Formation of the Human Person in the 21st Century

Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference
Seminary of All Saints, Uhiele-Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria
(March 18th – 20th, 2020)

Editors
Gregory OGBENIKA and Francis IKHIANOSIME

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We owe immense thanks to our Proprietors, the Archbishops and Bishops of the Lagos, Benin and Ibadan Ecclesiastical Provinces, for their overwhelming support and encouragement these past years. We are unreservedly thankful especially to Most Rev. Dr. Donatus Ogun, OSA, the Bishop of Uromi where our Seminary is domiciled. We thank him for declaring the Ceremony opened. We are similarly thankful to the Most Rev. Dr. Francis Adesina, the Bishop of Ijebu-Ode for his inspiring opening address at the Conference. In the same vein, we thank exceedingly, the Most Rev. Dr. Michael Odogwu Elue, the Bishop of Issele-Uku and Chairman of our Seminary's Commission for giving the keynote address at the conference.

We also thank our dynamic Rector, the Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Matthew Ihensekhien, whose leadership has seen the realization of some of these great feats, especially this conference. The same goes to the cohesive community of Formators whose useful suggestions and collaboration were instrumental to the success of both the Conference and this book.

We thank, in no small measure, the Commissioned Speakers: Prof. Isaac Ukpokolo of the University of Ibadan, Prof. Agatha Eguavoen of the Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma and Dr. Bjorn Freter, an Independent Scholar from Knoxville, Tennessee, United States of America for their informed contribution and participation at the conference. We also thank other participants, from within and outside Nigeria for their robust thoughts and informed contribution to the theme of the conference. We thank all the various professors from different institutions who helped to facilitate different sessions at the conference and who helped to moderate some of the papers which have been published in this volume.

We are also thankful to the following for their roles towards putting this conference proceeding together, Rev. Fr. Dr. Michael

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Editors.

EDITORIAL FOREWORD

The 21st Century is markedly identified by great discoveries in science and technology that it has christened as the age of information technology. Regardless of the advancement of knowledge in this century with mind-blowing discoveries like electric, driverless cars, cryptocurrency, 3D technologies and e-technologies like e-readers and e-cigarettes, the human person instead of advancing, is palpably and grossly undermined. While there is so much advancement in human reason which is meant to bring about a better place and dignity for the human person, paradoxically, the cost of the human person is more cheapened more than ever. The scandal of technological advancement is that, the rise in human knowledge has not brought about a better quality of life and a more secured world of the human person. Rather, the world has become more perilous. More and more, the purpose of man is diminished.

For instance, in Nigeria, we hear of harrowing experiences which not only diminish respect for human life, but also completely obliterate respect for the human dignity and person. There are daily orgies of violence and savagery brutality to the human person. Francis Ikhianosime captures the sad account and contempt for human life in Nigeria in the following words: "The human person has been pillaged from every side in Nigeria. The news of bloodbath occasioned from cult actions and restive youth violence, through to the chequered insurgency of Boko Haram insurgency and with its unbridled carnages, a smouldering band of herdsmen who maim and kill with reckless abandon and sometimes plunder an entire community without apprehension, broad-day marauding armed robbery and gory scenes of police brutality with heart-wrenching scenes and barbarity, sporadic mob-action of youths against perceived criminals, intermittent ethnic violence with sometimes unthinkable and profound bestiality on others, human life in Nigeria is simply brutish and short. The cost of human life is obviously on a deficit. Nigeria has become a charged zoned of violence. The respect for the human person and dignity is at a contemptible ebb in Nigeria" (Francis Ikhianosime, "The Word of God and the Sanctity of Human life in Nigeria", *Manual for National Laity Council,* 2020). These experiences mirror the overall challenges to the human person globally.

The consequent effect is that the human person today feels more disintegrated, claustrophobic and small. Man, more than ever before, is in need of meaning. The search for meaning has led many back to God through religion. While some have argued that part of the pillaging of the human person is the politicisation of religion, and so religion has no place in reclaiming the human person, others, think, religion remains a vehicle for reclaiming the place of man and his purpose in the world. Arguably, the cost and value of man has been lost, hence, there is the need to redefine what it means to be human in the 21st Century. The issues are axiological, philosophical and even theological. There is need for a reappreciation of the Human Person in the world of today and only a transvaluation of values can help. This task is imminent and onerous, hence, the focus on the Formation of the Human Person in the 21st Century in our conference.

