the

\textsuperscript{155} Austin Flannery, \textit{Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents - Nostra Aetate}, #2, p.739.
\textsuperscript{156} Austin Flannery, \textit{Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents - Gaudium et Spes}, #3, p.904.
\textsuperscript{158} Austin Flannery, \textit{Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents - Sacrosanctum Concilium}, #14, p.8.
\textsuperscript{159} Austin Flannery, \textit{Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents - Gaudium et Spes}, #54, p.959.
Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church had made a “qualitative leap” towards becoming a “world-church.”\textsuperscript{160} Even though the Catholic Church had always been a world-church in potential, Rahner argues that, previous to the Second Vatican Council, the Church had been too culturally tied to Europe, and that its relation to the rest of the world was more like that of an “export firm.”\textsuperscript{161}

According to Rahner, it was at the Second Vatican Council that the world-church first entered human history. This constituted what Rahner called the transition to the third major time period in the history of the Church. In Rahner’s scheme, the Church’s first transition occurred at the Church’s very beginning when it moved from being Jewish-Christianity to becoming Gentile-Christianity and thereupon adopting the Hellenistic culture. The second transition was when the Church moved from being Gentile-Christianity to being Greco-Roman-Christianity, assimilating the European or Western thought forms with all the radical restructuring of the faith this entailed.\textsuperscript{162}

Rahner stresses that this third major transition, ushered in by the Second Vatican Council, constitutes and involves a new challenge of restructuring that must likewise be met with ‘Pauline boldness’. He writes, “At this point a frontier has been crossed behind which it will never again be possible to return, even to the slightest degree.”\textsuperscript{163}

Rahner, like many other scholars of theology of mission, did not see the Church’s action in the Second Vatican Council as simply representing a reform or a revolution. Rather, Р

\textsuperscript{160} Rahner, ‘Towards a Fundamental Theological Interpretation of Vatican II’, \textit{Theological Studies}, p.716.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., p.717.
\textsuperscript{162} Ibid., p.721.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid., p.726.
it was the beginning of a new way of being. This shift has had tremendous implications for theology of mission and evangelization, particularly in Africa.

The Second Vatican Council declares that:

...the Church is not unaware how much it has profited from the history and development of mankind... from the experience of past ages, from the progress of the sciences, and from the riches hidden in various cultures. The Church learned early in history to express the Christian message in the concepts and language of different peoples and tried to clarify it in the light of the wisdom of their philosophers... In this way, it is possible to create in every country the possibility of expressing the message of Christ in suitable terms and to foster vital contact and exchange between the Church and different cultures.\(^{164}\)

The Church’s new role and the Second Vatican Council’s effects continue to create a number of uncertainties and issues, including inculturation and syncretism.

### 1.4.1 Inculturation

In 1978, a Jesuit Superior General Pedro Arrupe defined inculturation as, “the incarnation of Christian message in a particular cultural context, in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question, but becomes a principle that animates, directs and unifies the culture, transforming and remaking it so as to bring about a new creation.”\(^{165}\)

By emphasizing Arrupe’s definition, Bosch argues that in inculturation the focus is on the ‘new creation’ as the transformation of the old, resembling the plant which, “having

\(^{164}\) Austin Flannery, *Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents - Gaudium et Spes*, #44, p.946.
flowered from its seed, is at the same time something fundamentally new when compared
with that seed.”

Robert Schreiter, however, refers to inculturation as a “combination of the theological
principle of incarnation with the social-science concept of acculturation (adapting oneself to
a culture).” He emphasizes that inculturation implies a double movement, that “there is at
once inculturation of Christianity and Christianization of culture.” However, the Gospel
must remain Good News while becoming, up-to a certain point, a cultural phenomenon.

Roest Crollius, on the other hand, argues that inculturation is:

...the integration of the Christian experience of a local church into the culture of its
people in such a way that the experience not only express itself in elements of this
culture, but becomes a force that animates, orients and innovates this culture so as to
create a new unity and communion not only within the culture in question, but also as
an enrichment of the church universal.

Shorter views inculturation as “the on-going dialogue between faith and culture or
cultures” and a “creative and dynamic relationship between the Christian message and a
culture or cultures.” He stresses that the reciprocal and critical interaction between the
Christian faith and culture is a historical process, which can be identified with the transfer of
religious meaning between cultures. Shorter further explains that inculturation is the
encounter between the Gospel of Jesus Christ, on the one hand, and whole cultures on the

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168 Ibid., p.12.
171 Ibid., p.11.
172 Ibid., p.13.
other. “The Gospel illuminates and transforms culture, while culture re-expresses and even – to a certain extent – reinterprets the Gospel.”

From these arguments, it is clear that inculturation is viewed as an inseparable aspect of mission and evangelization. It is a synthesis in which faith becomes culture and vice versa. It should create favourable conditions and an environment for the establishment of God’s reign on earth and the realization of God’s loving commitment to humanity.

Similarly, Joseph Healy understands inculturation as the process by which people in a “particular culture become able to live, express, celebrate, formulate and communicate their faith and their experience of the paschal mystery in terms that make most sense and better convey life and truth in their social and cultural environment.” Bevans, for his part, argues that in inculturation, “people are renewed and strengthened in their identity and their sense of belonging by means of story, song, music and dance.”

In terms of Africa, some African scholars of theology of mission argue that inculturation grew out of different movements, questioning the classical assumptions of the early missionaries’ approach to mission and evangelization in Africa. They believe that the classical missionary doctrine, which assumed that commerce, civilization, and Christianity went together and “that cultural diffusion was the appropriate way to establish the church,” could no longer hold.

Sanneh, for example, asserts that Christianity arrived in Africa out of the general expansion of European interests abroad, which were motivated first by a wish to circumvent

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173 Shorter, *Towards a Theology of Inculturation*, p.64.


Islam and then by a desire for economic markets.\textsuperscript{177} He argues that the missionaries at the beginning of this period assumed that Africans had not heard of God and that it was their task to remedy that defect. They then began to ask Africans what names and concepts of God the Africans had. Having established such fundamental points of contact, the missionaries proceeded to adopt local languages so as to preach the gospel: “After all, it turns out, Africans had heard of God, described God most eloquently, and maintained toward God proper attitudes of reverence, worship, and sacrifice.”\textsuperscript{178}

Sanneh continues to argue that the early missionaries were not pleased when they found evidence that God had preceded them to Africa, and even resented the willingness of Africans to receive the gospel as confirmation of what Africans had always known about faith in the divine providence. Missionaries seemed “shocked and disappointed, even antagonized, by examples of faithfulness, endurance, and forgiveness” showed by Africans, “the standards by which they were purporting to do mission.”\textsuperscript{179}

John S. Mbiti, a renowned Kenyan scholar of theology of mission, aptly puts this into context: “The time has come when the Church in Africa should look carefully at the relationship between Christianity and traditional religions...”\textsuperscript{180} It is argued that it was from these movements that a new vision and understanding of theology of mission emerged. This understanding emphasizes that mission and evangelization in Africa must take account of the Africans to whom Christian faith is proclaimed, the African cultures and African traditional religions. I will continue with this discussion further in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

\textsuperscript{177} \textit{Ibid.}, p.193.
\textsuperscript{178} \textit{Ibid.}, p.192.
\textsuperscript{179} \textit{Ibid.}, p.197.
Schreiter argues that “Christianity, like other traditions, has a long history of absorbing elements from the cultures in which it has lived: Hellenistic, Germanic, Celtic, Syrian influences.”¹⁸¹ It is because of this that some scholars of theology of mission argue that if Christ could be at home in Greek philosophy and thereby reinvigorate the ideas and values of the pagan order, there could be no bar to Christ performing a comparable role among other peoples in other times.¹⁸² The problem with our time, Schreiter argues, is that “this same process is continuing, but that things are happening too quickly and many more cultures are involved.”¹⁸³

Inculturation should continuously invite Christians to enter into a new and profound communion with other cultures, inasmuch as they are called to weave, with mutual enrichment and complementarily, the ‘robe of many colors’ of the cultural reality of the one pilgrim people of God.¹⁸⁴ And it is this unity in diversity that inculturation should always strive for.

Dadosky expresses this point clearly when he argues that the Church today must be teacher as well as a learner. As a learner, Dadosky says, the Church requires “listening, dialogue, preparation, careful study and reflection.”¹⁸⁵ It is this kind of “mutual self-mediating relations, as graced, expresses that the Church can learn from the other and be enriched in her own self-understanding by that encounter.”¹⁸⁶ Where this happens, both the Church and the other, do not merely look at each other in terms of benefactors and

¹⁸¹ Schreiter, Constructing Local Theologies, p.151.
¹⁸³ Schreiter, Constructing Local Theologies, p.151.
¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p.751.
¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p.748.
beneficiaries, “but that all are, at the same time, giving and receiving, that a kind of osmosis is taking place.”\footnote{187}

As Shorter writes, “...ultimately inculturation is a community project. The community provides the criteria of authenticity and success, because it is life of the community which is in question. The community also provides the means.”\footnote{188} Therefore, forcing one’s religion on others to be assimilated may “foster intolerance e.g. fundamentalism or triumphalism. And there can also be a risk that too much tolerance may also lead to the opposite extreme or distortion or relativism, syncretism.”\footnote{189}

1.4.2 Syncretism

Syncretism is a word that comes from the Greek word συνκρητισμός meaning a ‘federation of Cretan cities’ united against a common enemy. This was a rare and uncertain event, as Cretans were usually fighting among themselves.\footnote{190} It was used to denote how different Cretan tribes became unified when they were faced with external threats. It was later used to signify a fusion of different divinities or doctrines.

Thus, Schreiter defines, syncretism has to do with the “mixing of elements of two religious systems to the point where at least one, if not both, of the systems loses basic structure and identity.”\footnote{191} It was also used as a recognition of the Greco-Roman gods under

\footnote{188} Shorter, \textit{Towards a Theology of Inculturation}, p.266.  
\footnote{191} Schreiter, \textit{Constructing Local Theologies}, pp.144-145.
different foreign names as an indication toward monotheism.\textsuperscript{192} It was also viewed as an effort to fill in gaps in a given religion and played a role in the form of adaptation.\textsuperscript{193}

The paradigm shift in the understanding of theology of mission in our present context with regards to inculturation raises a number of questions about syncretism. For example, are there limits to inculturation, or is everything that is cultural also Christian? Can it result in the core Gospel message being lost or communication between the churches becoming no longer possible? If these questions are not fully addressed, we may create a situation, particularly in Africa, where some believers view themselves as Christians only on Sundays or Saturdays while they simply revert to their own traditional or other forms of worship during the week. This creates a dual religious belonging\textsuperscript{194} among the Christian converts.

Carl F. Starkloff argues that “syncretic processes facilitate a retention or recovery of cultural identity among ‘threatened’ cultures under attack by more dominant cultures.”\textsuperscript{195} He suggests that syncretism can therefore become for the marginalized culture “a solution to their problems, while it represents a threat for the culture that is attempting to impose itself holus bolus on another.”\textsuperscript{196}

Let me take as examples situations in Kenya, an African nation where more than 80% of the general population identify themselves as Christians. When it comes to the electioneering period, a number of Kenyan Christians seeking elections to parliamentary, senatorial, governorship, county-representative, etc., offices, seek the spiritual intervention of

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{194} Schreiter, \textit{Constructing Local Theologies}, pp.144-145.
\textsuperscript{196} Ibid., p.59.
\end{footnotesize}
a Traditional Medicine person to help them secure the desired post. They believe with certainty that the Traditional Medicine person has some medicine or magical power to protect them from their opponents and the power to make the electorate vote in their favour.

Similarly, there are also a number of parents claiming to be Christians who bring their children to the Church to be baptized but then ask a Traditional Medicine person to give them a protective charm for their offspring against what is called the “evil eye”.197 The parents then tie some kind of a cord around their child’s waist or a bracelet onto the wrists of their child with the charm from the Traditional Medicine person, believing that this will certainly protect their child from harm.

Rahner argues that some questions still continue to come up: How can the unity of Christian faith be maintained and even verified when Christians have plural proclamations?198 Is everything within each and every culture and religion identified with the message of Christ? Theology of mission challenges us to seek coherence and common meaning among believers. Schreiter argues that if this is not done well we may end up with four common forms of syncretism, that is, over-emphasizing the similarities between Christianity and local cultures, filling the gaps, indiscriminate mixing and domination.199

First, we may end up looking for what is similar to Christianity in our own cultures and so try to compare the two sets of either rituals or rites. For example, in Africa, one may end up looking at the similarities between the African rites of passage (Birth-Naming,

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197 ‘Evil Eye’ is a word that is used in reference to a person who is evil bent to harm or kill the child either by looking or any other means that might cause death to a young child.
199 Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, pp.151-152.
Initiation-Circumcision, Marriage and Death) with Christian Sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick and Holy Orders).

Second, we could be reduced to filling up what is lacking in our own cultures with Christianity or vice versa. On the other hand, we may end up looking for linguistic equivalents for great theological categories like grace, salvation, sin and justification in the local languages in an attempt to meet the immediate and pressing pastoral needs.\textsuperscript{200}

Third, there could arise a situation in which there is indiscriminate mixing of both Christianity and local cultures such that both meanings are lost. This can occur when Christianity and the local culture(s) are randomly mixed without making a careful observation, understanding and judgment of what is being done or carried out without proper theological reflection. And fourth, a situation may arise in which one of the faith practices, either Christianity or local culture(s) ends up claiming domination over the other.

Whereas, the Second Vatican Council declares that every culture and religion carries with it sets of traditions, values and convictions, and that Christian evangelization must therefore preserve everything good that is to be found in human cultures or religions, the Council also says that Christian evangelization must free it from admixture with evil. The Council affirms:

There are many links between the message of salvation and culture... the Church has existed through the centuries in varying circumstances and has utilized the resources of different cultures in its preaching to spread and explain the message of Christ, to examine and understand it more deeply, and to express it more perfectly in liturgy and in various aspects of the life of the faithful... The good news of Christ continually

\textsuperscript{200} Ibid., p.7.
renews the life and culture of fallen man; it combats and removes the error and evil which flows from the ever-present attraction of sin.\textsuperscript{201}

The point that I seek to stress here is that the “good news of Christ continually renews the life and culture of fallen man; it combats and removes the error and evil which flows from the ever-present attraction of sin.”\textsuperscript{202} It therefore follows that an authentic pastoral minister (agent) must take the responsibility for not only saving from destruction the good that is found in other cultures of diverse peoples, but for healing, ennobling and perfecting that good for the glory of the Kingdom of God.

In fact, Lonergan argues that to communicate the Christian message is to lead another to share one’s cognitive, constitutive and effective meaning. Therefore, those who would communicate the cognitive meaning of the message must, first of all, know it. Those who would communicate the constitutive meaning of the Christian message must, first of all, live it. Those who would communicate the effective meaning of the Christian message must, first of all, practice it.\textsuperscript{203}

Such communication presupposes that, in theology of mission, pastoral agents must enlarge their horizons to include an accurate and intimate understanding of the culture and language of the people they address. As Lonergan argues, “They must grasp the virtual resources of that culture and that language, and they must use these virtual resources creatively so that the Christian message becomes, not disruptive of the culture, not an alien

\textsuperscript{201} Austin Flannery, \textit{Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents - Gaudium et Spes}, #58, p.962.
\textsuperscript{202} Austin Flannery, \textit{Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents - Gaudium et Spes}, #58, p.964.
\textsuperscript{203} Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, p.362.
patch superimposed upon it, but a line of development within the culture.” It has to be carried out attentively, intelligently, reasonably and responsibly.

**Conclusion**

In this Chapter, I have explained in a broader sense the understanding of a paradigm shift in the theology of mission and evangelization. I have looked at the definition of the word evangelization, the similarities and differences between mission and evangelization, and at how both Bosch’s ecumenical paradigm shift and Lonergan’s shift from the classicist to an empirical notion of culture have provided us with rich grounds and adequate frameworks for the understanding of mission and evangelization in our present time. A paradigm shifts from deductive to inductive, from logic to empirical.

I have also examined the tensions that have heightened within the theology of mission and evangelization in the post-colonial context. I have analyzed the two major issues arising in the theology of mission and evangelization, particularly in Africa, after the Second Vatican Council. This then prepares me to engage the changing paradigms of mission in the Kenyan context at a deeper level, “where its inconsistencies and contradictions become painfully clear.”

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204 Ibid., p.362.
205 Ibid., p.17.
Chapter 2

Changing Paradigms of Mission in the Kenyan Context

Introduction

I was once told the story of a European Catholic missionary who, after his ordination to the priesthood in 1930s, was sent by his congregation to a newly established mission station in the interior of Africa. The young priest was excited to be sent as a missionary to the exotic continent. When he arrived in Africa, he was immediately put in-charge of a new established mission. With the vigour and enthusiasm of youth, he quickly learnt the local language of the people and was soon able to communicate with the indigenous people and proclaim the Gospel message to them.

During his tenure, the young priest was amazed to see that some of the young women who came for choir practice on Saturdays at the parish did not cover their breasts. He wanted to ask about it, but fear of being offensive to the culture prevented him from doing so.

After some years, the priest prepared to return to Europe for his vacation. He took the pictures of his parishioners and choir members, and he had a great story to tell to his family and friends back in Europe. He told them how poor his mission station was, how difficult his life, how uncultured the people and how the young women were so poor, they had to go to choir practice with their breasts uncovered. He petitioned his friends for funds for clothes and received beautiful T-shirts, which he took back to his mission station in Africa.

When the priest arrived, he told the choir of the gifts that he had brought for them from Europe. He told them that he had decided to give the choir members a uniform T-shirt
to be worn on Saturdays during the choir practice and another kind to be worn during the celebration of the holy Mass on Sundays.

He then distributed the Saturday T-shirts to all the choir members who took them home. But when the choir members turned up for the singing practice the following Saturday, the priest was amazed: all the young unmarried women had cut holes on the T-shirts around their breasts. Their pastor wondered at the strange and funny reception of his gift.

The young priest did not know that, in this particular ethnic community, young unmarried women were taught by their cultural traditions and customs not to cover their breasts before finding a suitor for marriage. For a young unmarried woman, the exposed breast was regarded not only as a symbol of beauty but also as a sign of virtue and pride. But for the young European missionary, it symbolized poverty, embarrassment and barbarism.

This story illustrates some of the issues around the theology of mission and evangelization particularly in Africa. Although this incident took place in the early-twentieth century Africa, it does not seem too far removed from the situations that many missionaries encounter in mission and evangelization in the post-colonial era. As cultures, traditions and religious beliefs are dynamic, and as globalization brings disparate people into contact, learning about and trying to understand other peoples’ religious world-views is essential. Such an education is a driving force in order to live and practice an authentic Christian witness among people of different cultural and religious backgrounds.

This Chapter will look at mission and evangelization in the Kenyan context. It will be divided into two sections. In the first section, I will present a general historical overview of
Kenya in terms of cultural, religious, political and economic milieus. This will give us a picture of how the country is situated and of its people in general.

The second section will be divided into two sub-sections. In the first sub-section, I will look briefly at the historical developments of the early Christian missions in Kenya before the country’s political independence. I will examine the early missionaries’ model of mission and evangelization, that is to say, their carrying out of Christ’s command to go and proclaim the gospel to all nations, in the classicist assumptions in which it was interpreted. This endeavor involved learning new languages, translating of the Scriptures into local languages, erecting church structures, building schools and dispensaries, catechizing and baptizing the new converts into the Christian faith.

In the second sub-section, I will look at mission and evangelization in Kenya in the post-colonial context. I will try to identify some of the aspects that led to the emergence of a new paradigm shift in mission and evangelization in Kenya. I will also analyze and examine the model of mission and evangelization that is being used in our present context, as is expressed in the transfer of leadership to the indigenous clergy, the celebration of the liturgy, the conferring of the sacraments, the growth of small Christian communities and the participation of the laity.

2.1 General Historical Overview

The Republic of Kenya is situated in Eastern Africa; the equator runs right across the country. It is bordered by Somalia in the east, Ethiopia in the north, South Sudan in the
northwest, Uganda in the west, Lake Victoria in the southwest, Tanzania in the south and the Indian Ocean in the south east.

In the north, the land is arid whereas the southwest corner is in the fertile Lake Victoria Basin. The Great Rift Valley separates the western highlands from central highlands and leads to the lowland coastal strip. The country covers a total area of about 582,650 square kilometers and is home to some of the world’s most spectacular wildlife, lions, rhinos, elephants, giraffes, zebras, buffalos, antelopes and many rare birds among them.

2.1.1 The Cultural Milieu

Kenya has a population of about 40 million people. It is a land of multi-ethnic communities made up of more than 42 different ethnic groups or tribes. These tribes provide Kenya with many rich cultural backgrounds. Different tribes have relatively distinct and different customs, rites, rituals and languages, although Kiswahili is widely spoken as a national language and English is its official language.

Some of the major tribes in Kenya are the Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin, Kamba, Maasai, Kisii, Meru, Embu, Teso, Kipsigis, Somali, Mjikenda, Rendile, Borana, Samburu, Taita, Gabbra, and Kuria. While some tribes like the Maasai, Turkana and Samburu peoples have largely kept their traditional lifestyles, some other tribes have acculturated and incorporated much from Western lifestyles. Meanwhile, many Kenyans still prefer to identify themselves as belonging to a particular tribe or ethnic community.

The different ethnic communities are generally grouped into three major categories, namely the: Nilotes, Bantus and Cushites. Beside these there are the Asians, Arabs and Europeans who also live in Kenya.
2.1.2 The Religious Milieu

Kenya is a land with a diverse religious background with a rich texture of historical movements and religious practices. Some of the major religions are Christianity (including Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans, Baptists, Pentecostals, Evangelicals et alia), Islam, Hinduism and African Traditional Religions (ATRs).

Christianity is on the rise in Kenya. In the year “1900 Kenya was home to approximately 5,000 Christians comprising 0.2% of the population. By 1970 that number had grown to 7,299,800 or 63.5% and currently there are 23,859,800 Christians living in Kenya.”207

In 1995, Pope John Paul II visited Kenya among other African countries on the occasion of the first African Synod, and in November 2015 Pope Francis also visited Kenya on his first trip to Africa. On both visits, the popes encouraged and strengthened the faith of, not only the Catholics, but other Christians as well. They fostered a bond of unity and love with the Kenyan people and facilitated the renewal of Christian faith.

Today, Kenya can be called a Christian country for current estimates indicate that 82% of its total population are Christians.208 The early Christian missionaries would be proud of this because Kenya has indeed become a place and a land where the majority of its occupants are Christians.

Islam is also a major religion in Kenya with about 10% of the total population. Most of the Muslims are in the coastal and north-eastern regions. African traditional religions are

208 Ibid., p.430.
estimated to be making up about 2% of the total population even though there, at times, seem to be a dual participation among those who claim to be Christians and Muslims in the African traditional religions as experienced during moments of crisis like illness or death. During these moments of crisis, some Christians tend to visit traditional medicine men or women seeking their assistance and/or intervention.

2.1.3 The Political Milieu

Kenya was named a British protectorate in the year 1884-1885 by the Berlin Congress, which partitioned the African continent among various European powers. After a long struggle and popular rebellions against British colonial rule, Kenya finally received its independence on December 12, 1963. The uprising, led by the native population, was popularly known as the Mau Mau rebellion (a Kiswahili abbreviation for Mzungu Arudi Ulaya, Mwafrika Apace Uhuru, i.e. “Europeans to return to Europe and Africans to receive independence or freedom”), and was a revolt against white (British) minority rule.

Jomo Kenyatta, a leader during the fight for independence who had been jailed by the British during the uprisings, became Kenya’s first president under KANU (Kenya African National Union), the political party that took over the government from the British. From 1964 to 1992, the country was ruled as a single party state with KANU as the only political party, at first under Kenyatta and then under Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, who took over power when Kenyatta died in 1978. Demonstrations and riots put pressure on Moi to allow multiparty elections in 1992 after the parliamentary amendment of section 2A in the old constitution that had declared the country a one-party State.
In 2002, an opposition leader, Emilio Mwai Kibaki, won the presidential election with a landslide victory for the NARC (Nation Rainbow Coalition) party, defeating Moi’s preferred presidential candidate Uhuru Mwigai Kenyatta. The new presidential term limit that had been introduced prevented Moi from becoming president again, having been in power for 24 years. Kibaki initiated a number of reforms at the beginning of his presidency, including ordering a crackdown on corrupt judges and police officers and introducing free primary education.

In July 2005, a draft constitution was approved by the parliament, but in December 2005 voters rejected it because it expanded the powers of the president. And in December 2007, Kenya descended into violence and chaos following the presidential election. Preliminary polls revealed that the opposition candidate Raila Odinga, of ODM (Orange Democratic Movement) was leading the incumbent Kibaki of PNU (Party of National Unity) with a wide margin. However, Odinga’s lead dwindled and the ECK (Electoral Commission of Kenya) a body that was in-charge of the elections, declared Kibaki the winner with 46% to Odinga’s 44% of the total vote.

In November 2009 a new draft constitution was published that diminished the role of the president and devolved power to the local governments. It also included provisions for land reform and established a bill of rights. This draft constitution was overwhelmingly approved by voters in an August 2010 referendum. On August 27, 2010, the new constitution went into effect.

In 2012, Uhuru Mwigai Kenyatta of Jubilee Party was elected president getting just enough votes to avoid a presidential run-off with Raila Odinga, now of the CORD (Coalition
for Reform and Democracy) party. President Barack Obama of the United States of America visited Kenya in July 2015, as he has some family roots in Kenya. He was the first American president to visit Kenya while still in office.

Meanwhile, we have begun to witness tensions building up between the two major political coalitions (CORD and Jubilee) that has led to street demonstrations, as the country prepares for another parliamentary and presidential election, which is scheduled to take place in August, 2017. The key tribal figures who are also leaders of the two major political coalitions that are already jostling for power. Already some people have lost their lives due to these senseless political competitions among the politicians. While it is the masses who continue to bear the brunt of the political rivalry, the politicians continue to enjoy and to protect their positions at all cost.

2.1.4 The Economic Milieu

Kenya has the largest economy in East Africa. It is also East Africa’s financial and transportation hub. Agriculture is the backbone of Kenya’s economy as it has been for many years. Kenya’s different regions favour the growth of various agricultural products depending on the different climatic conditions. Crops like coffee, tea, wheat, barley, sisal, cotton, sugar-cane, coconut, flowers (roses), pyrethrum, pineapples, groundnuts, corn, millet, beans, kales, sweet-potatoes, Irish-potatoes, bananas, oranges and mangoes are grown in Kenya.

Kenya also depends on tourism. The country has a wide range of white-sand beaches on the coastal region and several national parks and game reserves, which continually attract many outsiders who come to Kenya for the safaris. Fishing and animal rearing (cattle, sheep,
goats and camels) also provide livelihoods for many local peoples. Milk, beef, pork, poultry, and eggs are available in the Kenyan market.

Many other Kenyans work in what is popularly known as the ‘Jua Kali’ sector, which are doing day labour in such fields as mechanics, welding, small hand-crafts and construction. The mining of minerals like gold, limestone, soda-ash, salt and fluorspar and also gemstones takes place in Kenya. Recently oil deposits have been found in the northern part of the country.

However, with the growing number of unemployment, HIV/AIDS pandemic, corruption and the displacement of people from their homes during the post-election of 2007/2008. Poverty in Kenya has become worse. There are many families who are struggling to make ends meet, surviving with only one meal a day and/or those who are living below the poverty line with less than one US dollar per day.

The church and some NGO’s (Non-Governmental Organizations) have initiated some self-help projects (like planting vegetables, rearing of chickens and tailoring) that are geared toward helping the widows to get some income in order to feed and clothe their families. The church in Kenya also runs a number of children’s homes where HIV/AIDS orphans are taken care of and are given their basic needs and medication.
2.2 Christian mission and evangelization in Kenya

Following the Berlin Conference of 1884 and the Berlin Act of 1885\textsuperscript{209}, which allowed the partitioning of Africa among the European colonial world powers,\textsuperscript{210} Kenya fell into the hands of Great Britain and the European Christian missionaries. Kenya, like the rest of Africa “was now a new kingdom to be won for Christ”\textsuperscript{211}.

With this partitioning, European Christian missionaries started to enter the interior part of Africa (Kenya) in order to proclaim the Gospel. This was largely because the European Christian missionaries needed physical protection, which was now provided by the European colonizers. Some scholars of theology of mission argue that it was due to this dependence on protection and other basic needs that European Christian missionaries remained loyal and obedient to their countries of origin and to the other Europeans who administered the foreign colonies\textsuperscript{212}.

Zablon Nthamburi argues that the granting of the Royal Charter to the Imperial British East Africa Company (I.E.A.C.) in 1888 had a direct bearing on the expansion of the early European Christian missionary activities in Kenya. He stresses that Sir William Mackinnon, the I.E.A.C.’s director, encouraged the already established missions to extend their work into the African interior, particularly where the company could ensure their safety.\textsuperscript{213}

\textsuperscript{211} Ibid., p.31.
It is fairly clear, therefore, that systematic and deliberate Christian mission and evangelization in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Kenya, began along side of the partitioning and colonization of Africa. Another factor supporting missionary efforts in Kenya was the building of the railway-line from Mombasa, the Kenyan coastal town on the Indian Ocean, to Uganda. This made it much easier for the nineteenth-century Christian Missionaries to reach the interior parts of the country. Elizabeth Isichei underscores this point when she writes that “the construction of roads and railways, and the increased security of travel meant that it became easier to spread the Christian message.”

2.2.1 Early Christian missionary evangelization

In 1498, the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama arrived at the island of Malindi in the Indian Ocean, off today’s Kenyan coast, after discovering a sailing route around the Cape of Good Hope. This key event in the “Age of Exploration” or “Age of Discovery”, which spanned the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, was one that formed part of the inauguration of a new chapter in world history. It included European expansion to the Americas and Africa, an endeavour motivated not only by the spread of religion, but first and foremost, by the search for profit for the economy and increase of power for the state. Heretofore, the conquest of North Africa by Islam had impeded the European travel to the Far East, and so European explorers such as Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama, had to search for new trade routes to the Far East.

Vasco da Gama’s contact and interaction with the local population was later followed by the sixteenth century’s “small wave of missionary movement consisting of missionary priests in Lamu and Augustinian friars in Mombasa, who witnessed to over 600 Kenyans who were converted to Christianity.” However, this first wave of mission and evangelization had a minimal impact on the local population due to a number of reasons; they include a hostile reception by the indigenous people and the fact that Islam had already established its presence on the coast.

2.2.1.1 Growth and Development

a) Early Protestant evangelization

Protestants mission and evangelization preceded Roman Catholic mission and evangelization in Kenya. In 1844 Dr. Johann Ludwig Krapf, a German Lutheran missionary, arrived at the port of Mombasa. Krapf was sent by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to Ethiopia, but he ended up at the Kenyan coast of Mombasa. Krapf later settled at Rabbai and within two months of his arrival, his wife Rosine and their newborn baby died of malaria. Despite these losses, Krapf continued with his effort to evangelize the local people and in 1846 he was joined by Rev. John Rebmann, a fellow German missionary. Krapf, a gifted linguist, studied the local language and was able to produce a Kiswahili dictionary. He also set himself the task of translating the New Testament into Kiswahili. However, Krapf left the Church Missionary Society in 1853, and went back to

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Europe having had little success in his African mission.\(^{218}\) This was partly because the Muslim inhabitants who had already established a presence on the coast did not fully welcome him. He later returned to Mombasa in 1862 and together with Thomas Wakefield, started the United Church. In 1901, the African Inland Mission settled at Kijabe, while the Methodist Missionary Society started their work in Meru in 1909.\(^{219}\)

**b) Early Roman Catholic evangelization**

In 1863, the Holy Ghost Missionaries, also known as the Spiritans, founded a mission station in Zanzibar with the aim of evangelizing the freed slaves. The mission was entrusted to two priests, Anthony Homier and Edward Baur, and two religious brothers.\(^{220}\) As the mission grew, the Holy Ghost Missionaries expanded their mission to Mombasa. In 1891 they opened another mission station at Burs, near Voi.\(^{221}\)

Also in 1891, with the construction of the railway line from Mombasa to Nairobi, a town in central Kenya, the Holy Ghost missionaries opened another mission station at St. Austin in Nairobi. Here they developed a large coffee plantation and St. Austin eventually became a large center for industrial and agricultural training.

In 1901, the railway line reached Kisumu; the Mill Hill missionaries entered Kenya through Uganda into the western part of the country around the region of Lake Victoria. The Consolata Missionaries from Italy joined the Kenyan mission in 1902 and went on to evangelize the central part of the country around the Mount Kenya region. Soon after this


\(^{220}\) Oliver, *The Missionary Factor in East Africa*, p.18.

initial mission and evangelization, many other Roman Catholic religious congregations, male and female, also came to Kenya to proclaim the Good News.

2.2.1.2 The model of the early missionaries’ mission and evangelization

The early Christian missionaries concentrated on building churches, education, works of charity, health care, and technical and agricultural training. For Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries alike, the proclamation of the Gospel went hand in hand with social services. They built schools and dispensaries or hospitals. In the educational centers indigenous people were taught how to read, write and solve simple arithmetic problems while at the same time, the message of Christ as the saviour and Son of God was proclaimed to them.

The indigenous people were taught how to read the Bible and were more often than not also invited to join the missionaries in their new (western) form(s) of worship. In some cases, the church-buildings were used as classrooms during weekdays, places where formal education was carried out, whereas on Saturdays and Sundays they operated as places of worship.

The health centers or dispensaries were used to meet the physical needs of the indigenous population by providing them with drugs against tropical diseases like malaria and safe deliveries for expectant mothers. Health centers or dispensaries were also places where the missionaries expressed their love, compassion, care and solidarity with the sick and the suffering.

This model of mission and evangelization in many ways called for more familiarity with established Christian or Church traditions than with local ones. For that reason, what the
early Christian missionaries carried out could only be done by persons foreign to a local culture.\textsuperscript{222} As a corollary, the early Christian missionaries strove to articulate such great theological categories as grace, salvation, sin and justification in the local languages, meeting the immediate and pressing pastoral needs of their time and situation.\textsuperscript{223} It was a matter of simple translation and “adaptation to local circumstance in ritual, in catechesis and in the rendering of significant texts into local languages.”\textsuperscript{224}

It was a simple, clear and explicit model of theology of mission and evangelization. Having language limitations, the early missionaries tried to explain the Gospel with few words and relied more on the celebration of the sacraments, especially Baptism and Eucharist. But it was also through their simple catechesis that indigenous people were converted to the new Christian faith and finally agreed to be baptized.

To give them their due, the early Christian missionaries to a great extent contributed toward the eradication of ignorance, disease and poverty among the indigenous people. They did in fact open the door to higher education and vocational training. They built and developed institutions of higher learning, universities and vocational colleges where indigenous people were taught practical skills, for example, new methods of farming or agriculture, carpentry and masonry.

Commenting on this point, Isichei argues that colonial officials and settlers feared that mission education would inculcate ideas about equality into the indigenous people. She writes that a Kenyan Director of Education (a white European) once asked anxiously, “Are

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\textsuperscript{222} Schreiter, \textit{Constructing Local Theologies}, p.7.
\textsuperscript{223} Ibid., p.7.
\textsuperscript{224} Ibid., p.5.
\end{flushleft}
your people taught that all men are equal?" She goes on to argue that such fears were groundless because “few indeed were the white missionaries inclined to regard Africans as their equals. However, literate Africans had direct access to the Bible and worked out its implications for themselves.”

The early Christian missionaries carried out these activities despite the many human limitations, challenges and difficulties that they had to face in their mission stations. Taking into consideration that “not all missionaries succeeded in mastering an African language... many spoke a bowdlerized version... intelligible only to Natives who being accustomed to Europeans, knew what was intended as well as the speakers themselves.” Indeed, God’s gift of the Holy Spirit was certainly with them and their work flourished and took root as the number of new converts who were being baptized into Christian faith increased.

They were men and women who passionately safeguarded the role of Christian faith in human society while at the same time did not deny the human search for knowledge and scientific developments. They encouraged such developments as human manifestations of God’s Spirit to assist human nature. Whether or not they were aware or unaware, the early Christian missionaries had inspired the indigenous people to look beyond themselves. They had ushered in a new paradigm shift, a new era, not only in Kenyan history, but in Africa as a whole.

Therefore, one can say with all humility that the majority of early Christian missionaries were men and women who were filled with hope, faith and love for the indigenous people to whom they ministered. In many ways the early missionaries

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226 Ibid., p.234.
227 Ibid., p.133.
transcended their own human and cultural interests in search of truth while recognizing at the same time their own human imperfections and relied on God’s providence. And as John Baur aptly puts it, “The growth of faith in depth was left as an urgent pastoral task to a future generation.”\textsuperscript{228}

2.2.2 Mission and evangelization in the post-colonial context

By the mid and late twentieth century, there was a new wave of change in the world. The world had experienced two global wars and what followed was a new struggle for independence and liberation. The period witnessed new developments, progress in modernization and technologies, growth of industries and establishment of new urban centers.

In Africa, the era was characterized by political struggles for independence from the European colonial powers. However, the struggle did not stop at the political arena alone. Those who were being evangelized within a structure intertwined with colonialism were human persons subject also to social, political and economic conditions. Mission and evangelization in post-colonial context, as Benezet Bujo puts it, began to take the shape of “the struggle against dictatorship, both domestic and foreign.”\textsuperscript{229} There was a new hope and desire within many individuals that there would be a new breath of life both religiously and politically throughout the world.

Within the Catholic Church, this period began with the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). The council was called primarily in response to the changes that were taking place in the world. The Church felt that there was a dire need to deepen the faith among all

Christians. There was an obligation to make Christian faith more at home with the people and the people more at home with the Christian faith.

The Second Vatican Council declares that “the history of the world is not only a history of evil but also of love, a history in which the reign of God is being advanced through the work of the Spirit. Thus, in its missionary activity, the church encounters a humanity and a world in which God’s salvation has already been operative.”

Bosch argues that by the late 1960s, “it became evident that a decisive shift had taken place, even in the mind of Westerners, from a Europe-centered world to a humankind-centered world. Hence forth the churches of the West would increasingly take cognizance of the views of and developments in the younger churches.” This then leads me to begin the discussion on the new paradigm shift in mission and evangelization, particularly in Kenya.

2.2.2.1 Emergence of a new paradigm shift in mission and evangelization

As Christianity continued to experience growth, indigenous Africans began to struggle with the question of how to differentiate between the former white European colonizers and the white European Christian missionaries, who led and controlled the newly founded Christian churches or mission stations. As Mbti aptly put it nearly forty years ago, “indeed, we are still so relatively close to the European colonial period that it becomes difficult to dissociate European Christian missionaries from the European colonizers.”

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230 Austin Flannery, Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents - Gaudium et Spes #26, p.927.
232 John S. Mbti is a renowned Kenyan scholar in the area of African religious studies. Born in 1931 in Kitui in the Eastern Province of Kenya, Professor Mbti has had a tremendous contribution to the process of ‘indigenization’ of Christianity into African cultures through his writings.
Since the spread of Christianity in Africa went hand-in-hand with colonization, the image that Africans received originally of Christianity was very much coloured by colonial rule and the colonial style of leadership. Isichei seems to be expressing the same point when she writes, “Gutiri mubea na muthungu, ‘There’s no difference between missionary and a settler,’ said twentieth-century Kikuyu.”234 On the other hand, Bishop Desmond Tutu of the Anglican church of South Africa argues that “when the missionaries came to Africa, they had the Bible and we had the land. They said, ‘Let us pray.’ We closed our eyes. When we opened them, we had the Bible and they had the land.”235 This indeed points to the fact that colonization and Christianity in Africa were seriously linked together. This was no different in Kenya.

With the new political independence and freedoms, there arose also a wave of leadership discontent within the mainstream churches, particularly in the Roman Catholic and the Anglican churches. Some indigenous converts began to question the role of the European Christian missionaries’ leadership style within the church. That is to say, they questioned the authority and control that the European Christian missionaries exercised over their native African converts or congregations.

In fact, Mbiti declares that “as long as the Christian church in Africa is in European hands, although brethren in Christ, Africans will continue to rebel against that status quo, in a quest for ecclesiastical freedom.”236 Some African scholars of theology of mission argue that this is one of the reasons why there has been a rapid growth of African independent churches. African independent churches are seen as “cultural resistance and religious protest against

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imported and formalistic and rationalistic theology on African soil.”237 They have become places where indigenous African converts to Christianity find solace in exercising their own authority and freedom far from the control of European ecclesiastical rule.

Another issue that caused some discontent was the fact that Christianity, in Kenya as well as in other parts of Africa, was never prepared to have any serious encounter with either African Traditional Religions (ATRs) or rapid modern changes. Mbiti comments on this while emphasizing that European missionaries’ mission and evangelization “expand by pushing traditional religions onto the defensive expecting them to keep silence, listen to their sermons, copy their examples, yield, give up, disappear and be forgotten.”238 He further continues to stress that “the old nonsense of looking at African background as devilish and fit only to be swept away by Euro-American civilization, is or should be gone by now. We all know that western civilization is not Christian, even though it does incorporate a lot of Christian influence in its long background and history.”239

This, in some sense, is what triggered some African scholars of theology of mission, for example Charles Nyamiti,240 Laurenti Magesa,241 Lamin Sanneh242 and John Mbiti, to argue that African Traditional Religions (ATRs) have a love of genuine values and are not

just to be dismissed as superstitious, taboo and magic. They therefore view African traditional rituals, ceremonies and festivals as having significant components that can be incorporated into Christianity. African Traditional Religions (ATRs) are seen as having something important to offer to Christianity in the same way that Christianity has something to offer African Traditional Religions (ATRs). Christianity in this manner is viewed as a religion that is coming to a people who are profoundly religious in their own way.\textsuperscript{243}

Mbiti argues that the church in Africa should not be afraid to experiment and try out new things and new ways of being a Christian church in Africa. He writes, “It will not do to listen only to what Rome, Canterbury or Athens tells us about how we ought to profess Christianity in our own house.”\textsuperscript{244} Benezet Bujo, on the other hand, argues that “African theology, it is plain, must be contextual, that is, it must take into full account the actual African situation.”\textsuperscript{245}

The actual African situation is that missionaries from virtually every Christian sect and denomination in Europe and America have appeared in the continent. The result of this high scramble for converts is that Christianity has added more confusion to the image of Christ that is presented to the people. Frankly speaking, Kenyans have neither a single image of Christianity nor a common structure of pastoral leadership, but several.

It seems that the main objective of most Christian denominations in Kenya is directed towards winning converts from those who are outside their denominational allegiance. Mbiti argues that “denominationalism is one of the worst divisive elements in modern Africa; and

\textsuperscript{243} Mbiti, ‘Christianity and Traditional Religions in Africa’, International Review of Mission, p.432.
\textsuperscript{244} Ibid., p.437.
\textsuperscript{245} Bujo, African Theology in its Social Context, p.70.
some of the denominations have engaged in physical fighting, while today they compete for converts in a homiletical propaganda.”

To avoid these kinds of rhetorical arguments and to maintain the desired openness and sensitivity to a local situation, Robert Schreiter explains that “it was suggested that the prevailing mode of evangelization and church development should be one of finding Christ in the situation rather than concentrating on bringing Christ into the situations.” As long as this is not done authentically, Christianity will remain like an alien body in the culture and to the people to whom the gospel is being preached. The word of God, Schreiter argues, “never receives the opportunity to take root and to bear fruit” unless it is accepted and deeply rooted in the lives of the local people.

Lonergan argues that the classicist assumption that there was just one culture, and that this one culture was not attained by the simple faithful, the people, the natives, the barbarians. That classicist assumption “was never more than the shabby shell of Catholicism.” For Lonergan, the real root and ground of unity is being in love with God and the fact that God’s love has flooded our inmost hearts through the Holy Spirit he has given us (Romans 5:5). He further clarified that “when the love of God is flooding our hearts... there is added apprehension of transcendent value. This apprehension consists in the experienced fulfillment of our unrestricted thrust to self-transcendence, in our actuated orientation towards the mystery of love and awe.”

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247 Schreiter, Constructing Local Theologies, p.39.
248 Ibid., p.39.
249 Lonergan, Method in Theology, p.326.
250 Ibid., p.327.
251 Ibid., p.115.
The emerging paradigm shift in the post-colonial context calls on Christians to develop an ever growing and maturing relationship with God and with one another. This can be greatly helped by an insistence on the love of God and neighbour as a unifying principle. It is in a sense, a paradigm shift that has to lead Christians to growth towards human freedom, reconciliation, healing, collaboration and authenticity.

The new paradigm certainly goes beyond the level of language translation of the texts and/or the adaptation of liturgical signs and symbols. It means, on one hand, that the incarnation of the Gospel message on the level of theological reflection must help in deepening one’s faith in order to reflect firmly on the inner-heart of the person. On the other hand, it involves a critical understanding and appropriation of what one reads in the scripture, teaching what one believes and practising what one teaches; it is that act of internalisation with a view of externalization of the Gospel message in concrete communities.

We read in Paul’s letter to the Romans that “all who are guided by the Spirit are children of God; for what you received was not a spirit of slavery to bring you back into fear; you received a spirit of adoption, enabling us to cry out, Abba! Father!” (Romans 8:15). Introducing a new model of mission and evangelization always expresses a great sign of courage and hope of the many pastoral agents who continuously seek to listen to God’s Spirit and guidance. I will now begin by presenting and examining the different models of mission and evangelization that have taken root in our present time.
2.2.2.2 New Approaches to mission and evangelization in the post-colonial context

a) Transfer of leadership to the indigenous clergy

Only with the new changes and demands did the European Christian missionaries begin to understand that they needed to place Church leadership into the hands of the local clergy. As Cajetan Ebuzien argues, in the past, “the Church was seen as the Priest’s own property... whatever he said was dogmatic and he passed urgent information through Station or Catechist-Teachers.”\(^{252}\) It is not surprising that even today; some churches are still referred to as the church of Fr. Morelli, Fr. Francesco, Fr. Claudio, Fr. Tillen, etc. in reference to the European missionaries who built them. While the idea in itself is not bad, it shows the extent to which the locals felt less involved in the activities of the church and remained more like the audience of the European missionary who ran the show. This is indeed evident in how it has become at times difficult to manage and maintain these churches in the absence of the European missionaries who were the sole funders and benefactors of these mission stations. Pope Francis, in his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, points out that even good ecclesial structure can hamper efforts at evangelization. The Pope comments, “Structures are only helpful when there is a life constantly driving, sustaining and assessing them. Without new life an authentic evangelical spirit... any new structure will soon prove ineffective.”\(^{253}\)

Leadership is the capacity and/or the ability of an individual or a group of individuals to guide and direct other members of the group towards the attainment of the common good, communal goals, values and meanings. It is the ability to reflect and to understand the


context in which one operates, becoming open to dialogue and listening attentively to the people with whom one works. It is the ability to read the signs of the times and the willingness to lead others toward the true and the valuable. It is the ability to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the group and of oneself, and the courage to focus on the strengths that lead to success and development.

Be that as it may, the Church in Kenya, as in other parts of Africa, has inherited from the European missionaries the structures of pastoral leadership (e.g. bishops, priests, pastors, and deacons), with all the privileges, benefits and authority those ranks entail, mirroring those the European missionaries possessed, placing them above the ordinary members of their congregations. Some of the privileges or benefits usually go with material wealth so being a member of the clergy, especially in the mainstream churches, is often associated with material wealth, power and prestige.