Why this topic is so important is because, at the centre of any authentic value or quality, would be human formation. In priestly formation, Human formation holds the pride of being the pivot for all other aspects of fomation. If the human person is not well formed, every other formation including, the spritual, pastoral or intellectual would be resting on a jaundiced foundation. Therefore, the need to have a thorough human formation not just for priestly formation, but for all human members of the society is at the heart of reclaiming the soul of the human person in the world of today. If there is a proper formation of the human person, the values of life, peace and a healthy environment would be sustained. Once, there is a proper formation of the human person, then, man can properly see all those ways that debases him in the society, and seek ways to reclaiming it. This is the attraction to the appeal for the formation of the Human person in the 21st Century.

This volume covers contributions on the subject matter. The papers presented at the conference which largely have been edited and rearranged according to special sections cover ecclesiastical/theological perspectives and seminary formaton, philosophical perspectives and human formation and then, religious/socio-cultural perspective and human formation. The issues discussed generally oscillate on the need to reposition the human person to his rightful place in the world. They, generally seek to draw on normative views of the human person which will bring about right living and peaceful and cohesive existence amongst all humans. A large part of contributions have devoted attention to seminary formation, since the Seminary, being a formation house, aims to train people who would be leaders and leaven in a sin-sick world. The keynote address and opening addresses set the tone for the conversation, while, the commissioned papers also further inspired new insight for this conversation. Other contributions, have approach the subject matter

from different sides, bring about a beautiful tapestry of rich resources on the subject matter, which we have here handy in this volume. In all, these papers offer theoretical basis for a reclaiming of the place of man in the 21st Century.

Gregory Ogbenika and Francis Ikhianosime.
Editors

RECTOR'S WELCOME ADDRESS TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE HELD AT THE SEMINARY OF ALL SAINTS, UHIELE-EKPOMA-NIGERIA, FROM 18TH–20TH MARCH, 2020, WITH THE THEME "FORMATION OF THE HUMAN PERSON IN THE 21ST CENTURY"

On behalf of the All Saints family, I warmly and respectfully welcome our highly-esteemed Bishops, distinguished guests, participants, each and all of you, to our Seminary, the Seminary of All Saints in Uhiele-Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria and to this 2nd International Conference, which has as its theme "Formation of the Human Person in the 21st Century". You are here at a time of joy and celebration in the Seminary. Indeed, we celebrate the Silver Jubilee of our existence (1995-2020) both as a religious and an academic institution. So relax, celebrate and rejoice with us.

Now, why did the Seminary decide to celebrate and discuss at the same time an issue of great complexity like human formation? Why did the Seminary decide to reflect on the formation and moulding of the human person to become Christlike and Christocentric? What are the nature, contents, challenges of the relations and roles that both the Church and the State play in human formation?

We have noticed that despite the fact that the famous Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its third session on 10th December 1948 and later signed into law, the human person remains threatened in the world of today. The geometrical advancement in science and technology, which ordinarily should have been at the service of man, seems to practically make the human person a slave, unsafe and satisfied with the erosion of standards. The free market economics which have grown triumphant with the demise of communism, poverty, etc. have contributed to the erosion of values and making people live an unbearable life that unceasingly chips away on their dignity. The human person is a psychosomatic, theoandric entity with infinite capabilities, yet limited and laced with inherent crises. Today, this human person is at a cross-road on account of some emerging challenging trends like individualism,

post-modernism, relativism, materialism, loss of the sense of the sacred, etc.

In the face of all these, there is the urgent need to evaluate the formation of the Human today, in our world, in our church. No wonder Gaudium et spes announced the need for a new birth of humanism: "A new humanism where man is defined before all else by his responsibility to his brothers and at the court of history" (GS 55). Truly the human person should be formed in such a way that all things on earth should be ordained to his centre and summit. In a sense, the human person is the pivot of history, the climax, the chief actor on the theatre of world history and the contact point between the past, present and the future. The human person is superior to the order of things, but remains their unifying factor and their crown

So, this is one reason why, as the Seminary rejoices and celebrates 25 years of existence as an ecclesiastical institution, she has chosen, also, to call together scholars of repute from Church, State and other institutions to reflect on the theme of the formation of the Human Person. It is my hope that this Conference would be able to address this theme and its attending questions in some significant ways. It is hoped that by the end of this International Conference, we would have enriched ourselves and acquired better views for Human Formation, which we can adopt, hopefully, in our various institutions, which we represent, and humanity will be better served as a result by all of us. I wish all of us exciting and purposeful deliberations.