Schreiter argues that a paternalistic attitude prevailed (often unconsciously) not only among those who invaded the culture, but often also in the indigenous leadership left behind to govern. More often than not, a situation arises “where leaders from within the culture have become so alienated from the roots of their own culture.”

This trend has created a kind of a class division between the clergy and the other members of their congregation. Some pastoral leaders, even today, feel threatened by the laity when asked to explain how the finances of the parish have been used; they would rather not address the issues of financial accountability and transparency because they simply do not want to be held accountable to the Christians that they serve and minister to.

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254 Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, p.39.
As Bujo aptly puts it, “Personal witness has certainly not been its strong point. It must also be said that the lifestyle of the clergy at all levels, local as well as foreign, serves to cut them off from the ordinary people.”

Some pastoral ministers or members of the clergy still cling to the traditional notion of looking at the clergy as a privileged class and they fear the loss of control and at times the material gain that goes with clerical office.

b) Celebration of the Liturgy

The word liturgy comes from the composite Greek word leitourgia, which means a public work that is performed according to a prescribed rite. Liturgy is thus a public official service of the Church. It is the prescribed form of ritual for public worship. The Second Vatican Council’s document on the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy declares that liturgy is the “summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time, it is the fount from which all her power flows.”

The document on the liturgy further states:

The Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as a ‘chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people (1Pet. 2:9, cf. 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism. In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit; and therefore pastors of souls must zealously strive to achieve it, by means of the necessary instruction, in all their pastoral work.

It is certainly clear that the Catholic Church is open to the development of liturgy in a way that allows full and active participation of all members particularly in a local given context. The Church becomes alive when all members participate in its worship. It is the people, the congregation who prays together, and therefore their full participation is paramount.

Furthermore, the Second Vatican Council explains clearly that:

The Church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters which do not implicate the faith or the good of the whole community; rather does she respect and foster the genius and talents of the various races and peoples. Anything in these peoples’ way of life which is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error she studies with sympathy and, if possible, preserves intact. Sometimes in fact she admits such things into the liturgy itself, so long as they harmonize with its true and authentic spirit.²⁵⁹

Today the full and active celebration of the liturgy in Kenya has found its main expression in the vernacular: the Catholic Mass is celebrated in the many different local languages like Dholuo, Luyha, Gikuyu, Abagusii, Kuria, Meru, Kikamba etc. The introduction and use of the local languages in the liturgy has been made possible by the translations of the Bible into different local languages and the availability of different texts for prayers of the Church in local languages. This has made the Catholic community’s prayers and worship to become more alive and meaningful to the local people. Latin would not only be obsolete in such a context but also irrelevant to their religious sensibilities.

Good work has also been done in the area of church music with the introduction of local spiritual hymns and local melodies which express the emotions and bring forth the authenticity of the local people’s prayer and worship. The adaptation and use of the indigenous songs and melodies have made the participation of the faithful to be lively and

active. As Shorter observes, “...in Africa, for example, there is no reason why a more
generous use should not be made of the dance-form in the present liturgy. Dancing normally
accompanies song and all forms of ritual movement in African culture.”

However, caution must be taken so that the liturgical dances and other forms of
external expressions find a place in prayer and worship, and not simply to become acts of
performance. They should indicate that the Christian Gospel message has indeed found its
full expression in the hearts and souls of the local or indigenous population.

Another significant move has been carried out in the art of liturgical vestments: the
adoption of African designed albs, chasubles, altar clothes, and Church decorations.
Provisions are also being made with regard to the holy vessels, with use of chalices, for
example, locally made out of clay. However, even though much has been done and is still
being done in order to Kenyanize or Africanize the Christian faith, still more challenges
remain.

c) Celebration of the Sacraments

Sacraments are signs that declare what God accomplishes in them. The Second
Vatican Council states that “the purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify men, to build up the
body of Christ, and, finally, to give worship to God; because they are signs they also instruct.
They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen, and
express it...” The clearer we see in faith, the greater our opportunity for union with God in

\[\text{\footnotesize\textsuperscript{260}}\text{Shorter, Towards a Theology of Inculturation, p.267.}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize\textsuperscript{261}}\text{The Catholic University of America, New Catholic Encyclopedia: Volume XII, (Qat to Scr), (Washington D.C.: Jack Heraty and Associates, 1981), p.806.}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize\textsuperscript{262}}\text{Austin Flannery, Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents – Sacrosantum Concilium #59, p.20.}\]
It is because of this that the celebration of the sacraments is so important to the life of the individual and to the Christian community as a whole.

Gerard Arbuckle argues that our daily living and interactions as human persons are full of signs and rituals, and are ritualistic. From simple greetings or shaking hands to sleeping, to going to college and to celebrations of baptisms and marriages, our lives are virtually sacramental. This is so much so that we can rightly argue that without signs and rituals, we might find ourselves lost or in chaos in the society or community. Arbuckle further describes ritual as “any prescribed or spontaneous action that follows a set pattern expressing through symbols a public or shared meaning.”

In fact, rites and rituals define or lay out boundaries and identify who belongs and who does not belong to a particular group in the same way that sacraments do. Take for example, the African initiation-circumcision rite, which in most Kenyan ethnic communities is viewed “like a second birth.” The initiation-circumcision rite opens for an individual the opportunity to fully participate in the life of the community. The performance of this ritual opens the door for the initiates to begin receiving special instructions on norms or rules, values and cultural practices that govern their particular and respective ethnic communities.

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263 The Catholic University of America, New Catholic Encyclopedia: Volume XII, (Qat to Scr), p.806.
265 Ibid., p.82.
266 African initiation-circumcision rite applies to both male and female. There are some ethnic communities in Kenya that do practice female genital mutilation as a form of initiation rite for the females, however, this practice is discouraged as it is dangerous to the woman’s health and life, and other ways of initiating the girls to adulthood are being introduced. On the other hand, circumcision applies only to the males. I have carefully used the term ‘initiation-circumcision’ to refer to both male and female. In some ethnic communities, this rite of passage is carried out from the ages of 12-14, while some others is done from the ages of 14 to 16 years. There seems to be no uniformity in terms of an appropriate age.
267 Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy, p.119.
The initiation-circumcision rite creates within the initiate a sense of belonging and responsibility to the community. It is also when the initiates are offered some vital information and advice regarding their future life and roles as responsible wives, mothers, husbands, fathers and courageous members of the ethnic community. It is an introduction to and the beginning of a participation in the life of the community in many ways. It marks the beginning of adult life and one is henceforth expected to share in the life of the community, in its successes and joys but also in its tribulations and sorrows.

Furthermore, with the performance of this cultural rite, the initiates are from then on considered to be mentors and models to the younger members of the community. Respect for different members of the community, usually based on differences in ages, replaces fear as the foundation of their moral conduct. They are, in fact, made to become aware of the community values and of their responsibility towards others. They are encouraged to be sensitive and just in their judgments toward other members of the community whenever their consent is called upon. And they are also urged to consult on some major issues among their own group of initiates and of those who are older to them in initiation-circumcision ritual.

Now, if we were to take this understanding of the initiation-circumcision rite and bridge it with the Christian understanding of the Sacraments, especially the sacrament of Baptism and Confirmation, then I strongly believe that there will be a much better understanding and appreciation of these two Sacraments, especially when they are celebrated within the Kenyan context. As Joseph Osei-Bonsu asserts, “The challenge of bridging the gap between faith and cultures has remained largely unmet and in fact the process is going

backwards in some areas.” The gap between the Sacraments and culture, I believe, has not been fully bridged and this is what makes the celebration of some of the sacraments remain alien to the lives of many Christians in Kenya today.

Orji expresses clearly the same idea when he cites “the instance of the tradition of conferring names in Christian liturgy.” The beauty of African names has never been fully explored and integrated into the Christian naming ceremonies, for example, at baptism. He affirms that African names carry both religious and social significance, and therefore, they should not just be ignored or discarded at baptism. He further emphasizes that “most African names are explicitly theophoric (God-bearing names) in that they either have God as a prefix or suffix. Even those that do not explicitly have God as prefix or suffix often times imply it.”

However, it is equally important to argue that the use of symbols or rituals from outside church traditions in the celebration of the sacraments need not be imposed on any given community. Again, care must also be taken so that the bridging of the gap, if it is done, should be carried out correctly and without exaggerations. Our Christian faith is a living, breathing faith, and therefore, even though these things are significant, our faith in Christ is still far more important than the rituals.


271 Ibid., p.177.
d) Growth of the Small Christian Communities (SCCs)

Bosch argues that the birth of Small Christian Communities, “first in Latin America and then to some other parts of the world, meant much to the self-image of the local Christian communities in the Third-World.”²⁷² Leonardo Boff referred to this new development in the Church as ‘ecclesiogenesis’ or as ‘reinventing’ the Church.²⁷³

Small Christian Communities (SCCs), which are common phenomena in the Catholic Church in Kenya and in Africa as a whole, are small parish-based communities that usually bring together between ten and twenty families of lay faithful who live actively their baptismal commitment as a community of faith within the same neighbourhood. In Small Christian Communities, everyone belongs and everybody shares in the life of the community.

Small Christian Communities in Kenya usually have a regular weekly meeting in the houses of different members within the group (on a rotational basis at times) in an atmosphere of prayer and worship. Unlike the early Christian missionaries’ approach to mission and evangelization that was, more often than not, a top-down (bishops – priests – catechists – outstations) approach, this model is more of a family oriented, down-up or grass-root approach to mission and evangelization.

Shorter observes that the “building of the Small Christian Communities was adopted as a pastoral priority by the Bishops of Eastern Africa in 1973.”²⁷⁴ Quoting the African Bishops, Shorter writes:

We are convinced that in these countries of Eastern Africa, it is time for the Church to become really ‘local’, that is: self-ministering, self-propagating and self-supporting. Our planning is aimed at building such local churches for the coming years. We believe that in order to achieve this we have to insist on building Church life and work on basic Christian communities, in both rural and urban areas. Church life must be based on the communities in which everyday life and work takes place; those basic and manageable social groupings whose members can experience real inter-personal relationships and feel a sense of communal belonging, both living and working. We believe that Christian communities at this level will be best suited to develop real intense vitality and to become effective witness in their natural environment.  

The Catholic bishops felt that the building of Small Christian Communities was the best way to safe-guard human values and to root the Church in the life and culture of the people. The bishops saw Small Christian Communities “as cells of the Church” and “the cornerstone of ecclesial edifice of today and tomorrow.” The life of the Church needs to be based on the communities in which daily activities take place. They are the simple social groupings whose members share and experience interpersonal relationships with one another. The Small Christian Communities provide the criteria of authenticity and success because it is within these small communities that pertinent questions regarding Christian life are raised. The communities also provide the means of implementing Christian doctrines and answer some challenges that are facing Christians in their particular contexts. As Shorter argues, “...inculturation is ultimately a community project.” For inculturation to be successful, it must involve the participation of the community members, and it is the Small Christian Communities that are closer to the problems and challenges that are facing the Church and society today.

275 Ibid., p.264.
276 Ibid., p.265.
277 Baur, Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History, p.419.
278 Shorter, Towards a Theology of Inculturation, p.266.
Since most of our pastoral concerns, challenges, problems and needs arise in the life of the Christian community, Small Christian Communities need to be guided and helped towards a self-understanding on the level of its time and context. In this way, they will be able to meet the pastoral concerns that confront them. Helping Small Christian Communities towards a theological reflection on issues that affects their daily lives entails “a shift towards systematic thinking that is first and foremost intended to be pastoral, in service to the community.” The Small Christian Community is the place where pastoral insights and decisions are not only received but generated, developed and carried out. It is a place where evangelization and the love of Christ grows and is witnessed.

Developing a living and active Small Christian Community is important because without a community people will have no place to live out their faith convictions. Even to see others bearing testimony to the reality of God in their lives is possible only within the community setting. And the Church, in a wider sense, is an historical community of the followers of Christ who have been called together to proclaim the Gospel message of Christ.

Lonergan insisted that meeting persons who appreciate the values they represent within the community, “criticizing their defects, and allowing one’s living to be challenged at its very roots by their words and their deeds” opens the human subject up for others. It opens one up to be loved and to love others. This is exactly what happens within the small Christian communities. Our forms of worship, liturgy, rituals and prayer take place within a

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community setting, where we encourage one another to actively participate in the celebration and life of the Church and of that particular Small Christian Community.

Small Christian communities encourage deeper awareness of community issues, community leadership, a sense of belonging, communal care and ecclesial and social development. As human persons, we are social by nature. We are born and we grow, live and thrive within human families and communities. We are not like single isolated islands. Rather, we are beings with others. We live, interact and share our lives with others in various communal contexts. We are socially and historically embedded. And it is within the small Christian communities that we can share and promote our values.

Lonergan argues that to be human is to be born in a community where there are shared meanings and values, as well as shared cultures and religions.\(^\text{283}\) It is from this common fund of shared meanings that human beings develop, progress, and provide for their own well-being by contributing to the common good.\(^\text{284}\) He further asserts:

> So it is that man stands outside the rest of nature, that he is a historical being, that each man shapes his own life but does so only in interaction with the traditions of the communities in which he happens to have been born and, in turn, these traditions themselves are but the deposit left him by the lives of his predecessors.\(^\text{285}\)

In this sense, Small Christian Community can be conceived as a space where mutual self-mediation of human beings, their meanings, and values take place. Though normative, it is also a dynamic and transformative reality, which keeps changing from time to time and from one context to the other.

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Today Small Christian Communities in Kenya have become new ways of being a Church. They offer an environment where Bible sharing and theological reflection take place as people try to connect the scriptural readings with their daily life experiences. They have also become the financial backbone of most of the Catholic parishes and sources of Christian charity in Kenya. They have become practical ways of living out the Gospel values and are virtually integrated in every level of the Catholic parishes in Kenya today. The Small Christian Community embodies the popular African saying, ‘I am because we are.’

e) Participation of the Laity

Today, more than ever before in the history of the Church, Christians all over the world seem to prefer roles which allow a full participation by the laity of both sexes, and which capitalize on the gifts that are found in the community. The clerical leadership should aim at this goal.\textsuperscript{286} Bosch observes that the role of the laity is at the cutting edge of the Christian mission today.\textsuperscript{287} It is therefore necessary to rediscover, empower and encourage the laity to participate actively in the life of the Church if we are to tackle the many challenges and opportunities of our time.

Likewise, the second African Synod, which was held in Rome in October 2009, emphasized the involvement of the laity, not as objects of Christian evangelization but as collaborators in the process of Christian evangelization. The African Synod of Bishops also addressed the issues of justice and peace as matters of priority. The lay members of the Church who are baptized and confirmed should be given opportunities to lead the congregation as lectors or readers, the administrators of small Christian communities, choir

\textsuperscript{286} Shorter, \textit{Towards a Theology of Inculturation}, p.266.
members, altar servers, youth leaders, catechists, guides of the prayers of the faithful, parish-council members, captains of devotional prayer groups and of church-community based groups that help the needy or the sick.

The laity needs to wake up from their slumber and occupy their rightful place in the Church. Vatican II and the new code of Canon Law provide for their adequate involvement in the work of evangelization and in church governance, through participation in the Church Council, the Parish Pastoral Council, the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Diocesan Synod, and also through their involvement in the work of the Justice and Peace Commission and the Catechetical Commission. Pastoral ministry in the Catholic Church should be structured in such a way as to leave enough room for an adequate and fruitful involvement of such lay apostolates and organizations.

There is no reason why we cannot have teachers and/or preachers, pastoral agents, healers, guiders, and ministers to the sick in addition to the Eucharistic ministers and lectors who are functioning as distinct lay ministers in the Church. The first African Synod and the Post-Synodal document of Pope John Paul II encouraged the African Church to evolve its own local ministries, but to this day little has been done in this regard. Many African lay people have the training and education required in order to undertake the various ministries within the Church. For example, the many trained Catechists in Kenya have always been seen as grassroots ministers. Perhaps it is time that the role of a catechist be more officially recognized and appreciated.

There is a need to overcome the obstacles that are preventing the laity from their full active participation in the Church. This include a misunderstanding of the talents and gifts of
the community members, confusion concerning the common priesthood of all the baptized, threats that the laity sometime present to the clergy and lack of proper training and education with regard to the role of the laity in the Church. As the Second Vatican Council’s document on the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church affirms, the apostolate of the laity “is a participation in the salvific mission of the Church itself. Through their baptism and confirmation all are commissioned to this apostolate by the Lord himself.”\textsuperscript{288} This is therefore a duty of every member of the Church to collaborate in mission and evangelization, but each according to his or her opportunity, ability, profession, charism, and ministry.\textsuperscript{289}

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have examined and analyzed the general historical overview of mission and evangelization in Kenya. I have also examined both the early missionaries and the post-colonial models of mission and evangelization, and just as Mbiti argues, I have come to the realization that “religion permeates into all departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it.”\textsuperscript{290} It is therefore important that mission and evangelization in Kenya should continue to embrace the use of the local languages, peoples’ thought patterns, fears, social relationships, attitudes and philosophical dispositions to make a lasting impact upon the individual and his or her community.\textsuperscript{291} They must also strive to create harmony in society and encourage friendship and tolerance among different tribes and religious backgrounds.

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\textsuperscript{288} Austin Flannery, *Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents – Lumen Gentium* #33, p.390.

\textsuperscript{289} Austin Flannery, *Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents – Ad Gentes* #21, p.838.

\textsuperscript{290} Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p.1.

\textsuperscript{291} Ibid., p.3.
Mission and evangelization is a bridge-building exercise. As Paul F. Knitter once commented in reference to theological studies, “Theological education ought to move beyond a mono-religious education.” In the same way, mission and evangelization has to continuously reflect on the way we experience, learn, understand and relate with people of different cultures and religions. They are an education that presents us with two things, which can be like opposing forces, “the extraordinarily rich religious diversity of our society and also the ongoing struggle of all of us (Christians and non-Christians) to learn to deal with this new reality.” They must awaken within us the desire to love and to be at one with the other. This is the desire for peace, guidance, reconciliation and healing. And as Judith A. Berling argues, “…the language of the other is no longer acceptable, for we are all other to one another.”

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294 Ibid., p.62.
Chapter 3

Challenges and Opportunities for Mission and Evangelization in Kenya

Introduction

In our world today, we are confronted with various challenges on a daily basis. There are political upheavals, economic crises, racial, ethnic and religious tensions, uncontrolled migration of peoples, pandemics such as the Ebola virus, the Zika virus and HIV/AIDS, climate change, natural disasters and so on. These challenges are threatening all of us, whether we are men and women of faith or not. They call for our attention, reflection, understanding, judgement and response but are especially relevant in the African context.

Even though challenges vary from place to place and from time to time, we are always required to address them in our own context. Matthew Michael underscores this idea when he argues:

... the missionary character of African theological discourses must be rediscovered because its dominant quest to address the several challenges in the context of the local church falls within the matrix of church’s missions. Consequently, in its continuous task of addressing the various challenges in the context of the local church, African theological discourse works within the missions’ premises of the church. In its task to engage the social, political, cultural and spiritual matrix of the church, the African theology shares and engages in the same missions calling of the local church, and this reveals a missionary character.295

Kenya, like any other country in the world today, is faced with multiple crises. Despite the Christian growth that has been experienced in recent years, Kenya has faced some of its worst periods of darkness since the time of its independence (December 12, 1963). When in late 2007 and early 2008, the controversial political election results were announced, the country was thrown into a period of full blown civil war. Today, Kenya is

still healing from the horrifying experience of the 2007/2008 post-election violence as the government tries to resettle the internally displaced persons.

The country has also been experiencing sporadic terror attacks: the major ones were the Nairobi Shopping Mall massacre, which took place on September 2013, and the April 2015 murder of 147 university students at Garissa University College. These were followed by the January 2016 mass killing of Kenyan military personnel at El Adde camp in Somalia; the number of its victims has not been made public by the government.

Kenyans have continued to experience and to witness the many deaths related to HIV/AIDS. Meanwhile, the run-away corruption and misappropriation of public funds has become like a cancer that is proving difficult to eliminate. As one travels across Kenya today and listens to different individuals who go to church on Saturdays or Sundays, one begins to realize that many people are desperately hoping for renewal and change. They are genuinely looking for something new in their relationship with one another, their society and with God.

When caught up in the midst of such crises, a person of faith must continue to ask questions regarding the relevance of mission and evangelization. Similar sentiments were also expressed by the first African Synod Fathers as they asked: “In a Continent full of bad news, how is the Christian message ‘Good News’ for our people? In the midst of an all-pervading despair, where lie the hope and optimism which the Gospel brings?”296 However, they affirmed that “[e]vangelization stands for many of those essential values which our Continent very much lacks: hope, peace, joy, harmony, love and unity.”297

297 Ibid., p.32.
This chapter will examine some challenges that stand out as threats to mission and evangelization in Kenya in our present context. It will also look at the available opportunities and exigencies for the essential principles of mission and evangelization. The chapter will be divided into two sections. In the first section, I will analyze some of the major challenges that confront mission and evangelization in the cultural, religious, political and economic spheres.

In the second section, I will look at the opportunities that can still be helpful in promoting mission and evangelization in Kenya today. As Rino Fisichella reminds us, “Crisis is never an exclusively negative event; it contains elements which challenge us to express a value judgment about what we are experiencing and it obliges us to find the most suitable ways of moving beyond it.”\(^{298}\) Finally, I will examine exigencies for the essential principles in mission and evangelization in our present context.

### 3.1 Challenges to mission and evangelization

#### 3.1.1 Cultural

One of the greatest challenges in Kenya is the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the virus known to be the cause of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). HIV/AIDS was first reported in Kenya in the year 1986. Commercial sex workers were the first group of people reported to have been most affected.\(^{299}\) The virus attacks the immune cells, i.e. CD4 T-cells, which are essential for fighting various diseases in the human body. When these cells are destroyed, a person becomes susceptible to a number of opportunistic

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diseases that can easily attack and kill the individual because his or her immune system has grown weak.

By the end of 1994, an estimated 100,000 Kenyans were reported to have died of HIV/AIDS related illnesses,\(^{300}\) and in the same year around 1 in 10 adults were said to have been infected with HIV. In 2001, the Kenyan Ministry of Health estimated that some 2.2 million people in Kenya had been infected with HIV and that about 500 people a day were dying of HIV/AIDS related illnesses.\(^{301}\) A national household survey conducted in Kenya in 2007 found that 7.8% of Kenyans between the ages of 15 and 49 were infected with HIV\(^ {302}\) and that HIV/AIDS related infections and deaths seemed to be on the rise.

Eunice K. Kamaara affirms that “the most affected category of the human population is the youth with a prevalence being highest within the age bracket of 14 and 19 years.”\(^ {303}\) The Kenya National AIDS Control Council and the Ministry of Health place most of the cases between the ages 15 to 45.\(^ {304}\) Some other reports suggest that by December 2011, “1.6 million people in Kenya were living with HIV.”\(^ {305}\) This raises many concerns, especially for the theology of mission and evangelization.

The youth are the future of Kenya’s church and state, and yet it is this group that is most affected by HIV/AIDS. These are frightening statistics and reports that the Church must address in order to respond appropriately to the crisis. Even though the Church in Kenya has

taken an active role and much has been accomplished in this area in the recent past, it should not become complacent.

Fortunately, recent research suggests that this upward trend is gradually reversing.\textsuperscript{306} The small improvement is the result of the HIV/AIDS awareness campaign, the Voluntary Testing and Counseling (VTC) at the various VTC centers, the use of condoms and such other preventive measures as sexual abstinence and faithfulness in marriage, and the availability of affordable Anti-Retroviral Drugs (ARVs) that seem to prolong the life of those individuals already infected.

Kamaara argues that the “Christian Church in Kenya is well placed to play a leading role in the fight against HIV/AIDS pandemic because it is the largest and therefore wields massive support, influence and authority nationwide.”\textsuperscript{307} Such a comment certainly suggests that the Church should be at the forefront in the fight against challenges like this one. But despite this view, HIV/AIDS undeniably still remains a big challenge for the Church in Kenya and Kenyan society.

In Kenya, HIV/AIDS is associated with death and dying. One who is infected with HIV is, more often than not, seen as a person with a death sentence. Generally, people view the cause of HIV/AIDS from their cultural contexts, and these are sometimes clouded with superstition and ignorance. As Abraham Berinyuu observes, “The African concept of sickness, its causes and cure, is considered from herbal, social and religious-ritualistic points of view.”\textsuperscript{308}

\textsuperscript{306}KAIS (Kenya AIDS Indicator Survey Report), National AIDS Control Program, p.22.
\textsuperscript{307}Kamaara, Gender, Youth Sexuality and HIV/AIDS: A Kenyan Experience, p.xv.
The stigmatism associated with HIV/AIDS makes some people afraid, and they avoid coming into close contact with those who are known to be living with HIV/AIDS. This kind of attitude makes people living with HIV/AIDS often feel isolated, depressed, stigmatized and discriminated against. Sometimes it forces people living with HIV/AIDS to migrate or to leave their familiar environments and to seek refuge in some other part of the town or urban center where they are not known to be HIV positive, particularly when they are still strong and healthy. In some extreme instances, individuals living with HIV/AIDS attempt to bring an end to the stigma and their psychological pain by committing suicide.

Joseph Ngome underscores this point when he asserts:

In rural villages, people regard HIV/AIDS as a taboo subject in the community. When it is spoken of, people use word ‘Chira,’ which is understood to be an ailment that strikes the body slowly and persistently until one is so wasted and tired looking that no modern treatment can help. Villagers do not admit that AIDS is real. Illness is believed to strike a man or a woman who goes against communal norms. In some regions in western Kenya, death from AIDS is attributed to evil hands of envious neighbors who bewitch their sons and daughters.309

Worse, HIV/AIDS is viewed by many people as God’s curse upon the infected person. Many people believe that HIV/AIDS is God’s punishment upon those who are living or had been living a promiscuous lifestyle. The victim is then judged to be punished by God for his or her misdeeds, particularly for not having lived according to traditions and customs of the community and, with that, going against God’s commands. It is because of these kinds of misunderstanding that many people do not want to be associated with those suffering from HIV/AIDS. Moreover, the person who is infected is also perceived to be a disgrace and shame to his or her family and community members.

Exacerbating the misunderstandings is the myth that one can contract HIV/AIDS through simple greetings like shaking hands with an infected person or by sharing meals with

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him or her. In general, there is still a great lack of knowledge concerning issues related to the spread and contraction of HIV. Such ignorance contributes to stigmatization of those individuals living with HIV/AIDS. It causes discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS, even at places of work, and leads to unjust treatment and finally to isolation. Even within the Church, where Christians proclaim that they are brothers and sisters in Christ and beloved children of God, it is not uncommon to encounter such discrimination against, and unjust condemnations of, fellow Christians and members of the same congregation who are known to be HIV positive.

Some also believe that HIV/AIDS is a disease for the poor in the society and that it does not affect the rich. Thus, HIV/AIDS has been seen as a plight of the poor. However, this belief is slowly dying because more wealthy people are infected with the virus. HIV/AIDS has neither boundaries nor borders. The culture of outright public denial of the existence of HIV/AIDS extends even to some of the close relatives to the people living with HIV/AIDS which, of course, leads to more infections and deaths.

Another challenge clearly evident in most ethnic communities in Kenya is that women are not entitled to property, especially land. In such ethnic communities, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has created a lot of suffering for the women, but even more so for widows whose husbands have succumbed to HIV/AIDS related ailments. Literally everything is taken by the brothers or male relatives of the deceased, leaving the widow with virtually nothing. This practice often leads to sexual exploitation of the vulnerable women and thus further extends the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Let me give a concrete example that I encountered in 2002 in one of our parishes. After my priestly ordination, I was sent to Kadem parish in the remote part of South Nyanza,
Kenya, within the Catholic Diocese of Homa-Bay. This parish is located in an area inhabited predominantly by the Luo\textsuperscript{310} ethnic community of Kenya. While in this parish, I was privileged to meet a couple, John and Jane,\textsuperscript{311} who were both living with HIV/AIDS virus. The two had been married for eight years when I met them.

John was a 35-year-old man and Jane was a 32-year-old woman. They both used to live and work in Nairobi, which is the capital city of Kenya. This was before John’s condition worsened; he had already shown signs of a full blown case of AIDS. John had worked in Nairobi as a taxi driver while Jane helped out financially as a casual labourer. The two had been blessed with two beautiful daughters aged 6 and 4 years old.

John was first diagnosed with HIV in 2000, and soon after that he became ill and could no longer work or provide for his young family. As John’s condition began to deteriorate, life became unbearable for his wife and children. They could no longer pay for their rent or school expenses for their daughters, not to mention John’s ever-increasing hospital bills. As time went by, John became so weak that he required extra care. He had also contracted tuberculosis. It was then that the couple decided to move back to their village home in Kadem so as to be close to John’s parents and siblings for assistance.

I met John and Jane during one of my routine pastoral visits to the sick within the parish territory. After that initial meeting, I became a regular visitor to their home for prayers, anointing of the sick and spiritual guidance. Unfortunately, after a few months of my visits, John succumbed to his illness. John’s death was a devastating experience to his entire family, particularly to his young wife and children. This encounter with John and Jane became a transformative learning experience for me. Apart from accompanying this man on

\textsuperscript{310} Luo is one of the ethnic tribes in Kenya. They predominantly occupy the western part of Kenya along the shores of Lake Victoria but also live in most of the major towns (urban centers) in Kenya.

\textsuperscript{311} John and Jane are pseudonyms. The names have been changed so as to protect the identity of the individuals.
his way of Calvary, so to speak, and witnessing how his body withered away slowly into death, I also had the opportunity to support and to console the family through their grieving process.

Just a week after John’s burial, I was surprised to see Jane seated on the verandah of the priest’s rectory late in the evening. It was quite unusual to find someone coming to the priest’s rectory late in the evening, i.e. after 8pm, unless there was an emergency that required the priest’s immediate attention, like anointing a sick person who could have been at the point of death. I saw that Jane had been accompanied by her two little girls and that she also had a small bag resting on her feet. I decided to come out onto the verandah in order to greet her and her two girls and also to ask what the problem was.

No sooner had she seen me than she started to cry, tears rolling down her cheeks. Jane seemed to have been overcome by painful emotions, and for a moment she could not talk. It was only after few minutes that she managed to compose herself and wipe away her tears. She then told me that she had been thrown out of her house by her in-laws and that she did not know where to go or to whom to turn for help. She explained that because she had refused to perform some of the cultural (traditional) burial rites and rituals that are required by the community of a widow after the death of her husband, she had been thrown out. She said also that she had refused to be “inherited”312 by one of John’s brothers as was also required by the Luo custom.

One of the Luo ethnic community’s beliefs is that God (Nyasaye) is always at work in the world and he continues to care and support his creation. God is viewed as spiritual, i.e.

312 Wife Inheritance is a common cultural practice in some ethnic communities in Kenya. It is a practice whereby the widow becomes the ‘property’ of the clan members or close relatives (extended family) after the death of her husband. Traditionally, this was done in order to protect, care and provide for the widow, but this is no longer the case today.
without matter, and as powerfully intervening directly in the daily lives and activities of the people. The Luo believe that God creates and destroys humanity. When God is angry, he inflicts humanity with different illnesses, disasters and punishment. However, God is viewed also as the source of people’s blessings in life.

The Luo also believe that a human person is made up of both physical and spiritual parts, or of body and spirit. The physical part is the body, the material, whereas the spiritual part is known as ‘tipo’, the shadow. It is the union of the body and the shadow that forms the life of a human person. They believe that at death, the body, the matter, becomes dust, but the shadow continues to exist: it vanishes and then becomes the spirit. The shadow continues to possess the dead person’s identity and becomes more intelligent and more powerful than it was when the person was living the earthly life. This explains why the Luo ethnic community strongly believes in the spirit of the living-dead.

The Luo further believe that the spirits of the living-dead exist as long as the dead can still be remembered by the living members of their family. Furthermore, the spirits of the living-dead can become demons (jochiende) when the circumstances surrounding one’s death and burial are not clear or when the funeral/burial rites and rituals that are performed to appease the living-dead are not done correctly. When the latter occurs, then the spirits of the living-dead may begin to haunt or cause psychosis and harm the living family members of the deceased.

Also among the Luo ethnic community, a widow after the burial of her husband is expected to be inherited either by a brother or other close male relative of the deceased. This man is then expected to take care of the widow and her family and any other responsibility that the widow may require. This is not the same as re-marriage because in many instances
the widow has no freedom to find someone outside the close family ties. When the widow has been inherited, it also marks the end of the mourning period.

Since Jane knew she too had contracted HIV, she refused to be inherited knowing that she would certainly infect her new protector with the virus. All she wanted was to live longer and to take care of her two girls. Despite her pleas and explanations to her brothers-in-law, they were adamant that she must be inherited by one of them. Finally, she was accused of being the witch who had killed John and thrown out. The brothers-in-law held that traditional customs and rituals had to be followed to the letter. They believed that if the traditional funeral/burial rites were not followed and the rituals not performed as required, then bad omens and even more deaths would fall upon their family.

Whereas this had created a place for deep theological reflection, it also provided me with an opportunity to be a reconciler, healer and guide to this particular fragile family. The challenge presented me with an opportunity to look into my own cultural values anew, only more in their relevance to Christian teachings. Helping Jane and her in-laws to come together and reach a lasting good mutual decision was not an easy journey. However, with the grace of God and through continuous dialogue, Jane’s in-laws did eventually agree to give her a piece of land outside their original homestead on which to build her home.

I had to organize the collaboration of Jane’s small Christian community and provide the materials needed to build a house for Jane and her children. Before their house was ready for occupation, I had to provide Jane and her two little girls with accommodation and food at the parish for some months. At the end of it all, Jane was very grateful when her house was finally ready and she moved in with her daughters.
That pastoral experience with cultural issues inspired me to look at some of the cultural rites and rituals that are not helpful and not always compatible with Christian values. It made me question some of cultural myths and superstitious beliefs that encourage people to be insensitive to the sufferings and needs of others around them, especially to those living with HIV/AIDS and who have children.

My continuous theological reflection into cases such as that of John and Jane have also given me opportunities to understand, at least to some degree, the profound physical, social, intellectual and spiritual struggles that some innocent people are forced to experience after the death of their loved ones. The memories of Jane and her two little daughters present to me vulnerable and voiceless individuals who looked scared and longed for a safe place to stay. They yearned for an environment where they could find compassion, love, acceptance and security. They were greatly in need of someone to listen to their story, their cry for justice and their search for the unconditional love of God. Jane and her children believed that it was only in the church, particularly in the church’s minister or priest, that these values could be found. I strongly believe that until we Kenyans are able to get beyond these myths, misconceptions and superstitious beliefs about HIV/AIDS, those living with HIV/AIDS will continue to suffer and even more people will be infected by HIV.

Another related crisis that faces the church in Kenya today is caring for persons with disabilities. Disability here is defined as “any restriction or lack, resulting from an impairment of ability to perform any activity in the manner or within the range considered ‘normal’ for a human being.”313 Neither the state nor the church has taken much interest in

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persons with physiological and/or psychological disabilities. The majority of those with disabilities are forgotten, discriminated against and looked down upon.

Although the current constitution of Kenya recognizes the representation and participation of people with disabilities in society and has therefore given rise to hope, we cannot say that much has been done for them “in regard to their spiritual and social liberation.” James M. Nelson observes that “illness always has been and still remains one of the central problems of human life.” He argues that “for most people, physical illnesses which manifest themselves through physical symptoms are common experiences. Mental illnesses which manifest themselves through mental symptoms seem to most people, on the other hand, as something strange and remote.” The Church needs to do more with regard to the care for persons with disabilities, mental as well as physical, and for those living with HIV/AIDS. When it does, the Church will be seen to be fostering patience, compassion and love among its sons and daughters.

In traditional African society, different ethnic communities had a great sense of community. It is by and through the community that one is known and identified. As the ancient adage expresses, “I am because we are”. Basil Davidson writes that “a man outside his clan is like a grasshopper which has lost its wings.” ‘Clan’ here refers to community as the family unit where one’s needs and wants were assured, and where one suffered neither social nor cultural alienation. Living together and sharing resources as a community are the basis of, and an expression of, the extended family within different ethnic communities in Kenya.

314 Ibid., p.8.
316 Ibid., p.13.
However, individualism and secularism are also worth mentioning here. They are like two faces of the same coin and are radically changing the way that people live and relate with one another. They are also changing drastically the way the Gospel message is interpreted and understood in Kenya today. As I have mentioned, in traditional African society, community life was emphasized. Sharing family and communal resources and giving hospitality to the stranger are significant values that are quickly eroding. Many people today in Kenya are becoming less and less concerned or even involved with the life and needs of others, particularly those of the poor and vulnerable within the community.

This is because Kenya, like any other part of the world, has been incorporated into and has become like a single global village. This is thanks to the use of various systems of communication or information technology, including mobile phones, smart phones, electronic readers, television, computers and the internet. The influence of globalization on our society has become enormous. People in Kenya today are able to follow what takes place in the rest world as if it were happening at their door-steps.

Tied to globalization are developments in mass media, which are providing more viable media for mission and evangelization. More people today can be reached and evangelized by means of the media, i.e. through radio, television and the internet. However, Gallagher warns that we should be always cautious because globalization is “a culture without identity and without history.”\textsuperscript{318} He explains that this new culture is creating a situation whereby people find themselves without strong anchors of belonging, and in such a situation, television trash is used to fill the void.\textsuperscript{319} The result is that the television trash

\textsuperscript{319} Ibid., p.162.
easily has a dehumanising and culturally destructive impact on people. Indeed, the media continuously lures our young people to a carefree lifestyle and encourages casual or even instant sex with their advertisements.

The Church, therefore, needs to make use of the human capacities inherent in every person to offer an alternative. These human capacities are what Gallagher calls, “a whole cluster of capacities of the heart – for wonder, searching, listening, receptivity, and life options for compassion and love.” When these capacities are properly utilized, they bring forth the spiritual dimensions that are relevant to people’s contexts today.

3.1.2 Religious

Over the last couple of years Kenya has been a peaceful country compared to its neighbours in Somalia, South Sudan and other war-torn African countries. It has been a safe haven for many refugees from war and terror in their own home countries. It has also been a welcoming and tolerant environment for different religious groups and people with different faith backgrounds because of the freedom of worship enshrined in its constitution. However, recent experiences are rapidly changing this concept of religious tolerance.

On September 21, 2013, unidentified gunmen stormed a Nairobi Westgate shopping mall killing at least 67 people and wounding more than 175 others. Most of the victims were Christians. On November 22, 2014, another group of gunmen ambushed a Nairobi-bound bus from Mandera town in the northern part of the country. Separating Muslims from Christians, the men killed 28 Christian passengers. Then on April 02, 2015, other gunmen entered Garissa University College in the north-east, killing 147 innocent students and injuring more

320 Ibid., p.162.
than 79 others. Here too, Muslims were separated from the Christians, and the Christians were killed. There have also been instances where Christian churches have been targeted for terror attacks by radical Muslims, especially in the coastal and the northern regions of Kenya, which neighbour Somalia.

Somalia’s militant group Al-Shabaab, with which the gunmen in most of these terror attacks identified, claimed responsibility for the attacks as retribution for the Kenyan military’s intervention in the group’s home country of Somalia. Nevertheless, one is left to wonder, ‘Why are they killing only Christians?’ and ‘Why are they targeting those unarmed – soft targets?’ There seems to be steadily increasing insecurity throughout the country. The most affected are Christian churches located in the towns which are closest to the Kenya-Somalia border.

These events have created suspicion and heightened tension between Christians and Muslims within the country. In Kenya there is in general a great tolerance among people of different religious groups, but Muslims, which make about 10% of the total population, among other religious minorities in Kenya, often perceive themselves to be treated unfairly. This is because parts of the country, especially the north where the majority of Muslims belong, have been left behind in terms of modern development by successive governments since independence. Perhaps this contributes to the poor relations between Muslims and Christians in Kenya and the fact that the majority of the government officials are Christians. The Muslims therefore feel that they are underrepresented in the national government.

Another problem the Catholic Church faces in Kenya is clericalism in church leadership, which I discussed already in Chapter 2. The idea that I present here is the
misunderstanding of what the clergy and the Church is in Kenya. First is the notion that the clergy are above the laity because of their ordination, and therefore they deserve unquestioned privilege and status. This also comes from the understanding that the priest represents Christ, whereas the laity represents those to whom Christ ministered. As representatives of Christ, clergy are seen as custodians of salvation and guarantors of God’s favour to the laity.

Second is the clergy’s abuse of power and control. This is encouraged by the myth that the Holy Spirit is fully bestowed upon the ordained ministers and the faithful are directly dependent upon the clergy for their sanctification. Therefore, what is good for the clergy is also identified with what is good for the Church, thereby losing the reality of the image of the Church as the body of Christ with different parts (all members of the Church).

Third is lack of financial accountability and transparency by the clergy regarding the management and use of Church funds and assets. There are cases of misappropriation of Church funds by the clergy who use them for their own personal needs. Others make significant purchases with the Church money without consultation and approval of the parish financial committees, parish council and/or the bishop.

Fourth is the clergy’s relationship with corrupt politicians and government officials who often offer their financial support to some major Church projects and activities. The fear of losing this money makes it difficult for the clergy to question or condemn the evils committed by politicians. Because of this, the Church’s mission to liberate and transform

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321 Millicent Osaso, *The Life and Times of Maurice Michael Cardinal Otunga*, (Eldoret, Kenya: AMECEA Gaba Publications, 2006), p.116. Describes how one priest in charge of social work misappropriated money allocated for the work and when he was asked to resign and given another assignment, he felt humiliated and demoted to such an extent that he quit priesthood altogether.
society disintegrates into an opportunity for the clergy’s social promotion, where they leave
the faithful and join the club or class of the few elite and oppressors of the poor and
marginalized.

Meanwhile, good pastoral leadership must at all times be open to dialogue. It must
take upon itself the responsibility of saving from destruction the good that is found in other
religious practices and the cultures of diverse peoples in Kenya. An authentic pastoral agent
must make an adequate effort toward inculturation; as John Paul II writes in Ecclesia in
Africa, “a serious concern for a true and balanced inculturation is necessary in order to avoid
cultural confusion and alienation in our fast evolving society.”

Yet inculturation, as I have mentioned, is not a simple matter since Kenya is comprised of diverse ethnic groups with
different traditions and languages. The dual practice of many of both Christianity and African
traditional religions also complicates the matter. Even though those who identify themselves
solely as belonging to African traditional religion make up only about 2% of the total
population, many others still revert to traditional practices whenever there is a need to do so.

Good pastoral leadership should not only make people feel at home in the Church but
help them also come to a realization that they are beings with others, with the wider Christian
community and the universal church. Therefore, becoming active in church ministries as
Eucharistic ministers and sharers of the Word in the Small Christian Communities (SCCs)
particularly needs to be encouraged among the laity.

Good pastoral agents must be ready to take risks not only for their own good, but for
the good of the community that they serve, even if taking such risks were to cost them their

322 John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, Ecclesia in Africa, #48, p.36.
lives. It is in taking such bold steps that good pastoral agents are adequately and constructively able to respond to the spiritual, intellectual, physical and social needs of their people. An attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible pastoral agent will, at the same time, be able to accept that he or she is not an angel, but a fellow pilgrim who is struggling, striving and navigating along the same path with others.

It is dangerous to have a mentality that says, “You know, I have nothing to learn from that religion, culture or people.” Such thinking occurs, more often than not, with pastoral agents who come from a dominant culture or religion. It is the perception of oneself or one’s culture or religion as superior to and more developed than the others. Good pastoral agents should emphasize the significance of having a continuous dialogue with the different cultures and even people of other faiths.

A good pastoral agent should be someone who is visionary and able not only to lead the group, but also to continually project the ideals and common goals so that they remain always fresh in a group’s minds. He or she should be able to build consensus on vital matters so that they can be embraced by the whole group. He or she should also have the ability to recognize the different gifts and talents that are found within the group and be able to motivate or encourage the group members in the process of developing their own talents, which can then be used for the good of the whole community.

When authenticity and integrity are lacking in leadership, vices like corruption and rivalry take root within the community. An authentic and accountable pastoral agent does not need to demand respect and dignity from the community. He or she will be respected and revered by many, though this does not rule out martyrdom, for there may still be those who
will not be happy with a straightforward person. Authenticity and integrity call for the pastoral agent to know his or her context well and to be balanced in his or her approach to different situations or issues.

The Church should find ways of encouraging young people who live together for years without having received the sacrament of marriage to receive this sacrament. The values of honesty and chastity should be encouraged among the youth. This is because the future of every successful nation and the Church come from good families, and therefore young people need to be helped to see the importance of having responsible and good families as pillars for tomorrow’s Church and nation.

There is a popular belief among young people that the sacrament of marriage is expensive. This is because many want to organize elaborate marriage celebrations which are economically beyond their reach. Whereas it is good to have a huge and colourful wedding, this is not necessary for a reception of a sacrament, and the young people need to be made aware of this.

The Church has also to deal with the crisis of priests who have gotten married despite their promise of celibacy. Priestly celibacy is an issue not only in Kenya, but in Africa as whole. It needs to be looked into, and I do not know the best way that this could be dealt with. Even though these few priests have been excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church by their local ordinaries, they still continue to function as priests in new churches like the Ecumenical Catholic Church, which is run by the estranged priest now known as Bishop Geoffrey Shiundu[^323] and Reformed Roman Catholic Church, led by the former Archbishop

of Lusaka, Zambia, Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo,\(^{324}\) together with his representative, a former Catholic priest now referred to as Bishop Daniel Kasomo.

### 3.1.3 Political

Land has been a sensitive issue in Kenya from the colonial period to the present time. It has been a source of conflict and tension among some ethnic communities, particularly in the Rift Valley and Coastal regions. It is undeniably that in Kenya the issue of land has led to the deaths of many people and has also displaced others from their homes.

During the colonial period, most of the European settlers established themselves in central Kenya and parts of the Rift Valley, displacing a number of the local communities. After independence, the political elites took the land from the Europeans at the expense of the landless, originally displaced owners. In some cases, there were illegal takeovers of individually- or community-owned land by public or private institutions, while in other cases members of favoured ethnic group benefitted from settlement schemes at the expense of others. There have also been cases of forceful evictions and land-grabbing by government officials.

Somehow all the post-colonial government regimes have failed to address land related injustices in Kenya in an honest and adequate manner. Today it is estimated that some 13% of Kenyans are landless while 67% own less than an acre of land per person.\(^{325}\) This has exacerbated problems surrounding ethnicity and tribalism. Tribalism is understood here as

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\(^{324}\) Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo was excommunicated in 2006 for consecrating four priests as bishops after his marriage to a Korean acupuncturist named Maria Sung in 2001 in a celebration sponsored by the Unification Church and presided over by its late founder, Rev. Sun Myung Moon.

\(^{325}\) More information can be found from [http://www.academia.edu/6245293/Poverty_AssessmentKenya](http://www.academia.edu/6245293/Poverty_AssessmentKenya), (accessed March 14, 2016).
both an unexamined loyalty to one’s ethnic group and the application of its learned prejudices against a person of another tribe. This is an evil that is slowly destroying and dividing Kenyan society. Tribalism has been used by Kenyan politicians as a tool to obtain power and as an instrument of violence and intimidation. As Orji explains, “Politicians are very adept at playing up ethnic differences and conflating them with religion to fan up embers.” However, there is a desire in Kenya for the people to be treated fairly, equally, reasonably and justly.