Once again, I welcome you to this 2nd International Conference in our Seminary and may God bless your stay here. Amen.

Very Rev. Fr. Matthew IHENSEKHIEN, Ph.D.
Rector
March 18, 2020

OPENING ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE, MOST REV. FRANCIS OBAFEMI ADESINA, BISHOP OF IJEBU-ODE DIOCESE.

FORMATION OF THE HUMAN PERSON FOR PRIESTLY MINISTRY IN 21st CENTURY NIGERIA

Historical Context

The 21st Century is complex, sophisticated, 'global', 'fast' and amazingly interconnected. It is a world that questions: It is curious and challenges even age long traditional institutions, structures and beliefs. There seems to be an unrelenting battle by many forces, for the soul and heart of the 21st Century world.

On one end of the spectrum are matters of technology, ecology, morality, and faith. On the other end are challenges of violence, crime, and extremism, all intricately parked at the core of the 21st Century. The tale of the world today is a paradox of two polar realities; of pain and progress. There is the reality of poverty, slavery, lack, disasters, terrorism, environmental collapse, religious fanaticism and the culture of death (abortion, suicide and assisted suicide). There is also the reality of populism, climate change, technological advancement, data revolution, rapacious interest in expanding communication, commerce, adventure, and high speed social-media interaction.

The 21st century is a world where there is a widening gap between the rich and the poor, exponential population increase, discontent with traditional faith-structures (especially among young people), religious bigotry, political impasse, nepotism, corruption, issues of national unity (in the case of Nigeria, even after 106 years of amalgamation). A world of increasing craze for prosperity, intense love for material possessions, liberalism, subtle exclusion of God from social life, redefinition of human sexuality, radically changing family structures, economic and cyber warfare, multicultural expansionism, etc.

It is in this polarized world that the Church continues to minister. It is in this 'confused' milieu that the Catholic priest is called to witness with unchanging values and graces of the gospel to the ever evolving, discontent and disparaging world. With all these happening, the 21st Century mindset poses a grave danger, if untamed, to traditional institutions including the Church. There is a possibility that the Church may become '5,000 miles wide in size, but only 5 inches deep in faith'.

There is a temptation to replace quality with quantity, to replace value with number, depth with size, and content with package.

It is therefore pertinent and wise to review and evaluate the processes and overall mode of priestly formation in this Century in the face of global and local realities that have become part of society in the 21st Century. As Church with a unique mandate to witness to the gospel in Nigeria and beyond, it is even more apt for us to consider the realities of the 21st Century and the challenges that human formation for the priestly ministry faces or is bound to face. Constant prayerful evaluation of our processes and mode of training is necessary for us to respond to the needs of our time. It is also very important for formation of priests in Nigeria to be constantly juxtaposed with the standards the Church has set for priestly training. We need to ask and constantly confirm that what we are doing and how we are doing it, is what and how the Church wants it done.

Human Formation of Candidates to the Sacred Priesthood According to the Church.

From *Optatam Totius* and *Prebyterorun Ordinis* of Vatican II to *Patores Dabo Vobis* of St. John Paul II and to the *New Ratio Fundamentalis Instutionis Sacerdotalis* — "The Gift of the Priestly Vocation" of Pope Francis, the Council fathers and all Church documents emphasize the importance and centrality of Human formation. It is the foundation of all priestly formation. Human formation promotes the integral growth of the person and allows the integration of all its dimensions - physical, psychological, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. The objective of human formation is to achieve a mature and balanced personality. To use the Word of Pope Francis, Human Formation is to transform "the uncut diamonds" of the formatees, patiently and carefully, respecting their conscience, so that they may shine among the People of God"

As we all know that every human person grows within the context of a community. The family is the first place for the formation of the human person. Family bonds are very essential for reinforcing healthy self-esteem and balanced personality. It is within the context of a healthy family that a healthy priestly or religious vocation is being nurtured.