Martin Shanguhyia and Mickie Mwanzia state:

While land grievances were not the cause of the postelection violence in late 2007 and early 2008, generations of failed land reforms and tensions over land since the colonial times provided fertile ground on which the outcome of that election was contested. Thus the postelection violence clearly followed interethic cleavages that were evident in the violence and murders in urban areas such as Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru and Eldoret.

In the past some politicians have been blamed for organizing criminal gangs, especially during the election periods, as a way of teaching their political rivals a lesson. The gangs eliminate the rivals or try to frighten them from participating in the elections. Gangs have also been used to terrorize voters, especially those who are deemed to be unfriendly to, or unsupportive of, a particular political party or candidate. These gangs continue to thrive and to operate even after the elections and are a continual threat to security and to the lives of innocent and law abiding citizens.

Furthermore, some ethnic or tribal groups believe that they have been historically discriminated against regarding development priorities by successive governments since

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326 Orji, A Semiotic Approach to the Theology of Inculturation, p.193.
Kenyan independence from Great Britain in 1963. The Kenyan population is greatly influenced by ethnic affiliations, and even in the current multiparty era, the major political parties have their greatest followers in certain ethnic regions. Magesa and Nthamburi note that in some situations, “civic educators, whose teachings are considered a threat, have been barred from these regions.” Yet, ethnic diversity, Philomena Njeri Mwaura observes, “is a blessing which should be turned into a fruitful and rewarding resource that can be used to enrich the concept of nationhood.”

Kenya is also ranked today among the most corrupt countries in the world. Unfortunately, the culture of Toa Kitu Kidogo (TKK), Chai or Hongo is slowly but surely harming the society. Corruption affects the way people serve and relate to one another in the society. Some of the worst scandals that have rocked the Kenyan government in recent years are the Goldenberg, Anglo-leasing, Triton and Maize scandals. Recently, a report came out amid the growing public anger about the wanton theft of public resources following the revelations of the loss of 791 million Kenya Shillings (KES) at the National Youth Service (NYS). Even before the NYS saga concerning top government officials, there is the mystery of how the government spent the 250 billion KES that was raised from the Eurobond.

While the Kenyan population has been robbed of billions of Kenyan Shillings, none of those who were involved in these mega-corruptions have been charged by the Kenyan courts. Indeed one of the masterminds of the Goldenberg saga has claimed, that he like the

330 Toa Kitu Kidogo, Chai or Hongo are Kiswahili phrases that are used to refer to bribe or corruption in Kenya.
331 One can read more on these Kenyan corruption allegations at: [http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000193065/kenya-ranked-third-most-corrupt-state](http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000193065/kenya-ranked-third-most-corrupt-state), (accessed February 12, 2016).
biblical Saul of Tarsus, to have met Christ on his way to Damascus (cf. Acts 9) and has since then become a new ‘Paul’. He testifies to a personal conversion and transformation, and has changed his name from ‘Kamlesh Pattni’ to ‘Brother Paul Pattni’. He has today become one of the leading Christian Pentecostal preachers in the country.

The Kenyan police force and the judiciary are two of the sectors most identified with corruption. Christine Bodewes describes how the level of corruption has demeaned Kenyans with these words:

In addition to extracting bribes for ordinary activities such as repairing a leaky roof or selling vegetables on the road, it was common for the chiefs to arrest and incarcerate Kiberans (in reference to the residents of Kibera slum in Nairobi, Kenya) in order to extort payment for additional bribes. The officials also acted as self-appointed judiciary, resolving local complaints such as landlord/tenant disputes, domestic arguments and petty crimes. The chiefs typically rendered judgment in favor of the party who paid the highest bribe, without regard to the merits of the case.\(^{332}\)

In Kenya, it is a question of how much wealth you have, for that is what buys freedom. Poor citizens often languish in prisons in very inhuman conditions. Thus, in Kenya today we would say that corruption is rife in almost all sectors and levels within the society.

There has also been a continuous cry for justice, peace and reconciliation in a number of spheres. In 2008, after the experience of post-election violence, the coalition government formed a Kenyan Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC). This was part of the Agenda Four of the National Accord signed in 2008. This commission’s mandate was to investigate, analyse and report the causes and effects of historical injustices and to contribute towards national unity, reconciliation and healing.

Eight years after the commission had been formed and carried out a country-wide interview, its final report was handed over to the government. Since then, nothing of the report has been heard in public. As Mwaura comments, “There have been calls for blanket amnesty for the perpetrators of violence without even requiring them to own up to their guilt, repent and seek forgiveness from the victims.”

This is how Kenyan government works when its top officials are implicated.

Democracy is closely associated with multiparty politics and free parliamentary elections in Kenya and in Africa as a whole. Most of the African countries after their independence from the colonial powers have experienced political rule of authoritarian and dictatorial single party states. Democracy is defined as “government of the people, by the people and for the people.” However, what we experience in Kenya is a government of the few, by the few and for the few powerful and influential individuals.

Under its two first presidents Jomo Kenyatta, who took over power from the British on December 12, 1963 and governed until 1978, and Daniel arap Moi, who ruled from 1978 to 2002, Kenyans experienced political repression and abuse of human rights. The period featured a policy of ‘Nyayo-era’ and the Nyayo torture chambers where political decedents and critics of the government were punished, and nepotism reigned in the civil service. In reference to this era of Kenyan history, Bodewes writes, “Kenya evolved into a neo-

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335 Nyayo is a Kiswahili word, which means ‘footsteps’. People were required to follow the footsteps of their political leader, in this case the ruling president without questioning or criticizing his leadership.
patrimonial state defined by repressive authoritarianism, poverty, large-scale corruption and human rights violations.”

It was not until 1992 that multiparty democracy was introduced into Kenyan politics. This so-called second Kenyan liberation was won after a long struggle to amend the section (Section 2a) of the old Kenyan constitution that made Kenya a single party state. Unfortunately, Kenyans still continued to experience gross violations of human rights and government censorship after the so-called second liberation had taken place.

As J.J. Ongonga argues, “Most of the African leaders tend to make promises to the electorate, but once they taste the fruits of power, they forget their promise to be ‘democratic’ in their governance. Suddenly their appetite for democracy wanes away.” When dictators are overthrown and new leaders are installed, people celebrate and become optimistic only to find themselves in the same situation they were in before. This continues to happen in Kenyan society, and these are the moments when the Church is needed to be the voice for the voiceless. The Church has the mandate to remind society that God created us in his image and likeness and endowed us with freedom.

A government that refuses to encourage expression of diverse opinions and instead abuses human rights cannot claim to be democratic, yet “it is criticism which most regimes in Africa abhor.” However, without positive and constructive criticism there can be no genuine development and growth even within the Church.

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It is commonly believed that many leaders (ecclesial and political) today have come to the realization that there is no authentic leadership that can guide people if that leadership refuses to dialogue and to listen to those who are being governed. Kenyans witness squabbles among their political leaders that prevent them from recognizing who to trust as the leaders continue to quarrel for positions and political benefits.

It is a simple fact that people, especially the young, learn from what they see around them. Some politicians have been accused of buying votes or bribing voters so as to remain in the position of power or to acquire power. At times these wrangles have led to violent confrontations among the different opposing parties leaving some with serious injuries or death. In Kenya today, there is a lack of good political role models for our people to emulate.

3.1.4 Economic

High growth in population in Kenya in recent years has generated rapid increase in the labour force, which is incompatible with the available jobs and arable land for agriculture in the rural areas. Further growth in literacy and acquisition of Western or formal education has given rise to a large number of people who search for well paying jobs, particularly in the urban centers. Kenya’s National Bureau of Statistics reported that the unemployment rate in Kenya had increased to 40 percent in 2011 from 12.70 percent in 2006.339

Another report prepared and presented by the Kenyan Government at the 2014 Ministerial Conference on Youth Employment (July 21-23, 2014) in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire, indicates:

Youth (15-34 year olds), who form 35% of the Kenyan Population, have the highest unemployment rate of 67%. Over one million young people enter into the labour market annually without any skills some having either dropped out of school or completed school and not enrolled in any college. A further 155,000 join the labour market annually after completing training in TVET or at the university. A total of over 1.3 million new employment places have to be created annually to meet this demand. It is also noted that, the skills acquired by the college and university graduates often do not meet the expectation of employers. There is therefore urgent need for the Government to strengthen and scale up successful measures targeting quality skill development creation for the youth.\(^\text{340}\)

Youth unemployment is a glaring reality in Kenya today more than ever before. Many young people who have completed their college education or university studies have failed to find jobs. Some poor families who invested heavily in their children’s education in the hope that when they finished college or university they would find jobs that would improve the families’ economic situation are in shock. Hope is slowly fading as many young people find themselves unable to get jobs after completing college or university.

The demands of modern life create a lot of needs, wants and expectations that many people cannot afford. Many young people in Kenya cannot satisfy such basic needs as food, shelter and even clothing. Because of this, many unemployed young people feel miserable, undervalued and hopeless when they compare themselves with others around them. Often this leads to undesirable activities like drinking cheap alcohol, stealing and idleness.\(^\text{341}\) They are plagued by self-doubt.

The gap between the haves and the have-nots continues to widen, and many young people are frustrated with their situation. Many unemployed young men and women end up


\(^{341}\) Ibid., p.12 “When youth are unemployed for long periods they are likely to engage in anti-social behaviour including drug and alcohol abuse, unsafe sex, criminal activities including terrorism.”
leaving their village homes and flock to the slums around the large cities, hoping to find employment. Some of them join criminal gangs that terrorise innocent citizens, while others turn to drugs or commit suicide as their situations become hopeless.

Drug and substance abuse is increasingly becoming a danger, especially for Kenyan youth. Whether in urban centers or in rural areas, drug and substance abuse is an issue that calls for our attention and response as Christians. A countrywide rapid assessment study on drug and substance abuse, published by the Kenyan government in collaboration with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in 1995, found that the problem was larger than expected and that drug and substance abuse had permeated all strata of society, with youth and young adults being the most affected.\footnote{Rosemary Okello, ‘Drug Abuse Toll Uncovered in Kenya’, \textit{The Lancet}, (07/1995, Volume 346), p.111.}

In late August 2014, Kenya’s President Uhuru Kenyatta led a team of security personnel in supervising the sinking of a ship carrying tons of cocaine off the Kenyan coast city of Mombasa. However, this incident has left some questions unanswered, for the president carried out this operation when the courts were in the process of declaring the owner of the ship and its cargo.\footnote{http://www.maritime_executive.com/article/Kenya_Blowship_2014, (accessed April 15, 2016), and a YouTube video on \url{http://www.youtube.com/watch}, (accessed April 15, 2016). President Kenyatta oversees the sinking of ship captured with drugs.} In the opinion of many, sinking the ship and its consignment destroyed the evidence that could have led to the discovery of its owner. This suggested a cover up and protection of the culprits by the government.

It is believed that some of Kenya’s drug barons are members of parliament and top government officials. A few years ago, in the spring of 2012, a government minister and some members of parliament were implicated in the drug cartel, but even then the matter
ended within the corridors of parliament. Nobody lost a job over this, and nobody knows what came out of the findings.344

Despite many young people’s lives being at risk because of drugs, the church and the state have taken very little interest in addressing this challenge, let alone rehabilitating the young people who are already addicted to the drugs. A centre run by the Catholic Church in collaboration with the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) provides a space for Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) at Asumbi parish in the Catholic Diocese of Homabay. However, it is the only one of its kind in Kenya. Such initiatives need to be increased and supported all over the country.

Prostitution and unwanted pregnancies are other problems facing the country today, particularly among unemployed young women seeking ways of survival. Felix M. Muchomba writes that the term ‘prostitute’, “usually connotes a person who derives his or her livelihood primarily from exchanging sex for money and who self-identifies as one.”345 He argues that some of the reasons which lead women and girls into prostitution are: spousal abuse, forced marriages, loss of spouse or parents, and elopement with strangers who later abandon them.346

Karen M. Hampanda states that even though commercial sex in Kenya is illegal and female sex workers are highly stigmatized, there is high demand for sex as a commodity in

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346 Ibid., p.81.
many urban areas.\textsuperscript{347} She asserts, “Many women in Kenya sell sex either partially or completely for economic survival.”\textsuperscript{348} This is because of extreme poverty and lack of alternative options to meet their economic needs.\textsuperscript{349} She writes that by the year 2011, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that “6.6% of urban Kenyan women have received money in exchange for sex.”\textsuperscript{350}

There is limited research and statistics available on prostitution and unwanted pregnancies in Kenya. However, in 2005 the International Labour Organization estimated that “approximately 30,000 girls under the age of 18 are engaged in prostitution in Kenya and many boys are also believed to be engaged in commercial sex.”\textsuperscript{351} Jane Mildred and Carol A. Plummer argue that child sex tourism in Kenya has been a problem, particularly in coastal regions, “in some cases, due to pressure from parents or other guardians to contribute to the family income where few other options for supporting families exist.”\textsuperscript{352} They further argue that “valid nationwide surveys, as well as detailed qualitative data are needed to fill the information vacuum”\textsuperscript{353} in Kenya.

Nevertheless, the lives of many young girls are ruined since they have become mothers before they were mature enough to take care of babies whose fathers are absentees. This complicates issues like unemployment because many young girls are forced to leave school so as to care for their children. In most cases, the young mother and her child become

\textsuperscript{348} Ibid., p.142.
\textsuperscript{349} Ibid., p.145.
\textsuperscript{350} Ibid., p.142.
\textsuperscript{352} Ibid., p.603.
\textsuperscript{353} Ibid., p.603.
a burden on her parents, who have to cater to not only for her, but for the new child too. In some sad situations, this leads to unhealthy and unfriendly relationships within the family, and the ‘unwanted child’ may end up without proper emotional and financial support.

With the economic hardships currently being experienced in Kenya, many families find themselves in abject poverty. Lack of sufficient food, poor diet, poor clothing, poor housing and lack of school fees are some of the common experiences of many families. This economic crisis is forcing some young people to engage in antisocial habits such as begging, stealing, child labour, early marriages and child prostitution. The result is that our young people feel deprived of opportunities in life, which leads to low self-esteem, inferiority complexes, lack of motivation, rejection, feelings of bitterness and hatred towards society.

Many people in Kenya depend on agriculture, but with the changing weather patterns, it is becoming increasing difficult to rely on farming anymore. Due to global warming, the weather has become very unpredictable, and every year farmers count their losses. Even those communities that keep livestock are not spared, for their animals die of hunger because of lack of pasture. The lakes and rivers are also drying up, and fish are becoming scarce. Mau Forest, which used to be a water-tower,\(^{354}\) has been invaded by people cutting down trees for various economic reasons, e.g. for burning charcoal, building materials and clearing more land for agriculture.

\(^{354}\) Mau Forest is one of the highland forests in Kenya where there is plenty of rainfall (due to the forest) and feeds a number of rivers that run into the lakes, hence my usage of the term ‘water-tower’.
3.2 Opportunities and exigencies for the essential principles of mission and evangelization

3.2.1 Opportunities

One may be tempted at this point to ask whether there is any hope left for Kenya. My answer to such question is, “Yes! Indeed there is.” As John Swinton suggests:

Even in the midst of the deepest darkness, small gestures can bear powerful witness to the possibility that the way that things are is not the way they should be or indeed will be. Simple gestures such as these – sharing bread; offering comfort, friendship, and consolation – broke through the evil and offered hope and humanness within a context quite consciously designed to destroy both. These gestures did not prevent the evil or bring it to an end. Nor did they offer an explanation for it. They did, however, make a profound statement that evil does not need to have the final word.\(^{355}\)

Kenya is a land of diverse and vibrant cultures and peoples. The different ethnic communities that live in Kenya provide it with many opportunities to learn from one another. Each ethnic community presents a set of genuine values and cultural richness. The progress made, especially in the inculturation of the liturgy, is a good example of richness of Kenyan cultures. This should not be seen as helpful to Kenyan society alone, but also as a strength and blessing for, and contribution to, the universal church.

Kenya, being a profoundly Christian country with the majority of people proclaiming Christianity as their religion, provides a good argument for the Church to continue to foster the gospel message of love, peace, unity and honesty among its followers. We know that two significant instruments for change and transformation in society are religion and education, and since the Church in Kenya has an upper hand on both of them, it should make use of the opportunity to foster an integral growth of the human person.

Perhaps of great significance is the fact that more than half of the Kenyan population is younger than age thirty-five. This is an asset that mission and evangelization can draw upon. Getting the youth involved in the different activities of the Church is vital. The Church should also promote and encourage creativity, especially among the young. Moreover, the growth of Church in Kenya is often “reflected in the growth in the number of vocations to priesthood and religious life.”

Kenya has a good number of young men and women in the Catholic seminaries and convents. Some religious congregations like the Passionist missionaries and some dioceses do not have enough room or tuition funding for aspirants to religious life. A number of Kenyans have also been sent abroad and are stationed in different countries as missionaries. This is a significant development and a sign that Christian faith continues to mature in Kenya.

However, as Emmanuel Katongole argues:

Impressive as the statistical growth of Christianity in Africa and Catholic Church in particular is, it would be misleading to limit the optimism relating to the future of Catholicism in Africa to mere statistics. For the vitality and dynamism of the liturgical expression in many African Churches seems to have captured the attention and imagination of many in the West. In fact, the image most associated with African Catholicism is one of congregations of African women, men, and children adorned in colorful fabrics, singing, swaying, and dancing (literally) the Lord’s name in local lyrics at the accompaniment of drums and tom-toms. It is such images of a lively expression, confirmed by the statistical growth in African Catholicism, that have contributed to the widespread feeling that the future of the Church is in Africa.

In *Ecclesia in Africa*, Pope John Paul II clarifies that “Africa is a huge Continent where very diverse situations are found, and that it is necessary to avoid generalizations both

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357 Ibid., p.180.
In almost all African nations there is abject poverty, mismanagement of available scarce resources, political instability and social disorientation, all that perpetuate the conditions for despair, misery and violence. Katongole explains that in spite of Ecclesia in Africa’s call for celebration of God’s marvelous deeds for Africa’s liberation and salvation, it was more concerned with the economic, social and political conditions of Africa. He argues that the “Pope and the Synod Fathers were particularly concerned whether and what sort of difference Christianity can still make in a continent of bad news.” He clarifies that the 1994 Rwandan genocide, which occurred at the time of the first African Synod, drew particular attention from the Synod Fathers, even to such an extent that the Synod was meant to meet the demands of immediate challenges that were facing the Church in Africa.

Katongole agrees that the step taken by the Synod Fathers was a positive one since they were “inspired by a creative restlessness in search of new visions and directions for the Church in Africa.” However, one needs to move a little further and with “a certain measure of humility and responsibility... own and narrate the genocide, the poverty, despair, and hopelessness in Christian Africa as also ‘part of our story’ as Christians.” He stresses that the “relation between the two faces [of the Christian Church in Africa] cannot be assumed to be a settled question, but one that calls for an honest introspection.” Meanwhile, the Kenyan Church should not shy away from its identity and uniqueness.

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358 John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, Ecclesia in Africa, #40, p.32.
359 Ibid., p.32.
361 Ibid., p.190.
362 Ibid., p.190.
363 Ibid., p.191.
364 Ibid., p.192.
Africans, John Paul II stresses, “have a profound religious sense, a sense of the sacred, of the existence of God the Creator and of a spiritual world. The reality of sin in its individual and social forms is very much present in the consciousness of these peoples, as is also the need for rites of purification and expiation.”\textsuperscript{365} This applies to Kenya, especially in their profound belief and reverence for the Divine.

Mbiti argues that in Africa, “...religion permeates into all departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it.”\textsuperscript{366} He asserts that since traditional religions occupied the whole person and the whole of his or her life, conversion to new religions like Christianity must embrace an African language, thought patterns, fears, social relationships, attitudes and philosophical disposition, if that conversion is to make a lasting impact upon the individual and his or her community.\textsuperscript{367} He affirms, “Africans are notoriously religious, and each people have its own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices.”\textsuperscript{368} He raises the awareness of everyone, particularly pastoral agents in Kenya, of an existence of a people and a community, which is already deeply religious.

This is a fundamental strength, particularly for the Kenyan Church, and it offers an opportunity for the theology of mission and evangelization to exploit when tackling the challenges that face the Church today. When people already have an idea and respect in their lives for who God is, then it is easier to create and find a common ground whence dialogue can be initiated.

This common ground must embrace the family as well. For Kenyans in general have a great sense of belonging to a particular community and a tremendous love for family. Erick

\textsuperscript{365} John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, Ecclesia in Africa, #42, p.33.
\textsuperscript{366} Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy, p.1.
\textsuperscript{367} Ibid., p.3.
\textsuperscript{368} Ibid., p.233.
Otieno Nyambedha and Jens Aagaard-Hansen assert that in the Luo community, as well as in many other African ethnic communities, “the traditional obligation of the extended family was to assist those who were in need, including orphans and other children facing difficult life circumstances.”

They explain:

*Duol* is a term used in reference to traditional Luo life to signify unity and solidarity within a lineage under the authority of the elders. This authority was most prominent in the pre-colonial period, and continued up to independence. It declined steadily under the impact of modernity during the post-independence period. Consequently, the institution of *duol* fell into disuse. The emergence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has renewed the need for unity and solidarity in finding community-based solutions. The original principles of *duol* are now manifested in a transformed version of *duol* and similar collaborative community initiatives.

They argue that these new patterns of association “transcend the kinship boundaries and traditional relations” that were experienced in particular ethnic communities’ social life, and “forms of relatedness are fast evolving in [Luo] society to respond to the contemporary challenges of modern economy and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.” This need not be seen as a solemn duty but as natural extension of joy in community and family life lived in Christ.

John Paul II argues, “The peoples of Africa respect the life which is conceived and born. They rejoice in this life.” Let me take as an example the case of Mr. and Mrs. Odhiambo, members of one of our Passionist parishes in Kenya. They are a relatively young couple in their early thirties. During one of my recent visits to the parish, they told me of what they termed as two blessings in their lives. Mrs. Odhiambo had just given birth to their second-born child, a son, and Mr. Odhiambo had acquired a new car for the family.

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370 Ibid., p.521.
371 Ibid., p.521.
372 Ibid., p.521.
374 ‘Odhiambo’ is not the real name of the couple. I have intentionally changed the names of the couple in order to protect their identity.
This couple came to me asking for blessings and prayers as a sign of their gratitude for God’s blessing upon them. It appeared to me that they were happy and contented with who and what they are and have. At the same time, they recognized that seeking divine intervention was important in their daily lives. Their joy was evident as I prayed a blessing over their little son and their new vehicle.

A related case is that of Ms. Jacinter375, a woman of thirty-eight who had come to our parish to share with me her worries. She said that when she was twenty-four years old, she had procured an abortion. She was filled with a terrible fear that God was punishing her because of her former way of life. She told me that as a young girl in grade six, she had promised God that she would become a nun when she grew up but did not fulfill the promise.

By then, she had had a number of unstable relationships, none of which had resulted in marriage. She said that she would henceforth dedicate her time to prayer and be ready to help the young girls in our parish with advice so that they will not take the same path as she did. By the time I left the parish, two years later, Ms. Jacinter had become an active member of the church choir and a member of the rosary group.

I presume that there is something related to religion and the divine that Mr. and Mrs. Odhiambo and Ms. Jacinter have received, probably from their upbringing or family backgrounds. They were both turning back to religion although for different reasons and with different motives. Reflecting on these two anecdotes, I wonder how culture and society, or how the images and representations of God that one receives from his or her family of origin, can affect one’s wholeness.

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375 The name ‘Jacinter’ is a pseudonym I have adopted to protect her identity.
Kenyans have a great sense of hospitality, solidarity and community life.\textsuperscript{376} John Paul II seems to underscore these aspects when he explains that in Africa it is “unthinkable to celebrate a feast without the participation of the whole village. Indeed, community life in African societies expresses the extended family.”\textsuperscript{377} This applies also to Kenya; in most Kenyan languages or dialects that I have encountered, there is no word for ‘cousin’. All cousins are referred to as ‘brothers’ or ‘sisters’, which expresses how closely families are knit; they all see themselves as members of one family.

One takes it as his or her responsibility to assist an extended family member who might be in need. This solidarity is expressed during moments of loss of a loved one, when people come not only to console those who have remained behind, but also to share their love for one another and their resources.

3.2.2 Exigencies

One way or another all persons have experienced some kind of crisis in their lives. Whether that experience was physical, social, mental and/or spiritual, it does not matter. The fact remains that we have had an experience to reckon with. Whether it was just a slight head-ache or hunger for food to a life threatening illness like HIV/AIDS, Ebola or cancer, the fact still remains that we have faced a challenge in our lives. Christians reflect on Christ’s answer to these challenges.

It is clear that the cultural, religious, political and economic challenges for mission and evangelization in Kenya in the post-colonial context create urgent demands for essential


\textsuperscript{377} John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, \textit{Ecclesia in Africa}, #43, p.34.
principles. These are driven by the fact that the church in Kenya should not allow itself to be divided as during the 2007/2008 post-election violence that claimed many innocent lives. As Kenya approaches another election in 2017, there is a great need to overcome the ethnic, religious and political tensions and to avoid sliding into another wave of violence.

Second, there is the fact that the process of inculturation, which takes place not only in Kenya but in Africa as a whole, demands urgent preparation of both the clergy and the laity to become more active in participation and creative in sharing the good news. For the Christian faith to be fully lived by the Kenyan people, it must become part of the Kenyan culture. Dadosky argues that this encounter is mutually transformative, that “one cannot have a serious encounter with another culture without ‘being changed’, i.e. having one’s worldview challenged, expanded and/or enriched.”\(^{378}\) But at the same time also presenting “the possibility of a renewed understanding of the Church’s mysteries.”\(^ {379}\)

Third is the fact that Kenya contains a Christian majority country, with more than 80% of its total population claiming to be Christians, mission and evangelization are no longer solely directed towards those who are not yet Christians but rather to those baptized Christians who are faced with various challenges in their daily lives or those who perhaps nominally affiliate with the faith. This calls for an urgent need for essential principles, so as to be able to challenge the cultural taboos and customs that threaten human life and development. Pastoral agents must become aware of the many challenges that are confronting the Kenyan people and together with them find better ways of confronting them.

\(^{379}\) Ibid., p.751.
Fourth, the fact that Kenya is a youthful nation with the majority of its population being under the age of 35 years and with significant growth of small Christian communities there is a growing need to focus on mission and evangelization not only as the work of the clergy but also as the responsibility of the laity as well. The collaboration and participation of all the members of the church, young and old, male and female, is vital for the continued growth of the church in Kenya.

I argue that the exigencies for the essential principles of mission and evangelization, particularly in Kenya in the post-colonial context, should be guided and directed by two factors: Christ-centeredness and socio-cultural and/or religious viewpoints. As Christ-centered, I look at Jesus’ teachings on the commandment of love and the golden rule as normative guiding pastoral action. While the socio-cultural or religious perspective, emphasizes our common human desire for wellness or wholeness, and our desire and capacity to do good provide the context for discerning the most adequate and effective response to the situation.

As Christians, we should always look at Jesus Christ as the ultimate model for our mission and evangelization. At the end of everything, we should be able say as pastoral agents that we have grown to be more like Jesus. In fact, the authentic teaching of Jesus is the supra model for all mission and evangelization that goes beyond time, space and nationality.

Jesus Christ had followers, a community of the disciples. He evangelized and led individuals and groups with authenticity, integrity, compassion and love. More often than not, he challenged the political and religious leaders of his time. He questioned their interpretation of the law and their concern for the poor and marginalized in society. He said,
“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy;’ but I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:43-44).

Senior and Stuhlmueller argue that the “central motif of Jesus’ ministry was the ‘coming of the Kingdom of God’ (cf. Mark 1:14-15).” Jesus used this rich biblical symbol to understand and articulate the nature of his own mission to Israel. They stress that Jesus had experienced, “and then made the heart of his mission, a renewed appreciation of the free and gracious nature of the God of Israel, this God who could not be controlled or limited by Israel’s own carefully constructed boundaries.”

They further comment, “The extension of compassion, loyalty, and friendship across well-defined boundaries of exclusion was a parable in action, a way of vividly communicating Jesus’ understanding of God and the quality of his rule.” Christ’s example of love and compassion is not just something that is tied to a particular religion or cultural group of people, it is something that transcends time, space and nationality and involves all humanity.

We read in the Gospels that Jesus’ teaching made a deep impression on the people because he taught them with authority, unlike their own Scribes (Matthew 7:28-29). Jesus had a new approach to mission and evangelization, which was transformative, servant-oriented, reconciling, healing, guiding, empowering and liberating. He said, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets” (Matthew 7:12). Jesus sent his disciples to proclaim the Gospel, to sanctify, to serve, to reconcile, to heal, to guide, to teach and to bring hope (Luke 10:1-9). They were to cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers and cast out demons (Matthew 10:8).

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381 Ibid., p.147.
382 Ibid., p.147.
From the socio-cultural and/or religious perspective, it is evident that we all desire to be well and to be happy, either as an individual or as a community. A healthy human person functions normally. A feeling of wholeness within a person gives rise to contentment and fulfillment in many respects. Richard Johnson argues that “the more awake you are, the happier, the more at peace, the calmer, the more courageous, and the more physically hardy and mentally healthy you will be.”

Johnson asserts that “self-realization, the process of awakening, is the basis for living a fully functioning life: it is the basis of mental and emotional health.” Harold Ellens argues that “health is a state of relative wholeness appropriate to that point at which one is just now, in the process of growth to self-actualization.”

Magesa argues that in Africa religion is the source of abundant life, and that religion “informs peoples’ perception of the Holy that demands and enforces their emotional and behavioral commitment and so gives direction to their lives.” Whether one is a Christian, Muslim, Hindus, Buddhist, or ascribes to African Traditional Religions, he or she has a belief in some transcendent value that is directing the way he or she behaves and lives with others in society.

Berinyuu argues:

In Africa, both good health and sickness can be linked to two sides of the same coin. Health, i.e. good health, for Ghanaians, for example, is defined by Kofi Appiah-Kubi as the ‘well-being of mind, body and spirit; living in harmony with ones neighbor, the

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384 Ibid., p.11.
environment and oneself and in all levels of reality – physical, social, natural and supernatural.  

I am using here the word ‘wholeness’ to refer to the state of being oneself without any form of coercion or illness. This does not imply an absence of suffering and/or elimination of the many challenges that face us, or even a cancellation of death. Rather, the challenges will still be there, but one will be able to face the crises in life with courage and hope.

Lonergan argues, “What is good always is concrete.” Since it is human beings, concrete subjects, who desire to do what is good, that good must therefore be concrete. Human good is within our human capacity to intend and to attain. It is a reality that we are certainly capable of achieving.

Lonergan points out, “The human good is at once individual and social.” The structure of the human good is thus two-fold: it is both personal and communal. He observes that the human person does not just operate as an isolated entity for one’s personal interest or self-satisfaction, but also for the good of the group. That is why people live in groups and cooperate with one another: to meet one another’s needs or for the common good.

It is through our cooperation or collaboration with one another that we develop social institutions which enable us to live and work in harmony. This cooperation among different individuals should not be a coerced or a forced cooperation. Lonergan insists that the truly good is not only that which satisfies our desires but also that which is valuable, with “a goodness that is beyond criticism.” He adds that those persons who appreciate the values

387 Berinyuu, Pastoral Care to the Sick in Africa: An Approach to Transcultural Pastoral Theology, p.31.
388 Lonergan, Method in Theology, p.27.
389 Ibid., p.27.
390 Ibid., p.47.
391 Ibid., p.47.
392 Ibid., p.36.
they present to the community, “criticizing their defects, and allowing one’s living to be challenged at its very roots by their words and their deeds”393 open the human subject for others.

Ellens argues, “Humans have a deep need to find meaning, even if it is negative meaning, in all things, especially in illness and pain.”394 We seek to know the ‘truth’ or ‘meaning’ about our existence, human suffering and inevitable death. Mission and evangelization should promote “man’s struggle with the facts of existence in an endeavor to find the underlying relationships that give them meaning, and to create a way of life based on his resulting insight into the nature and meaning of life.”395

Traumatizing experiences, such as the post election violence and terror attacks, deep hurts and pains that people go through constantly, call for justice, peace, reconciliation and healing. Mission and evangelization must therefore seek to mediate and bring about reconciliation and healing to both the offended and the offender in a way that fosters peace and teaches people to love their neighbours as themselves. They should bring about “a renewed humanity and a new human society, free of unjust and inhuman assumptions and structures.”396

In moments of tragedy and suffering, people come to realize that they have much in common, either as an ethnic entity or as the wider human community. People come together to show their solidarity with one another. They desire and tend to seek ways for peace and

393 Ibid., p.247.
394 Ellens, Radical Grace: How Belief in a Benevolent God benefits our Health, p.11.
395 Nelson, Psychology, Religion and Spirituality, p.98.
396 Shorter, Toward a Theology of Inculturation, p.268.
unity. People pray as a community and ask God to grant them good health and life. They pray for God’s protection before they set out for any important activity in their lives.

It is evident that in many places around the world, community prayer and religion are sources of love, compassion, support and tolerance to and for the individuals within the community. As Nelson argues, “There is consistent evidence that many people see religion as a source of support, and that they resist giving up this strong social network even in the face of serious medical problems that might limit participation.”

People often turn to God for answers when they are faced with challenges or tragedy in their lives.

On the other hand, Ellen argues:

Sick gods make for sick people. To put it slightly differently, sick gods make people sick. Sick gods provide sick models, which produce sick persons and sick communities. To insure personal and communal well-being requires that one’s god is well; or at least, the converse is so. If one’s god is sick, one cannot achieve well-being, individually or communally.

Nelson underscores this statement when he asserts that religion determines “the fashioning of distinctive emotions; of distinctive habits, practices, or virtues; of distinctive purposes, desires, passions, and commitments; and of distinctive beliefs and ways of thinking.”

Meanwhile, James L. Griffith affirms, “Religion has just as much power to impose suffering on human life as it does to alleviate suffering. Much like atomic energy, which can make either bombs or electricity, religion is not good or evil but simply powerful.” Griffith continues “for many, these religious influences are health promoting, but for some they are

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397 Nelson, Psychology, Religion and Spirituality, p.316.
399 Nelson, Psychology, Religion and Spirituality, p.3.
not. Sometimes religious issues do not directly speed the progression of disease, yet do add unnecessarily to its misery.\textsuperscript{401} Thus, it is clear that religious influence, when not critically reflected upon, affects people’s lives either positively or negatively, for better or for worse.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have examined some issues specific to mission and evangelization in Kenya in the post-colonial context. I have highlighted issues such as the 2007/2008 post-election violence, ethnic/tribal conflicts, HIV/AIDS pandemic, corruption, political insecurity and increasing acts of terror, drug and substance abuse, youth unemployment, land issues, leadership squabbles, persons with disabilities and clericalism to name some of the major ones. While this does not exhaust the list it brings light on the complications and challenges of mission and evangelization in Kenya. I have argued that unless theology of mission and evangelization begins to address the challenges that are facing Kenyans today, it will remain superficial and ineffective and will not make a deeper transformation in peoples’ lives. I have discussed some of the specific challenges that face mission and evangelization in Kenya.

I have looked at the opportunities in Kenya such as the diversity of many cultures that can help promote mission and evangelization today, the profound religious sense of the sacred and existence of God, the values of hospitality, solidarity, community life and the majority of the Kenyan population being young i.e. under the age of thirty-five years old. I have also examined the exigencies for the essential principles of mission and evangelization in Kenya today and outlined the two factors that should guide and direct these urgent demands as Christ-centeredness and socio-cultural or religious perspectives.

\textsuperscript{401} Ibid., p.5.
Chapter 4
Perimeters and Pastoral Implications for Theology of Mission and Evangelization in Kenya

Introduction

Because contexts are dynamic and not static, the process and method of our Christian mission and evangelization are also destined to continuous change and re-evaluation. But because by nature we are social and historical beings, that we live in a particular context in space and time; our Christian evangelization will always be influenced by people and things around us. Stephen Bevans affirms that no context is static, “even the most traditional culture is one that is growing, improving and declining.”402

Despite our changing contexts and times, Christ remains the same for Christ is the same yesterday, today and always (cf. Hebrews 13:8). What changes is our method or manner of transmitting that same message of Christ to a group of people that live in a particular context and at a given period of time.

Katongole illuminates this point when he argues that the urgent task for the Church in Africa in modern times is “either action or the adoption of more relevant pastoral methods or new forms of evangelization.”403 He affirms that “in a continent that is already massively Christian, what might be required is not just deepening of evangelization but a re-

examination of the various forms of embodiment such evangelization has taken in the past, and the sort of re-visioning such embodiment might call for."\(^{404}\)

In a similar way Matthew Michael stresses:

... we must re-evaluate the legitimacy of each response and seek to enhance the same in order to address the missions challenges of modern and postmodern Africa. Admittedly, some of the responses may be improved upon or even refocused, but we have no luxury of jettisoning them or refusing to engage them in new and fresh ways. There is no need to ‘reinvent the wheel,’ an adage goes, but we must redesign the ‘wheels’ of modern African theology in order to move it faster in the direction of the contextual challenges of the African missions fields. The responses must move also beyond its intellectual and academic borders to the ‘real world’ by making more practical the intellectual insights of these reflections in order to help the immediate needs of our local evangelists and missionaries at the local church levels in their quest of soul-winning and evangelism.\(^{405}\)

To borrow Michael’s words quoted above, this chapter does not intend to ‘re-invent the wheel’ for the theology of mission and evangelization; rather, it will be an attempt to improve and to refocus the ‘wheels’, to address and to respond to the challenges of our present time in Kenya in a more practical way.

This chapter, therefore, will take a critical analysis of the pastoral implications for a theology of mission and evangelization in Kenya in the post-colonial context and present some principles to guide it. It will be divided into two sections. In the first section, I will analyse the pastoral implications for the theology of mission and evangelization with the help of Emmanuel Y. Lartey’s seven essential principles: healing, guiding, sustaining, reconciling, empowering, liberating and nurturing.\(^{406}\) This will then help us have an idea of how a

\(^{404}\) Ibid., p.191.
theology of mission and evangelization of the church can best help Kenyans today address the many social challenges.

In the second section, I will draw from certain aspects from the work of Bernard Lonergan, Pope Francis, and Cyril Orji. I will then complement this material by my own pastoral experience in Kenya, present and propose two other aspects of theology of mission and evangelization: *authentic witnessing* and *effective collaboration*. It is these two aspects that I believe need to be encouraged and strengthened in the theology of mission and evangelization in Kenya today.

4.1 Seven essential principles of theology of mission and evangelization

Lartey is an African scholar of theology of mission and ordained minister of the Methodist Church. He was born in Ghana, West Africa and has worked in Africa, Britain and United States, where he is currently a professor in pastoral theology, care and counseling as well as a church minister. He recognizes that theology of mission needs not only emphasize the diverse contexts and cultures, but also “the flow between such contexts which necessitate a critical awareness, conversation, and borrowing from sources which have hitherto been resolutely ‘other’”\(^{407}\). As he aptly puts it:

One of the remarkable aspects of the current world situation is that our age is spoken of as one to be understood in terms of transcending or going beyond. We live in the ‘after-time’, the ‘beyond’ time – the time following, contingent upon critical of and reflective on realities which are no longer as clear and true as they were before. We

live in post-modern, post-colonial, post-Christian, post-human and perhaps also ‘post-pastoral’ times.\textsuperscript{408}

He recognizes that our present time is that which is marked by “rapid transformation and uncertain flux in social, economic, cultural, religious, political and personal spheres.”\textsuperscript{409}

Lartey reminds us, “Where human communities perceive themselves to be summoned and inspired by the love of God and neighbor to act in the care of persons, there pastoral theology finds a particular interest. Pastoral theology operates around and studies the central themes of faith-inspired care and care-inspired faith.”\textsuperscript{410} As pastoral agents, we are invited to reflect on the healing, sustaining, guiding, reconciling, empowering, liberating and nurturing of our brothers and sisters who are suffering, especially the poor and marginalized in our society.

Lartey continues:

Religion and views of transcendence are pervasive and resilient in all of African life. There is little or no separation between a “sacred” and “secular” realm. All life is both sacred and secular. These beliefs are expressed most clearly in rituals that are meant to foster and enhance harmonious relations between people and the unseen world of the ancestors, gods and spirits. Ceremonies, rites and rituals emphasize the importance of participation, symbolic representation and celebration.\textsuperscript{411}

Assuming that this argument is true for Africa, Kenya included, we should therefore be able and ready to extend our loving and compassionate hands to our brothers and sisters who are poor and marginalized in Kenya.

\textsuperscript{409} Ibid., p.1.
\textsuperscript{410} Emmanuel Lartey, \emph{Pastoral Theology in an Intercultural World}, (Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 2006), p.28.
\textsuperscript{411} Ibid., p.63.
Lartey develops the idea of the essential principles of theology of mission from Seward Hiltner, who first identified the functions of pastoral theology as healing, guiding and sustaining.⁴¹² He also examined the works of William A. Clebsch and Charles R. Jaekle, who described a fourth essential principle as reconciliation.⁴¹³ He looked also at the work of Howard J. Clinebell, who suggested that another essential principle is nurturing.⁴¹⁴ Examining these materials, Lartey developed and presented in his book *In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, the seven principles healing, guiding, sustaining, reconciling, empowering, liberating and nurturing as the essential elements of the theology of mission.⁴¹⁵ I examine and elaborate upon these seven elements, which are also referred to as the essential functions of pastoral theology. As an African theologian, as they were developed within his own context, they are pertinent to an application in the Kenyan context.

### 4.1.1 Healing

Reminding us of the task and mission of the early Christian church in Africa, Berinyuu writes, “The Christian church as part of its ministry of healing brought hospitals to many parts of Africa. This ministry of healing by way of hospitals and clinics in rural areas, has tremendously reduced infant mortality, and has also increased the average span of life of most Africans.”⁴¹⁶ In fact, from its very beginning in Africa, the Christian church had and has always been in the forefront in matters of health, healing the sick and in matters of justice and peace.

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⁴¹⁵ Lartey, *In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, pp.61-68.
Certainly we read in Gospels how Jesus healed many individuals who were suffering from different diseases. Healing is a restoration of person(s) to some level of wholeness or wellness. In the healing process, a sick individual is being aided by another in finding wellness or wholeness from their brokenness, injury and/or disease. Healing may be in the realms of the physical, social and psychological orders.

As Lartey puts it, “The pastoral healer listens deeply to the sighs and groans of human distress. The healer listens for, and is sensitive and open to, the transcendent in whatever form or shape, knowing that transcendence mediates love, support and help.” Indeed, Jesus listened deeply to the cries of suffering individuals of his time. An example is the healing of a woman who had suffered from a haemorrhage for twelve years (Mark 5:25-30).

Jesus Christ’s public ministry as portrayed in the Gospels was mainly based on the healing of those who were suffering, both as an individual and as community. We know that the process of healing is a restoration of a person to some level of wholeness, which also attempts to achieve some level of spiritual insight and well-being.

Senior and Stuhmueller argue, “All of the Gospels portray Jesus as a person possessing extraordinary personal authority and charism, one who in his encounters with the sick had the ability to heal. He heals physical ailments such as fevers (Mk. 1:30-31), gives sight to the blind (Mk. 8:22-26), restores paralyzed and withered limbs (Mk. 3:1-6), cleanses skin diseases (Lk. 5:12-26). He releases victims from a large spectrum of psychological afflictions (cf. the summary of Mt. 4:23-25.”

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417 Lartey, In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling, p.63.
Healing is aiding a person to find wellness or wholeness from brokenness, injury or disease in a physical, spiritual and/or emotional sense. Nelson says that “just because religion is beneficial, it cannot be concluded that everyone will benefit from it. Its effects also appear to be limited. Research shows that its greater effect is to help prevent disease rather than heal, although it is possible that things like prayer might also have healing functions in certain specific situations.”

Similarly, pastoral agents in Kenya today, can focus on being healers of the many divisions that exist in society, particularly the tribal and religious differences. They must learn ways of how to bring about unity among different ethnic communities who are, more often than not, divided along political parties’ affiliations. They should provide all individuals with a safe and free space that allows them to express religious issues and/or any other issue, which may be affecting their wellbeing and healing process. More focus should also be placed on families who are experiencing separation or divorce issues and on the church’s stance on birth control, especially on the use of condoms and other contraceptives versus the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

The church in Kenya has always been in the forefront in the fight against physical diseases (such as malaria, tuberculosis, pneumonia, cholera etc.). There are a number of church run health-care institutions all over the country where many sick people seek treatments. From mobile clinics to dispensaries and well established hospitals like St. Camillus Karungu (Migori), Tabaka Mission Hospital (Kisii), St. Mary’s Hospital

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420 Maurice Michael Cardinal Otunga, for example, led Christian faithful and Muslim leaders in the burning of condoms at Uhuru Park, in Nairobi in 1996, as a clear message that the Church is opposed to condom use. The Catholic Church in Kenya also ruled out the use of artificial methods of controlling fertility such as sterilization and the use of contraceptives. See Millicent Osaso, *The Life and Times of Maurice Michael Cardinal Otunga*, pp.157-187.
(Elementaita - Nakuru), Mater Hospital (Nairobi), Kijabe Mission Hospital (Limuru), Gendia Mission Hospitl (Homa-Bay) and many others.

4.1.2 Guiding

Lartey argues, “Guiding is about enabling people through faith and love, to draw out that which lies within them.”421 To guide is “to do with ‘leading people to the threshold of their mind.’ By ‘mind’ here the reference is not exclusively rationalist. Instead it speaks of the totality of our experience of being.”422

Jesus as a guiding leader took it as his sole responsibility to assist troubled individuals in their discernment and decision making expressed in thought and/or action. We see this portrayed in the encounters between Jesus and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10); Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3:1-21); and Jesus and the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-42). In many cases, these involved choices or decisions affecting both the present and future circumstances of those whom Jesus engaged. As Lartey argues, “We need to be drawn out to the very limits of our capacity if we are to experience life in its kaleidoscopic splendor and mystery.”423

Jesus’ pastoral leadership was inspirational and transformative. At the very beginning, with the call of the first disciples (Luke 5:1-11), we see how Jesus inspired them to the point that they left everything and followed him. Even John Baptist’s own disciples, having heard John say, “Behold, the lamb of God...”, followed Jesus and became his disciples, and they in turn brought others to Jesus (John 1:35-51). In fact, almost all the individuals who had an encounter with Jesus had this transformative aspect of Jesus’

421 Lartey, In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling, p.65.
422 Ibid., p.65.
423 Ibid., p.65.
leadership in their own lives, and their lives were never the same again. In short, they were physically and spiritually transformed.

Today than never before, it remains the responsibility of a pastoral agent in Kenya to be a model and a guide to the people, especially to the youth and to assist them in their process of discernment and development. There are a number of challenges that are facing young people in our present time. Today’s youth are in dire need of guidance, as well as to be treated with love and compassion. They need to be listened to and to be helped in their career choices in order for them to be more active and productive in society. While guiding, culture and social contexts, and specific individual needs, deserve respect. Pastoral agents should guide in such a way that the person is still left to play an active role in making informed decisions about some significant choices in his or her life.