The family referred to as the domestic Church is expected to inculcate earliest form of formation into every child. Simple acts of prayer, reverence for the sacred and respect for moral laws are first learned in the family. The child receives baptism from the Church and proceeds to further understand the faith through catechesis. Having completed the sacraments of initiation, a child who is called to the priesthood or religious life would begin the priestly training in the Seminary.

From my personal experience of being a formator in a major seminary, I have come to the conclusion that when the Christian family is healthy, good vocations emerge. After all, some of the deadly traits we notice in some seminarians are defects resulting from family set-up or societal backgrounds: Aversion for Truth telling; irresponsible life style; lack of commitment; sexual immaturity and abuses, mistrust of authority and disconnection from and discontent with the teaching, directive or spirituality of the Church, etc.

According to the 2nd Vatican Council, "Priestly training should aim at the development of a system of training for the proper degree of human maturity, stability of character, ability to make carefully weighted decisions, sound judgment of events and people, self control, strength of character and those good qualities proper to Christ's minister- sincerity, constant love of justice, fidelity to one's promises, courtesy in deeds, modesty and charity in speech."

It is therefore required that the Seminary undertakes a careful, vigilant enquiry of every student with due consideration for age and development. The Seminary should discern the motive, freedom of choice, aptitude for undertaking the obligations of the priestly life (pastoral, ecclesial, canonical), as well as the spiritual, moral, and intellectual adequacy of every seminarian. Those not suited to the ministry are to be guided with fatherly kindness without derailing from the universal call to Christian Vocation.

The priestly formation in the 21st century Nigeria must therefore take seriously the discernment of vocation of seminarians in order to ascertain that, their values and motivation for the priesthood are not identical with the average gospel peddler who simply wants to be prosperous. The Seminary and the Dioceses must do more to confirm that seminarians love only what the Church prescribes and follows what the Church teaches.

The agenda for the priesthood has never been and will never be about owning exotic cars; clothes, shoes, I-phones; nor about comfort, or "lucrative places of assignment." Rather, it is about service, prayer, penance, sacrifice and salvation of souls. The ultimate life sacrifice of Late Sr. Henrietta ALOKHA, SSH at the recent pipe-line explosion in Abule-Ado shows the courage c: a true shepherd, who would not abandon the flock in moment of danger.

On 9th May, 2019, Pope Francis promulgated a **Motu Proprio**, *Vos estis lux mundi* (You are the Light of the World) which establishes new procedural norms to combat sexual abuse and to ensure that bishops and religious superiors are very *well* accountable for their attitude and approach to the handling of cases of sexual abuse. In the light of this new development, it will be a great disservice to the Church and a grave error,

if seminarians are ill-prepared to respond and handle the broad scope of sexual abuse issues (including the attendant legal and ecclesiastical sanctions therewith).

Priestly formation we offer in the 21st Century in our Seminaries should afford seminarians specific, direct, consistent, holistic and versatile education on the dangers and implication of sexual abuse. They should be guided to avoid it or any semblance of it. Furthermore, Seminarians should be educated on measures on protecting themselves even from possible allegations and to shun any kind of behaviour that may illicit concern on this matter, or that may question the integrity of the Church. It is foolhardy to think that Sexual abuse issues is a matter for Europe and not an African problem as some tend to think. Candidates for the priesthood should be aware of the dangers and complexities of sexual abuse; so they can dispose themselves to escape the damages that sexual abuse brings

Conclusion

The Church in Nigeria needs priests who can engage the world with the values of the Kingdom; priest who can transform the present order with the powerful message of Christ, We need priests who can preach the word of God with zeal and enthusiasm and conviction, priests who can meditate an the word of God, priests who can lead in vocal prayers with power from heaven. We need priests who can celebrate the Sacraments with faith and action, not with some mechanical, cold, and depressing demeanor. We need priests who can engage the people of God and make them believe they have all the answers in the Catholic Church, so that they do not need to look for answers elsewhere

The Church m Nigeria needs priests, who know what they are doing, who can defend the faith. We need priests who can manage their emotions and sexuality. We need priests who are not ruled by anger, bitterness, or malice. We need priests who are not always on their "high-horses'. We need priests who can relate with confidence and charity towards all men, Christians, Muslims, and Traditionalists alike. We need good, happy, efficient, holy, loyal, hardworking, and compassionate priests. We need priests like Christ. This is the task of the Seminary at this time in Nigeria, it is a great task but it is not impossible. All of us must do our part by giving our best to Christ and his Church We must pay more attention to every aspect of human formation, because the times are changing, demands are higher, and the stake is grave.