Fr. Alex Zanotelli (born August 26, 1938), a member of the Comboni Missionaries who works in Korogocho slum in Nairobi, Kenya is a living model from whom to learn. As an Italian Catholic priest, Zanotelli has decided to live among the poor people in the slum and to share with them not only the spiritual word but has also become as a mentor and a guiding figure for the many young people living in the slum. He has initiated programs that help educate young people and offer them opportunities for better living conditions. As a believer in social harmony and equality, he has also been in the forefront championing human rights and the dignity of the poor particularly those living in desperate situations.\textsuperscript{424}

\textbf{4.1.3 Sustaining}

Encouraging people to endure, especially when they are battling life-threatening illnesses, such as cancer or HIV/AIDS and when they are facing hunger, poverty, and physical disability, can prove to be a very daunting task at times. As Swinton argues, “Life is

not fully comprehensible, controllable, or fixable. We constantly find ourselves as individuals, as communities, as nations, forced to live with unanswered questions. Where is God when it hurts?\footnote{Swinton, \textit{Raging with Compassion: Pastoral Responses to the Problem of Evil}, p.3.}

Lartey affirms:

Sustaining goes beyond resignation. It is not about maintaining a stoic silence or a cynical resolution. To be sustained is to find strength and support, from within and without, to cope adequately with what cannot be changed. It has to do with a transformation of a situation by traversing through it, and is more to do with attitude than escape.\footnote{Lartey, \textit{In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling}, p.64.}

It is in times of disasters and tragedies such as the death of a loved one that people need to be encouraged and sustained. One gives support in such difficult situations and times, “not by promising a favorable outcome or better times, but by enabling and facilitating coping mechanisms within\footnote{Ibid., p.64.} and without the affected individuals.

At the Last Supper, Jesus demonstrated to his disciples an example of a servant-oriented leadership. When Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, Jesus said to them, “You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. If I, Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you must wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.” (John 13:12-15). Again Jesus said to his disciples, “No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends...” (John 15:13). And again he said to them, “Among the Gentiles it is the King who lords it over them... With you this must not happen. No, the greatest among you must behave as if he were the youngest, the leader as if he were the servant of all...” (Luke 22:24-27). Jesus sustained his disciples even to the very end of his earthly life and ignited within them the will to continue.

\footnote{Swinton, \textit{Raging with Compassion: Pastoral Responses to the Problem of Evil}, p.3.}
\footnote{Lartey, \textit{In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling}, p.64.}
\footnote{Ibid., p.64.}
Likewise, pastoral agents in Kenya today, must be men and women who sustain the hope of those who are suffering, particularly people living with HIV, widows, orphans, the poor and the marginalized. Having the capacity to endure enables people to build loving and long lasting relationships and support groups, which can be spiritual, social, economical and emotional. Pastoral agents should become visible signs of hope to the hopeless in society.

A good example of this is the Kenya AIDS Relief Program (KARP). This is a program that is funded by the American government in conjunction with the Catholic Church in Kenya. It is run in most of the Catholic hospitals in Kenya like the St. Camillus Mission Hospital in Karungu, Migori-Kenya. The program supports people living with HIV/AIDS. They come together to share their stories, to care for and support one another emotionally, socially and psychologically.

4.1.4 Reconciling

Lartey states, “Reconciling involves bringing together again parties that have become estranged or alienated from each other. These parties may range from individuals through small groups to nations. The quest, which is clearly a pastoral one, is for harmonious relations between people.” In reconciling, one is seeking to re-establish or to restore a broken relationship either with another person, a group of people and/or with God.

In his reconciling leadership, Jesus was seeking to bring unity, peace, love and harmony to different individuals. Jesus would often say, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace” (Luke 7:36-50). The success of reconciliation “lies in the active and creative search for means to bring people together in ways that are respectful of their differences.”

Quoting de Gruchy on reconciliation, Michael states:

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428 Ibid., p.65.
429 Ibid., p.65.
Reconciliation is not an historical ideal or an academic theory but a tangible experience of living together in community. Theologically speaking, this refers to the sacramental embodiment of the new humanity. Understood in this way, the Church is an agent of reconciliation, representing its embodiment in history. But the Church is by no means a paragon of reconciliation, quite the contrary is too often true. So the relationship between the Church as empirical reality and its struggle to be true to its sacramental nature is of critical importance. This leads us to a consideration of the place of the sacraments of reconciliation in the life of the Church: baptism, Eucharist and confession or penance.\textsuperscript{430}

For Michael, the Church in modern times, “is the embodiment of reconciliation on earth, and through its sacraments, the church must seek to practice arts of reconciliation.”\textsuperscript{431}

Senior and Stuhmuller argue that “in the authentic Jesus material of the Gospel is an emphasis on reconciliation and forgiveness at the expense of judgment or retribution.”\textsuperscript{432} They argue that the God of the coming Kingdom as presented by Jesus is “a God who forgives gratuitously; therefore the one who accepts this God must transform his or her life accordingly.”\textsuperscript{433}

Pastoral agents in Kenya today, must be signs of God’s forgiveness to the people. They must become reconcilers of the many broken relationships, especially after the experiences of the 2007/2008 post-election violence. They must become initiators and facilitators of genuine reconciliation and forgiveness among different ethnic communities and families.

Former Speaker of the National Assembly of Kenya, Mr. Kenneth Otiato Marende (born January 7, 1956), is a good model for reconciling different groups. He was elected Speaker of the National Assembly at a time when Kenya was going through post-election

\textsuperscript{431} Ibid., p.90.
\textsuperscript{433} Ibid., p.148.
violence of the year 2007/2008. When two rival political parties (PNU and ODM) were forced to form a coalition government, Marende as a Christian played a major role of bringing the two to pass a number of bills that helped in reconciling the country and bringing not only peace but making sure the two parties worked together for the good of the people of Kenya.

4.1.5 Empowering

Lartey asserts that in empowerment one puts more emphasis “on the fact that there is something good, something of worth and values within human persons as they presently are.”\(^{434}\) He argues that the task of the pastoral agent is therefore that of “drawing out and building up of unnoticed strengths and resources within and around people and communities.”\(^{435}\)

At the time of Jesus, many who were poor (widows, orphans), sinners (tax collectors, prostitutes, lepers), women and children often found themselves helpless, powerless and hopeless. In a number of instances in the Gospels we see Jesus encouraging, giving support and restoring the hope of those marginalized by society. Jesus indeed empowered many to regain their self-esteem and self-worth as in the case of divorce in Matthew 19:1-9, the children in Matthew 19:13-15, and the tax collector in the temple in Luke 18:9-14.

Lartey asserts:

...marginalized groups and persons have endured years of enforced and internalized helplessness. There are, for many, real obstacles which result from what psychologist Ernst Seligman describes as ‘learned helplessness.’ As I have indicated, this may result from continued experiences of failing to achieve desired results in spite of pursuing the recommended paths – the oft-cited ‘glass ceiling effect.’ It may also be related to deficiencies in confidence, self-esteem and other personal characteristics required for effective action in the social realm.\(^{436}\)

\(^{434}\) Lartey, In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling, p.58.
\(^{435}\) Ibid., p.58.
\(^{436}\) Ibid., p.68.
One example in Kenya, as I have earlier mentioned, is the high number of college and university graduates with no jobs. While the popular belief and dream of many young people has been that education is the key to all success that today proves not to be the case. Another Kenyan example is the community stigma experienced by the many people living with HIV/AIDS. These are some groups that need to be empowered.

As Lartey explains, “Empowering takes various forms. It is seen most often as a communal affair. Some of the ways in which it expresses itself include: working together with people to attempt to restore community spirit; trying to make governments more responsive to people’s needs; encouraging groups based on one or other identity issues...” It is in carrying out acts such as these that we can bring empowerment to the poor and the marginalized men and women of our society today.

Similarly, pastoral agents in Kenya should empower the poor and marginalized in society, especially children (girls) and women. They should be able to undertake some activities that can help the widows and the orphans to find a way to provide for their basic needs like food, shelter and clothing. A pastoral agent needs to be an initiator and a driver of spiritual, as well as, social, economic and political transformation in society.

The evangelization groups initiated and supported by the Passionist Missionaries in Kenya particularly in their parishes of Tonga, Karungu and Kadem are visible signs of how people can be motivated to improve not only their spiritual wellbeing but also their social, economic and political participation. Through the Golgotha Center for Evangelization in Karungu, the Passionists are able to train and prepare groups of lay people who in turn are able to reach out to others in their respective parishes.
4.1.6 Liberating

As Lartey points out, “Liberating involves the intricate and delicate process of raising awareness about the sources and causes of oppression and domination in society.” He observes that dominant groups in society may suppress the views and expressions of other groups either through coercion, threat or intimidation. Liberating “entails the critical and analytic examining of both personal and structural sources, causes and developments in the establishment of current situations of inequality.”

Jesus stood out in his pastoral leadership as a voice to the voiceless and the marginalized in society. He condemned the hypocrisy and greed of the Scribes and the Pharisees (Matthew 23:13-32). Magesa and Nthamburi assert that the entire life and preaching of Jesus were aimed at rejecting and breaking down the pyramidal social structure of his day.

A structure of pastoral leadership, whereby those at the top are deemed to be knowledgeable and have all the power, should not be the yardstick for measuring or addressing the issues of liberating. As Lartey suggests, “In addition to awareness raising, there is the important task of considering options available for change. There is then the need for choice and action followed by reflection and evaluation.” And Jesus did indeed raise the awareness about the causes and sources of oppression and domination during his time and sought to liberate the society of those evils.

Pastoral agents in Kenya today, must be on the forefront in the fight against female genital mutilation and early marriages of young girls who drop out of school. They should be

437 Ibid., p.67.
438 Ibid., p.67.
439 Ibid., p.67.
440 Magesa and Nthamburi, Democracy and Reconciliation: A Challenge for African Christianity, p.120.
441 Lartey, In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling, p.67.
ready to stand against the oppressive cultural norms that deny the widows and orphans of their rights. They should also be ready to reject the exploitative and oppressive government and ecclesial structures that deny, especially the employees decent and liveable wage. Like the biblical prophets, they are also called to articulate God’s plans, designs and dreams for the people. They should therefore, be able to ‘critique’ wisely whatever is presumed to pose a threat to faith, to human life, to the flourishing of human existence.

In Kenya, the church has been a major player in education particularly in the promotion of girl-child education (i.e. by encouraging parents to give equal education opportunities to girls and building schools for girls). There are various church institutions all over the country most of which are run by the Catholic nuns. These make up some of the best schools in the country. Poverty, ignorance and disease are like a vicious circle that the church in Kenya struggles liberate the people from the various challenges the people face.

4.1.7 Nurturing

Lartey argues that pastoral agents are called to be facilitators of growth. “This is done through a process of nurture that combines caring with confrontation.”[^442] To nurture is to feed, nourish, educate, and to bring and train up an individual. Nurturing, Lartey comments, “is an ongoing process that is sensitive to the crucial ‘life-stages’ through which we go. These stages are times of crisis and opportunity. They require us to leave past attitudes and limitations behind and to embrace new, potentially threatening, possibilities.”[^443]

When Jesus had finished breakfast with his disciples after his resurrection, he said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these? He said to him, ‘Yes Lord; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ A second time he said

[^442]: Ibid., p.66.
[^443]: Ibid., p.66.
to him, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ He said to him, ‘Yes Lord; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Tend my sheep.’ He said to him the third time, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ And he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep.’” (John 21:15-17).

It is evident from this encounter between Jesus and Peter that growth is facilitated and occurs “in a relationship to the extent to which caring, that is ‘acceptance, affirmation, grace and love’ is experienced with confrontation (openness and honesty about those aspects of reality that are being ignored or denied).”\textsuperscript{444}

While quoting Howard Clinebell, Lartey writes that the goal of a pastoral agent is to facilitate “...the maximum development of a person’s potentialities, at each life stage, in ways that contribute to the growth of others as well and to the development of a society in which all persons will have an opportunity to use their full potentialities.”\textsuperscript{445} This includes the attempt to nurture African theology by such pioneers like John S. Mbiti, Emmanuel Lartey, David Bosch, Cyril Orji, Charles Nyamiti, Laurenti Magesa etc.

Certainly, these seven principles of theology of mission and evangelization are like foundation pillars of a building that pastoral agents in Kenya today need in order to practice authentically their faith and to respond adequately to the challenges of our present time. It is indeed these principles that will not only make the pastoral agent relevant, but they also bring about cohesion and healing of the many wounds that Kenyans are encountering.

\textsuperscript{444} Ibid., p.66.
\textsuperscript{445} Ibid., p.66.
4.2 Two other aspects of theology of mission and evangelization

4.2.1 Authentic Witnessing

Drawing from Lonergan, Pope Francis, Orji and from my own pastoral experience in Kenya, I will now present and propose two other aspects of mission and evangelization that I deem helpful to pastoral ministers and agents who are involved in the process of evangelization in Kenya particularly those in religious formation. Concerning the formation of religious personnel in Africa, John Paul II explains, “Formation must aim to provide Christians not only with technical expertise in passing on more clearly the content of the faith but also with a profound personal conviction enabling them to bear effective witness to it in daily life.”\footnote{John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, \textit{Ecclesia in Africa}, \#77, p.60.} The Pope affirms, “Techniques of evangelization are good, but even the most advanced ones could not replace the gentle action of the Spirit. Even the most thorough preparation of the evangelizer has no effect without the Holy Spirit...”\footnote{Ibid., p.61.} He continues, “Genuine witness by believers is essential to the authentic proclamation of the faith in Africa today. In particular they should show the witness of sincere mutual love.”\footnote{Ibid., p.61.}

Pope Francis, on the other hand, emphasizes that we become fully human “when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being.”\footnote{Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation, \textit{Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel}, p.4.} It is the authentic human person who finds the source and inspiration of his or her efforts at evangelization.

The fulfillment of our human yearnings cannot be found in a world that is pervaded by consumerism. “Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and

concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God’s voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt and the desire to do good fades.  

In this sense, mission and evangelization call pastoral agents into a renewed encounter with God’s love, a love that restores meaning in their lives. That is the call to be authentic witnesses in our world today.

Pope Francis maintains that the heart of the Gospel message will always remain the same, that is, “the God who revealed his immense love in the crucified and risen Christ.” However, the riches of the Gospel message are inexhaustible. The message is ever fresh in different contexts and periods of our lives and renews and refreshes all believers, lukewarm and non-practicing alike. It renews individuals and communities and it never grows old.

The pope further emphasizes that the “joy of evangelizing always arises from grateful remembrance: it is a grace which we constantly need to implore.” Those who have gone before us in faith are our witnesses. Just as Jesus Christ left for the apostles and the Church the sacrament of the Eucharist as a memorial of his paschal mystery, so also we should remember those pastoral agents who brought first the Gospel message to us. “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God” (Hebrews 13:7). Mission and evangelization are a call not to forget the contributions of those men and women who have gone before us marked with a sign of faith but rather, as believers, to remember, for a “believer is essentially one who remembers.”

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450 Ibid., p.1.
451 Ibid., p.6.
452 Ibid., p.6.
453 Ibid., p.7.
In his book *Method in Theology*, Lonergan stresses that “the basic idea of the method we are trying to develop takes its stand on discovering what human authenticity is and showing how to appeal to it. It is not an infallible method, for men easily are inauthentic, but it is a powerful method, for man’s deepest need and most prized achievement is authenticity.”\(^{454}\) Lonergan believed that the human person is his or her true self in as much as he or she transcends.

To transcend means to grow, to develop, to progress in life. Progressing is not “a single improvement but a continuous flow of improvements. Individuals, societies, or cultures do not advance in straight lines; development is always a precarious and achievement fragile.”\(^{455}\) Joseph O. Ogbonnaya writes that for Lonergan, the issue of social progress, development and transformation:

...involves a movement from the theoretical aspect of the ‘detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know that grasps intelligently and affirms reasonably not only the facts of the universe of being but also to its practical possibilities’ actuated in self-consistent knowing and doing.\(^{456}\)

Drawing from this, it becomes clear, that for Lonergan, progress and decline in development are virtually dependent upon the actions of the human person. The human subject is the sole determinant of his or her progress and decline through his or her actions.

According to Lonergan, human authenticity involves one’s capacity or ability to know the truth and to do that which is good. It relies on the subject to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible.\(^{457}\) Human authenticity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity that

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\(^{455}\) Orji, *Ethnic and Religious Conflict in Africa: An analysis of bias, decline, and conversion based on the works of Bernard Lonergan*, p.90.


intends the truly good. That specific operational act of self-transcendence gives rise to further questions of value, which then requires one in turn to make decisions that are valuable. By doing so, he or she becomes different in the ways of his or her thinking and acting. The human person becomes alienated from his or her true self inasmuch as he or she refuses self-transcendence.

Authenticity, like conversion, is dynamic and requires one’s sustained effort in order to achieve truth. To appropriate a truth is “to make it one’s own, an appropriation that takes place not only cognitionally, but volitionally and sensitively as well. In all its aspects, this appropriation is existential and summons the subject to truthful knowing and doing.” Human authenticity invites one to be open and obedient to a reality which is beyond oneself.

Conversion is the way to self-transcendence. It is a journey of becoming an authentic human being; a being who is able to communicate and dialogue with other members of the human community with love, humility, respect and openness. It offers us an opportunity of being-in-love with one another and with God. For Lonergan, conversion involves a new understanding of oneself, others and God. Conversion therefore begins with our recognition of the basic patterns of operation: experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding. This is what leads to a transformation of the human subject and his or her world.

On the process of conversion Lonergan writes:

Normally it is a prolonged process though its explicit acknowledgment may be concentrated in a few momentous judgments and decisions. Still it is not just a development or even a series of developments. Rather it is a resultant change of course and direction. It is as if one’s eyes were opened and one’s former world faded and fell away. There emerges something new that fructifies in inter-locking,

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458 Teevan, Lonergan, Hermeneutics and Theological Method, p.121.
459 Lonergan, Method in Theology, pp.13-16.
cumulative sequences of developments on all levels and in all departments of human living.\footnote{460}{Ibid., p.130.}

Conversion, therefore, is basic to Christian living.\footnote{461}{Ibid., p.130. See also Lonergan, \textit{A Second Collection}, pp.65-66. “Fundamental to religious living is conversion... It is not merely a change or even a development; rather it is a radical transformation on which follows, on all levels of living, an interlocked series of changes and developments.”} It involves a new understanding of oneself because, “conversion is taking off the old person and putting on the new, and this is not just an expansion of a prior mode but the beginning of a new mode of living.”\footnote{462}{Mary Kay Kinberger, \textit{Lonergan on Conversion: Application for religious formation}, (New York: P. Lang, 1992), p.53.}

Lonergan argues that conversion is existential, that it is intensely personal, and utterly intimate. However, it is not so private as to be solitary. Conversion may occur to many people, who thereupon can form a community in order “to sustain one another in their self-transformation and to help one another in working out the implications and fulfilling the promise of their new life.”\footnote{463}{Lonergan, \textit{Method in Theology}, p.130.} As an ongoing process, conversion continuously invites us to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, and loving.

In the process of self-transcendence, we come to realise that most of our understanding is what others before us have understood. Indeed, it humbles us to realise that little of our understanding is purely original. Most of our judgments rest on the judgment of others who have gone before us. Lonergan argued that this is what brings us to matters of belief.\footnote{464}{Ibid., p.41.} For we believe that the understanding and the judgment of those who have gone before us are true or correct. Thus, most of our social, cultural and religious traditions are largely matters of belief.
However, we do not learn from others solely by repeating their operations but also by being attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible in such operations.\textsuperscript{465} This explains why in any given human progress or development, there is always the struggle to live out the meaning of one’s being; there is an urge to be more perfect. The struggle for authentic subjectivity is not always easy. Failures and disappointments are ever-present possibilities along the process of self-transcendence. There occur feelings of having achieved and not perfectly achieved, of the already and the not-yet at the same time. But one’s hope is always to improve, to be better and to achieve the best.

Lonergan recognizes that the objectivity of authentic subjectivity is fragile. In particular, he calls attention to the many varieties of bias, i.e., blocks to or distortions of growth, that can thwart authentic human knowing and doing.\textsuperscript{466} We resist change in our lives because we are blinded by different forms of bias.

Bias represents our turning away from the path of self-transcendence and refusal to understand. It is a negative aspect within us - that does not prevent us completely from our unrestricted desire to know; rather it limits the horizon of our knowing and doing. It limits our ability to ask intelligible and reasonable questions about the reality.

Dadosky argues that “bias prevents human beings from authentic understanding and doing.”\textsuperscript{467} Bias makes the human person “prone to behave in a manner that is not only detrimental to himself or herself, but also to his or her people.”\textsuperscript{468} To use Lonergan’s words,

\textsuperscript{465} Ibid., p.44.
\textsuperscript{466} Ibid., p.231.
\textsuperscript{468} Orji, Ethnic and Religious Conflict in Africa: An analysis of bias, decline, and conversion based on the works of Bernard Lonergan, p.53.
bias make us inattentive, unintelligent, unreasonable, irresponsible and unloving to things that go on within and around us.

Bias clouds our eyes and makes us see with blurred vision. Orji argues that all human persons are prone to acts of prejudice; “nearly everyone is an unconscious racist, or a semi-conscious, or even a conscious racist,” and sometimes one may be oblivious of that fact, possibly because “prejudicial acts are sometimes diagnosed under noble principles.” It is only through the process of an ongoing conversion that one can be helped to root out and overcome bias. Lonergan distinguished specifically four types of bias: dramatic, individual, group and general.

Dramatic bias arises from the psychological wounds that we might have encountered along our path of growth due to our inter-subjective nature. Painful wounds that we might have encountered in the past in our relations with others can become blockages for us. They can prevent us from being attentive to particular situations. These past undesirable feelings and memories can easily arouse fear, anxiety, rage and threats in us toward an object. Dramatic bias can make us numb or freeze our feelings but can also make us aggressive since the trauma is so emotionally sensitive that we always avoid facing up to it.

Individual bias comes from one’s inner desires for self-gratification or self-fulfillment at the expense of the wider community. It arouses within the person the need to relate to an object in terms of individual gain or personal benefits. The greatest urge for individual bias is to fulfill the ego, the self.

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469 Ibid., p.54.
470 Ibid., p.55.
Group bias, as the name suggests, relates to the desire to favour one particular group or my own group over another group. It refers to the privilege that an individual or group of individuals give(s) to one particular class, family, race, or ethnic group over another. Dadosky argues that “when group bias interpenetrates with dramatic bias, it can erupt into persistent conflict of violence and wars between groups.”\(^{471}\) This is because group bias “only seeks to protect the interest of a particular ethnic, racial, or social group and excludes the interest of other groups”\(^{472}\) within a society.

General bias, on the other hand, is the “bias of common sense, which restricts intellectual pursuits to the ‘practical’. It does not comprehend the adage that ‘good theory is practical’ but, rather, holds that theory is an impediment to practicality.”\(^{473}\) General bias avoids questions that may lead to theory and holds onto the level of experience as the reality. Although general bias does not completely deny or refuse theory, theory is used only as much as it applies or supports the practical.

With regard to general bias, Dadosky proposes a possible type of bias, which he calls ‘intellectualist bias’. According to Dadosky, intellectualist bias represents the opposite of general bias. It is the bias “that prefers the world of theory over the world of common sense.”\(^{474}\) Dadosky argues that this type of bias may lead one to be a theorist who is disconnected from the practical, possible ways of our daily life and who persistently

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\(^{472}\) Orji, *Ethnic and Religious Conflict in Africa: An analysis of bias, decline, and conversion based on the works of Bernard Lonergan*, p.75.


\(^{474}\) Ibid., p.257.
continues to hold that what is real is the world of theory or ideas. This can be of great danger, too, for it disconnects the world of common sense from theory.

Thus, authentic witnessing, like conversion, which is an about-face process, enables an individual to overcome bias. It is through the ongoing process of conversion that human authenticity and freedom is achieved. Lonergan insists that the experience of being in love with God is a human experience. That is to say that it has similarities to human love.

Let me summarize and clarify here the points that I am trying to put across with all these arguments: the first is that authentic witnessing is a continuous process of conversion; the second is that it is the capacity to overcome all sorts of bias; and the third is that it is love in essence. God’s gift of love is God’s grace offered to all people. It is the primary datum given by God to all people of every age. God’s love is manifested in one way or another in different religions of the world.

Lonergan argues, “When the love is God’s love flooding our hearts... there is added apprehension of transcendent value. This apprehension consists in the experienced fulfillment of our unrestricted thrust to self-transcendence, in our actuated orientation towards the mystery of love and awe.” 475 The goal of the human being’s unrestricted desire to know the truth is to love. And religious love is being in love with God and with fellow human beings.

Love is the capacity to share oneself openly with the other person. It is quite natural to be afraid of opening oneself to others and to God. It is not easy to be transparent and honest to others and to God. In love, one must become vulnerable as one is called to share

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oneself with others. Nobody wants to be vulnerable, and yet, we all have to become
vulnerable if we are to love and to be loved. If we do not want to become vulnerable in love,
then obviously we become isolated individuals.

From a religious point of view, I can say that we will reject love if we don’t want to
become vulnerable. A perfect model for us is Jesus Christ who made himself completely
vulnerable: “We see in Jesus one who is now crowned with glory and splendour because he
submitted to death; by God’s grace he had to experience death for all mankind” (Hebrews
2:9). We cannot understand others if we do not risk becoming vulnerable. Becoming
vulnerable is the beginning of understanding others. It is the beginning of that sense of
wonder of our unrestricted desire to know the truth, the moment when things begin to
happen.

Religious love enables us to discover who we are. It makes us realize that being in
love with God is a relationship that goes beyond the self. It makes us reach out to the other,
to reach out to our neighbours with love and compassion. Religious love helps us to discover
that we are created in the image and likeness of God, and it energizes us to work for the good
of all human beings.

As Pope Francis argues, “The Church has realised that the need to heed this plea is
itself born of the liberating action of grace within each of us, and thus it is not a question of a
mission reserved for the few.”476 Thus, religious love is a call for all humanity to “love your
neighbours as yourself” (Mark 12:31). It opens us up to hear the cry of the other, especially
“the poorest peoples of the earth. Religious loves grants us peace in society since ‘peace is

founded not only on respect for human rights, but also on respect for the rights of people’s...
landless, homeless, lacking food and healthcare.” 477 Religious love is the truth that human
beings seek, and seeking ‘truth’ always involves a going-out. It is the capacity to open up
oneself and the ability to enter a new reality, which is the other. Seeking what is true is
simply receiving love or reaching out with love to the other. It is opening one’s eyes to the
new reality around him or her.

Pope Francis presents to us a very significant argument on the practicality of religious
truth when he says, “What kind of love would not feel the need to speak of the beloved, to
point him out, to make him known? If we do not feel an intense desire to share this love, we
need to pray insistently that he will once more touch our hearts.” 478 A person who is
continuously going through a process of religious conversion cannot fail to communicate the
truth that he or she has come to know about the beloved. And the life of the one who is
converted manifests the truth unto the world by his or her words and actions.

Lonergan argues that for one to communicate the truth, he or she must have come to
know it and to live it. A person “cannot lead another to share what oneself does not
possess.” 479 He or she must first be light in order to lead others to the same light. Again, one
does not only need to possess the light, he or she must actually manifest the radiance of that
light. I may have a great knowledge, but if it remains as just a theory, then it might be of no
use either to me or to the other. Knowing as a cognitive faulty is one thing, and doing as an
act of that knowledge is another.

477 Ibid., p.96-97.
478 Ibid., p.127.
479 Lonergan, Method in Theology, p.362.
Lonergan further argues that communication of religious truth is cognitive, constitutive and effective. “It is cognitive inasmuch as the message tells what is to be believed. It is constitutive inasmuch as it crystallizes the hidden inner gift of love into overt Christian fellowship. It is effective inasmuch as it directs the Christian service to human society...” Pope Francis illuminates this point when he asserts, “Every authentic experience of truth and goodness seeks by its very nature to grow within us, and any person who has experienced a profound liberation becomes more sensitive to the needs of others.” Religious truth, like new insight, encourages, motivates, nourishes and gives meaning to our individual and communal activity. Religious truth converts or changes our hearts to carry out the works of charity with an immeasurable love.

When one begins to discover that one has to decide for oneself what one is to do with oneself and one’s life, then commitment begins. Such human authentic existence is commonly realized when one falls in love, which is an experience of unrestricted loving. The act of falling in love transforms the person who is in love. Conversion, like falling in love, has a direct impact on life, “where the whole focus of the person shifts to the one who is loved.”

Authentic Christian witnessing is learning to listen and to be attentive to what the Holy Spirit is saying if we have to lead the way towards the reign of the Kingdom of God. It recognizes that God’s gift of love is present to every human person and that we are created in the image and likeness of God. It demands a deep reflection on one’s own daily experiences,

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480 Ibid., p.362.
482 O’Callaghan, Unity in Theology: Lonergan’s Framework for Theology in its New Context, p.239.
Christian traditions and cultural values while at the same time opening one to the presence of the mystery of the Holy Spirit.

A Christian witness that resigns itself to fate and does not continuously reflect on the personal experiences, Christian traditions and cultural values within which one finds him or herself will certainly not be an instrument of mission and evangelization and of God’s salvation to the world today. Authentic witnessing continuously calls for openness and even for adaption of new structures and models of pastoral leadership that will bring meaning and life to people in society. This indeed, I strongly believe, is the desire and longing for many Christians in Kenya today. It is the desire to see models and become also authentic witnesses to the Gospel message.

4.2.2 Effective collaboration

The image of the Church as the people of God calls forth a renewed spirit of leadership within the Church that promotes full and active participation of members of the church. It calls for a paradigm shift from a sole-proprietor or clergy-controlled model of leadership to a cooperative model that involves both the clergy and laity in ecclesial ministries. Authentic pastoral leadership should always aim at collaboration. As Orji affirms, “Real inculturation, therefore, cannot be content with half measures, like the liturgical adaptations... What about real inculturation in areas like liturgical rite, liturgical calendar, church ministries, lay ministries, church leadership and authority, appointment of bishops...”

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484 Orji, *A Semiotic Approach to the Theology of Inculturation*, p.175.
The Second Vatican Council’s document *Lumen Gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church) states:

The pastors, indeed, should recognize and promote the dignity and responsibility of the laity in the Church. They should willingly use their prudent advice and confidently assign duties to them in the service of the Church, leaving them freedom and scope for acting. Indeed, they should give them the courage to undertake works on their own initiative... The sense of their own responsibility is strengthened in the laity, their zeal is encouraged, they are more ready to unite their energies to the work of their pastors.  

Effective collaboration is a way of relating and working together in the life of the Church. It demands our conscious commitment to the common good, values and our convictions. It is the recognition that our Christian Initiation (Baptism) gives us a shared but differentiated responsibility for the life and mission of the Church. This recognition creates in us a fundamental desire to work together as a community of the people of God.

This is what it means to talk of renewed structures that are demanded by mission and evangelization in the post-colonial context “as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth.”  

It is cooperation in mission and evangelization that calls for authenticity and inclusiveness in the spirit of dialogue, respect, openness and truth. This is what can turn our church institutions, small Christian communities, ministries or other movements within the church to become sources of enrichment, nourishment and renewal to the members.

Orji argues, “When the shortcoming of a previous position is recognized seek a higher viewpoint. An African theology of inculturation cannot be done without attention to

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human rights, particularly the rights of women.”

Using the words of Lonergan, Orji goes further to assert that the higher viewpoint that is needed, “is the discovery, the logical expansion, and the recognition of the principle that intelligence contains its own immanent norms and that these norms are equipped with sanctions which man does not have to invent or impose.”

Effective collaboration is, therefore, a reminder to us to commit ourselves to the life of the church in mission and evangelization. The most important and distinctive characteristic of an effective collaboration in mission and evangelization is love. When Jesus was asked what was the greatest command in the Law, he replied, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength,” and he went on to say that the second commandment stood beside this in greatness: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:30-31).

Orji explains that Africa is a complex society whose complexity plays out in myriads of ways. He gives the example of South Sudan, but his statement is equally applicable to Kenya: “The problem of South Sudan is symptomatic of the problem of Africa where political disputes quickly morph into ethnic and religious conflicts. The failure to distinguish

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488 Ibid., pp.185-186.
489 Ibid., pp.187-188. “Barely two years after independence (December 2013), conflict erupted between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and those loyal to his deputy at the time, Riek Machar. What was thought to be a mere political conflict degenerated into an all-out ethnic conflict between the Dinka (President Kiir’s tribe) and the Nuer (vice-president Machar’s tribe).”
properly a political conflict from ethnic and even religious problem often leads to wars with
dire consequences.”

Effective collaboration in mission and evangelization should act as a means of
refining ourselves and of leading us to maturity or authenticity. Its primary goal is a call to
serve with the heart and the mind of Christ. When Jesus’ other disciples grew indignant at
James’ and John’s demand of privileged position, Jesus called them all to himself and
reminded them of the need to serve rather than being served (Mark 10:42-45). Effective
collaboration must act as “an active force in dismantling of all unjust structures and unhelpful
cosmologies (worldviews).

However, it is through effective collaboration that self-sacrificing love and the loving
servant-hood nature of active participation become alive. This implies cooperation between
the clergy and laity in promoting evangelization. Mission and evangelization are not the work
of the clergy alone but they are a collaborative venture among members of the same
community of faith. There are a number of areas where collaboration between the clergy and
laity can be encouraged depending on the circumstances and the context.

Indeed, it is in effective collaboration that our participation in the priestly, prophetic
and kingly functions of Christ is manifested and exercised. It is important to note that each
exercises these functions proper to his or her calling as we form a greater indivisible unity.
The roles of the clergy and laity must be viewed in terms of their complementarities and
mutual collaboration.

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490 Ibid., p.188.
491 Ibid., p.191.
As Orji emphasizes, “Differentiations foster pluralism. Christianity has always benefitted from pluralism of expression.”  

He continues, “Thus, the pluralism that must take place is pluralism, not of doctrine, but of expressions and communications, using the available narratives, parables, metaphors, modes of praise and blame, etc. of the people.”

Effective collaboration awakens in us the reality that Jesus Christ continues to provide his Body, the Church, with gifts of leadership through which we serve each other in the community.

Effective collaboration must also take into consideration the different contexts at stake, e.g. the place and time. It must address specific situations and peoples. As Orji points out, “The gospel must be proclaimed in a manner that accords with the assimilative powers of the culture to which the gospel is preached.”

He explains that “there is a mutual dialogue by which the gospel is informed by culture and culture is informed by the gospel.” He also argues that “the meaning of the gospel text comes to fuller fruition on the basis of its cultural understanding” which is mastered by “the self-correcting process of learning, in which pre-conceptual insights accumulate to complement, qualify, [and] correct one another.”

Nevertheless, we cannot live an authentic life unless we subscribe to values that are true and good and then are able also to see witnesses that inspire us to exercise the discipline needed to be consistent in such matters. I take as an example two outstanding models of authentic witnessing and effective collaboration personalities in the Kenyan church in the

494 Ibid., p.194.
495 Ibid., p.196.
496 Ibid., p.198.
497 Ibid., p.198.
498 Ibid., p.198.
post-colonial period: Servant of God Maurice Michael Cardinal Otunga of the Roman Catholic Church and Bishop Alexander Kipsang Muge of the Anglican Church.

a) **Maurice Michael Cardinal Otunga: 1923 – 2003**

Maurice Michael Cardinal Otunga (1923-2003) was the first Kenyan to be elevated to the episcopacy and cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church in Kenya. His cause for canonization has commenced and he has been granted the title of Servant of God. He was an extraordinary humble pastor and a fearless promoter of the church’s teachings on justice and peace. He lived what he believed: life is a gift to be cherished, self-sacrifice for the community and a life of prayer. He had a great commitment to the poor and marginalized.

As Cardinal, Otunga clashed with some politicians as he pointed out the various forms of oppression that they “indulged in at the expense of the lives of the common citizens.” He argued that religion and politics should be concerned with the “human person who is both body and soul, matter and spirit, eternal and temporal,” and that “When you take care of the needs of the spirit you have to care of the needs of the body too. You cannot leave one out for they constitute one and the same person.” When Otunga was asked to explain his pastoral role in Kenyan society, he stated: “I do not admire or wish to overthrow any government. I would only be interested in seeing that justice prevails in all spheres of life so that every Kenyan enjoys his or her human rights to the full.”

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500 Ibid., p.74.
501 Ibid., p.75.
502 Ibid., p.75.
At the African Synod in Rome in 1994, Cardinal Otunga presented a paper entitled, ‘Evangelization as Justice and Peace’ to the Special Assembly. He began by saying that he was speaking in the name of the Kenyan Episcopal Conference:

Peoples on the move cannot be ignored. The displaced persons in Kenya are those citizens rendered homeless on account of tribal violence. Urbanization is another major cause. The victims of discrimination, I think, are particularly those citizens who have moved from place to place in search of employment and this may be due to nepotism, religious discrimination or corruption in the administration of the country. For these people it is difficult to establish a stable contact. For those who already believe, many are in great danger of losing their faith. It becomes more difficult when the situation is politically originated and perpetuated as is the case in Kenya now. Here the bishops have exercised their prophetic role and have spoken out to the government. It is not easy.503

When he retired as the archbishop of Nairobi in 1997, Otunga chose as his retirement home a house for the poor, the Nyumba ya Wazee (house of elderly), which is run by the Little Sisters of the Poor in Nairobi. This was true to his lifestyle as archbishop for he never chose to live in luxury and always implored his priests to beware of materialism as an obstacle to the gospel witness.

Otunga found himself dealing not only with religious issues of the church, but also with the political, economic and justice situations of the country. Although known for his great humility, he never hesitated to come to the defense of the country’s poor and marginalized. In all trying circumstances, he responded under the inspiration of the Gospels and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Millicent Osaso writes of the Cardinal, “Otunga challenged political abuses in the government, such as political assassinations, corruption,

nepotism and tribalism... (He) constantly reminded the civil leaders of what was expected of them by God and the people whom they serve and served.”

Otunga never allowed himself to be muddled down in tribal politics, always reminding everyone that he was the bishop for all the members of his flock. Osaso comments, “The humble Cardinal owned almost nothing in terms of material possession. His life is a challenge to the modern clergy and religious men and women in the Church. Otunga – one can say, lived for others.”

He died on September 06, 2003, at the age of eighty. Kenyans remember him for his authentic witnessing, a distinguished and humble leadership which fostered phenomenal church growth, making the Roman Catholic Church in Kenya one of the largest and fastest growing churches. He encouraged holistic development: the vision for people’s physical, spiritual, social and economic development, which enabled the Roman Catholic Church to reach the community by establishing the best schools, hospitals, and colleges among many other community development projects. His leadership also brought a liturgical renewal, making the form and style of worship in the church more Kenyan.


Bishop Muge (1948-1990) was the first Anglican bishop of Eldoret Diocese. He believed in the power of the pulpit to transform and reform the society. He advocated social truth and scared politicians whose interest was just to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor.

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505 Ibid., p.191.
As a bishop, Muge refused to see himself through the lenses of ethnic affiliations, which was and is still characteristic of Kenyan politics. When he was pressured by leaders from his own ethnic community to make decisions along ethnic lines, he denounced them saying, “We have nothing in common with those who call themselves Nandi (his tribe) leaders. I am not a tribal leader. I am a Spiritual leader with pastoral responsibilities over many tribes in my diocese.”

When he was warned by some politicians not to visit certain regions for security reasons, he defied the warnings, swearing to go and perform his pastoral duty, responding, “My call to serve the Lord is such that personal security is secondary compared to the primary task of taking the Gospel of the Lord to the most parts of the diocese. If it is the will of the Lord that I be with him in heaven, then that is welcome, for death to a Christian is gateway to heaven.” When he set out for a mission, regardless how dangerous it was, not even his family, could stop him. Muge was a man of depth and total commitment to the cause of truth. He had faith beyond the fear of death.

He made a radical and uncompromising choice to defend the poor and oppressed people and warned the church in Kenya against sinking into corruption rather than leading and guiding the nation. He maintained that the church, as the nation’s conscience, must rid itself of anything that could rob it of its moral authority. He remained true to his cause championing for democracy, fighting against corruption, ethnicity and land grabbing until he met his untimely death in a road accident on August 14, 1990.

507 Ibid., p.20
508 Ibid., p.27.
On effective collaboration, Osaso argues, “Great religious leaders vary in the prescription of their services but, they share a common denominator in their devotion to service. Though separated by space and time, religious leaders share the conviction that there is a divine purpose in life. They believe in the justice of God and in the goodness of humankind.”509 Otunga, for example, at the time of his appointment as a Catholic bishop in 1956, it was said that it was difficult to distinguish between white colonialists and the white Church leaders, especially in the attitudes that the Europeans had towards Africans. There were negative reactions especially from the white clergy that “made Otunga recall with great pains some past experiences that require special grace to forgive and forget. He was quoted saying, ‘Where there is pride, there will be a fall.’”510

Otunga’s task as bishop and as cardinal “was to delegate necessary responsibilities in the Diocese to the priests and laity.”511 He prepared some priests to become headmasters of schools512 and invited several religious congregations like the Passionists and others to join the diocese.513 He went out of his way to ensure the European priests that they did not need leave but, rather to collaborate in mission and evangelization. In collaboration with the missionaries, he initiated “many pastoral institutions that included schools, convents and parishes.”514 He also ensured that each parish established some self-help projects to cater for the needs of the poor in the community.515

510 Ibid., p.109.
511 Ibid., p.112.
512 Ibid., p.112.
513 Ibid., p.115.
514 Ibid., p.113. “On April 12, 1957, Pope Pius XII released an Encyclical Fidei Donum dealing with missionary character of the Church. In that letter the Pope appealed to the religious orders to take up the missionary challenge with renewed zeal. It stirred the hearts of many missionaries who made their personnel available and at the service of the mission Church.”
515 Ibid., p.113.
However, Otunga’s collaboration extended beyond the boundaries of the Catholic Church in Kenya to other Christian denominations and to the Muslims. He collaborated with the other church and spiritual leaders in promoting human rights and “the rights of children and their welfare through the promotion of the interests of the family in all its aspects.”\textsuperscript{516} He collaborated with peoples of other faiths to highlight issues such as “unemployment, housing, working mothers, alcoholism and single-parent families.”\textsuperscript{517} He also worked with others in seeking ways that would lead to peace, justice, freedom of speech and respect for one another.\textsuperscript{518}

The same applies to Muge who started the newly created Anglican diocese of Eldoret in 1983 with only eighteen parishes and twenty-three clergies. By the time of his untimely death, the diocese had undergone tremendous spiritual growth with twenty-eight parishes and thirty-six clerics.\textsuperscript{519} He personally participated in youth camps, rallies and church activities. And because of his love and care for the youth, he was appointed and remained the provincial (national) Chairperson of the Kenya Anglican Youth Organization. He was keen to collaborate and work together with other church leaders outside the Anglican Church as well.

These two examples that I have given show that for a pastoral agent to be effective in collaboration, he or she has to overcome clericalism. Clericalism, as I have discussed earlier in Chapter 3 of this work, is an obstacle to effective collaboration. They also demonstrate to us that effective collaboration begins within church but extends also to others outside the church boundaries. They also demonstrate by their lives and commitments, expressed by

\textsuperscript{516} Ibid., p.157.  
\textsuperscript{517} Ibid., p.157.  
\textsuperscript{518} Ibid., p.182.  
\textsuperscript{519} \url{http://www.dacb.org/stories/kenya/muge_kipsang.html}, (accessed May2, 2016).
their sacrificial love for the Kenyan people, that authentic witnessing may sometimes lead to martyrdom, especially when the gospel value of love for neighbour is threatened.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the seven essential principles of the theology of mission and evangelization that may prove helpful in guiding such efforts in Kenya in a post-colonial context. I have also examined two other aspects of theology of mission and evangelization, which I deem as necessary for evangelization in our present time.

I have pointed out that authentic pastoral leadership is recognition that we are created in the image and likeness of God. It reflects our resolve to be holy and good men and women here on earth. I have also indicated that since we are both socially and historically embedded, authentic pastoral leadership is also concerned with the development, the growth and the good of both the human person and the society.

Authentic witnessing and effective collaboration are creative means through which mission and evangelization can be made possible to address the spiritual, physical and psychological aspirations of the people today. As pastoral agents, we must therefore be ready to read the signs of the time, challenge the socio-cultural, political and economic aspects of society and guide people toward the good, the truth. I believe that authentic witness and effective collaboration must always and consciously discern the “signs of the times” if we are to become the sacrament of God’s salvation in our present time. However, as Lonergan asserts, “Human authenticity is not some pure quality, some serene freedom from all
oversights, all misunderstanding, all mistakes, all sins. Rather it consists in a withdrawal from unauthenticity, and the withdrawal is never a permanent achievement.”

I have presented how theology of mission and evangelization are an on-going process. A process that gradually leads into a new horizon, into a reality that is present and not-yet at the same time. This is what makes mission and evangelization fluid and dynamic in nature. It also gives room for further creativity and additional new discoveries. I have pointed out in the previous chapters that church and society are also ever developing realities, which adapt and adopt from the local contexts whatever words, symbols, ideas and practices that with time become significant for the theology of mission and evangelization.

I have also presented a useful tool to pastoral agents that would enable them to renew and collaborate in the theology of mission and evangelization, especially in the Kenyan context. It also encourages them to listen deeply and attentively to the challenges and questions that are being raised by our contemporary context and in so doing, they will not only be able to take up the challenge of renewing and revitalizing good structures and methods that promote mission and evangelization but also able to avert and prevent the unfortunate situations like the post-election violence was experienced in Kenya.

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520 Lonergan, Method in Theology, p.252.
General Concluding Remarks

I want to conclude this research and study by underscoring the fact that the human person, created in the image and likeness of God, is both the subject and object of mission and evangelization. We all know that a human person is both socially and historically embedded. Mission and evangelization, therefore, must always be concerned with the development and the good of the human person. Mission and evangelization must be prepared to address the spiritual, physical and psychological well-being of the person or group of persons. It must be ready to challenge the socio-cultural, political and economical aspects of the society or community in which people live.

In this thesis, I have tried to contribute to the awareness of the theology of mission and evangelization in Kenya in our present context. I have presented and addressed particular contexts and some specific challenges that confront Christian believers in Kenya. I have examined how evangelization should be carried out by addressing the concrete concerns that effects the lives of the people. I have looked at Bosch’s radical ecumenical paradigm shift in theology of mission as well as Lonergan’s shift from classicist notion to an empirical notion of culture and overviewed the context of theology of mission and evangelization in Kenya. I have examined Lartey’s seven principles of theology of mission and emphasized that genuine and effective evangelization should give rise to an authentic and active Christian community and praxis. I have also proposed some practical insights that could be helpful to pastoral ministers or agents who are involved in the process of evangelization in Kenya.

As the Whiteheads remind us, “Religious maturity compels us to engage our religious heritage at a deeper level, where its inconsistencies and contradictions become painfully
However, reaching such a mature decision in faith requires an adult or a mature relationship with God. An adult faith requires a continuous searching and challenging response to God’s invitation and presence in our cultures, religious traditions and lives. This is indeed what Lonergan invites us into when he emphasizes that our mission and evangelization, in the modern context, continuously call on us to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible.

The Church must, therefore, consciously discern the “signs of the times” if she is to become the sacrament of God’s salvation in history. She must listen and be attentive to what the Spirit is saying if she is to lead the way towards the reign of the Kingdom of God. To evangelize to the twenty first century Church, we must be ready to respond to contemporary challenges.

A pastoral agent who resigns himself or herself to fate and does not continuously reflect on his or her personal faith experiences, Christian traditions and the cultural values within which he or she finds himself or herself, will certainly not be an instrument of authentic mission and evangelization, or of God’s salvation to the world. Pope Francis captures well this new concept of mission and evangelization when he writes that the Lord’s missionary mandate includes a “call to growth in faith... hence it is clear that the first proclamation also calls for ongoing formation and maturation.”

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