+ Most Rev. Francis Obafemi ADESINA
Bishop of Ijebu-Ode

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MOST. REV. DR. MICHAEL ODOGWU ELUE BISHOP OF ISSELE-UKU DIOCESE

PRIESTLY FORMATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: NEW TRENDS AND PERSPECTIVES

Your Excellencies
Monsignori
Rev. Fathers
Rev. Brothers and Sisters
My dear Brothers and Sisters

I stand before you as the representative of the Cardinal, the Archbishops and Bishops of the three Ecclesiastical Provinces of Lagos, Ibadan and Benin City, who are the proprietors of the Seminary of All Saints, the venue of this Jubilee International Conference on "PRIESTLY FORMATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: NEW TRENDS AND PERSPECTIVE". In their names, I welcome you all very warmly to our Country, to our Provinces and particularly to the only Seminary in Nigeria, which has the whole host of Angels and Saints in heaven as her Patrons and Patronesses.

On behalf of our Three Provinces, I express my gratitude to you all for having chosen this Seminary that is located in our Province and is marking her 25 years of existence here, as the venue for this all important gathering and to discuss this equally important topic and I hope that you will all experience the rare but real hospitality offered by the Community of Saints. As you know, while the Saints in heaven guide us, those of us here in this Seminary or those who have anything to do with it, have direct admission to the Community of Saints later in heaven. I also hope that the sharing of views and ideas and celebrations which will take place amongst us will not only be an expression of the solidarity which is characteristic of the Christian family, but also a significant step forward in our mission to function optimally and updatedly in the most important task of forming young men for the sacred Priesthood.

The business of the Seminary is to form good Catholic men for the ministerial priesthood. The task of seminary Formators is to ensure that candidates were thoroughly grounded in theological truths and priestly spirituality with clear expectations in terms of doctrinal orthodoxy, liturgical celebration, pastoral ministry and priestly spirituality with an eye to the vicissitudes and vagaries of the time and place. The

preoccupation of the Formators in the Seminary is how to form the seminarians for optimum efficiency and pastoral effectiveness as priests. The zealous and dedicated Formators, therefore, are constantly in search of enhanced and updated software to carry out this duty satisfactorily.

Such Conference as for which we are gathered and such themes as are to be considered, are some of those serious efforts that the Formators in the Seminary make to maintain their relevance and utility and to be sure that they are operating at the highest level with updated functionality. These efforts in the Seminary by Formators in the Seminary, whose conditions of service are not the best in the world, are what convince the Proprietors of the Seminary and the Church generally that the Formators in the Seminary are people who believe what they teach, namely, that the reward for every good work and even for every genuine effort, is in heaven.

My opinion about how to proceed in this matter is to look at the topic of this Conference very well and relativize the concepts very well to put us face to face with what the crux of the matter is. While the formation of the Catholic Priests has the same objective, the context, time, and methods for doing it have continued to change.

Now, let me attempt a relativization of the concepts of New Trends and Perspectives. Every difficulty is relative to the person who has it. From the beginning of Christianity until now, there have always been Challenges which generations after generations of Christians have had to face. And as we all know, the time of their facing these challenges was their contemporary society, their 21st century. So, it is not really an excuse to appeal either to challenges or to contemporary society for our inability to carry out and carry on this important function of the formation of our seminarians and priests.

Let me cite this example to buttress this relativity of challenges and contemporary society that I am talking about. My grandmother, who was born probably about 1887, has, as a name which she was given when she was 4days old "*Uwa Ebihue*" (the world has changed). If we were to judge them by our own standards now, we would ask "what would they have seen at that time to be giving that kind of name?" But in relation to their own time and space, they observed novelties that surprised them. They saw challenges in relation to what they used to know and what they used to see and so they gave the name and among us here names have meaning.

My argument is that it is not more difficulty being a Christian now than it was for the Christians of Asia Minor whom, while Peter was addressing them, reminded them that they were not to be taken aback by the fiery ordeals that they were going through as though something strange was happening to them (ref. 1 Pet 4:12-14). And a little later, he

told them to bear in mind that their brothers all over the world are suffering the same thing (ref. 1 Pet 5:9). So, I believe, as St. Paul advises, that we should just work out our salvation within the context where we find ourselves (Phil 2:12). For, after all, even though this present age may be a wicked one, our lives should redeem it (ref. Eph 5:16; Col 4:5-6).

And so while nobody could have imagined that the usage or non-usage of the mobile phones and laptop computers were issues to be talked about in the formation team meeting during the time of Late MSGR Pedro Martins days in the Seminary, or even in the days of this young Bishop Elue in the Seminary, now, in this 21st century, not to take advantage of these updated software for priestly formation would cause injury to the integrity, comprehensiveness and the updated functionality of both the Seminary as an institution and Formators as conscientious labourers in it.

I, who am an elder myself, according to St. Peter, have this duty to forewarn the Formators in the Seminary about two dangers or temptations which they must try not to fall into. The first one is: "*I no go do for my pickin because my papa no do for me*." The only thing that can come from that mentality is retrogression and backwardness. The other one is to project and prescribe one's personal spirituality as the norm for everybody. No. General principles and objectives are approachable from various and different angles. Again, we have the same aim, namely, for the good of priestly formation in our time.

Along the same line, I am sure it will also be important to talk about how the maximization of the principle of solidarity and subsidiarity would enhance the updated functionality and utility of the collective efforts of both the Proprietors and the Formators at priestly formation in our time. If everybody does what he or she does best, the whole group would be the better for it in the end.

It is my wish and prayer, therefore, that this Conference will offer sufficient enlightenment for the understanding of the topic of this conference and that the parties involved, that means all of us, would be able to see ourselves as partners in progress for the benefit of the best priestly formation in our time and for our Church.

Now, I pass the word to you hoping that the input from the main speakers and from all participants in this Conference would be mutually enriching and particularly that it would equip us to handle the matters arising in the name of New Trends and Perspectives as far as priestly formation in the 21st Century is concerned.

+ Most Rev. Dr. Michael O. ELUE,
Bishop, Catholic Diocese of Issele-Uku, NIGERIA.
19th March 2020

COMMISSIONED PAPERS

1

LET THE REAL FEYERABEND PLEASE STAND: INTERROGATING THE ONTOLOGICAL BASIS FOR A POST-MODERNIST EPISTEMOLOGY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

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Introduction

I consider it necessary to begin this interrogation of the ontological basis for a post-modernist epistemology of a human person with the assumption that there is a necessary relationship between metaphysics and epistemology. It is difficult to think of an epistemological stance without a corresponding metaphysics. By extension, it would be difficult to think of an epistemology of the human person without a given ontological stance. Ontology is the science of 'being' in general, covering such issues as the nature of existence and categorial structure of reality. As a term, 'ontology' has some additional special uses in philosophy. It is used to refer to the set of things whose existence is acknowledged by a particular theory or system of thought: it is in this sense that one speaks of 'the ontology of a theory'.[1] To this extent, the post-modernist epistemology of the human person must rests on a given ontological scheme, and interrogating this ontological scheme is the point of focus for this essay. The work, therefore, considers the metaphysical ground or justification of a post-modernist theory of cognition concerning the human person. In other words, the work raises the question, how does the postmodern condition influence our cognitive process concerning the nature of the human person?

The Received View of Rationality

Since the 17th century, rationality has been understood through a matrix of relations between 'truth', 'objectivity', 'certainty' and 'reality'. This has been identified with a certain unique framework of principles and methods with reference to which we are to secure truth and objective knowledge; an impartial stand point for meaningful discussion, appraisal, comparison, and judgment. The task of identifying and characterizing this framework is one of the starting point of human inquiry in general and philosophy in particular.

The Cartesian epistemological program initiated in the 17th century, presents one of the attempts at developing a system of principles and methods for conducting human inquiry. Inspired by the desire for reliable knowledge, Descartes constructed a system which he bequeathed to modern thought of which he is often described as the father.[2] This system had the background assumption that, the order of nature is fixed and stable, and that the human mind acquired mastery of it by operating in accordance with principles of understanding that are equally fixed and universal.[3] To most seventeenth century thinkers, this assumption was beyond question. It did not only influence the understanding of rationality at the time, it also determined the type of epistemological question that could be raised.[4]

In addition to this assumption, there is a certain disposition of the mind – a certain anxiety[5] expressed in the belief that in our understanding of reality and our interaction with it, only two options are open to us: either we are equipped with some permanent, historical framework to which we can ultimately appeal or we are ineluctably led to relativism, historicism, scepticism, and irrationalism. And so, we are always faced with a choice between a certain binding set of ideals and epistemological chaos.[6]

It was generally believed that to resolve this anxiety, we require a fixed framework of universal and foundational principles. Descartes saw this and embarked on a search for what he called an "Archimedean point" in his *Meditations.*[7] Beginning with the first meditation, he says,

It is now some years since I detected how many were the false beliefs that I had from my earliest youth admitted as true, and doubtful was everything I had constructed on this basis: and … I was convinced that I must once, for all, seriously undertake to rid myself of all the opinions which I had formerly accepted, and commence to build anew from the foundation, if I want to establish any firm and permanent structure…[8]

The need for this project of establishing a securely grounded thought system is compared to the vision Archimedes. Thus, in the second meditation Descartes writes:

Archimedes, in order that he might draw the terrestrial globe out of its place, demanded that one point be fixed and immovable. In the same way, I shall have the right to conceive high hopes if I am happy enough to discover one thing only which is certain and immutable.[9]

In Descartes's view, the principles that guide our understanding of the world consists in the correspondence between "ideas" which the human mind found "distinct" and "clear" (such as the basic concepts of Euclid's geometry) and aspects of the world. It is in this correspondence that we establish the foundations of knowledge as well as the standard of rationality. Thus, at the very base of knowledge is, according to Descartes, the neutral activity of reason.[10]

An adequate analysis of the received view of rationality must consider the contribution of Descartes and Bacon to the development of ideas. In the 17th century, Aristotle's science faced challenges in the light of new discoveries in physics, astronomy and anatomy. Francis Bacon is often taken to be the spokesman to the new spirit and new method of science. His idea about scientific method subsequently became known as Beaconian induction, and is expressed in his *Novum Organum*.[11] In a general sense, Bacon's contribution to modern thought can be discussed at two related levels. The first level concerns the classification of knowledge. This is laid out in book 1 of the *Novum Organum.* In it, he made what was probably the first systematic attempt to express a psychological motives and human interests that often lie behind various forms of philosophical outlooks. He discussed what he called "idols of the mind" which had up to his own time persistently stood in the way of objective knowledge, dominated and distorted men's mind and delayed the acquisition of true knowledge. The "idols of the tribe", for instance, are tendencies to see things in relation to one's own self, rather than as they are in themselves. In Bacons view, man is not the measure of all things and we unthinkingly tend to impose order on phenomena which is not there. If we would command nature, he says, we must first learn to obey her. There are "idols of the cave", which are the predispositions of character and learning with which different individuals approach facts, rather than seeing them as there really are. The "idols of the market place" arise through the use of language, when we read back into nature, conceptions that have arisen through our using words, which actually stand for nothing. Bacon also identifies "idols of the theatre" which are due to the influence of philosophical system of our mind. In his view, we should not be misled by Aristotle's talk of experimentation and observation. Someone in the grip of a philosophical system, he says, including Aristotle himself had come to his conclusion before he did his experiment. The second level has to do with a new method of investigation, set forth in the most empiricist form. This consists in

making experiments and drawing general conclusions from them. These conclusions are then tested in further experiments.[12] Bacon's position is primarily an attack against what he called the sterility of pure deductive logic, which is never really able to increase knowledge. He insisted that the traditional syllogism was not a means of discovery, but only an aid for exhibiting the deductive consequences of what is already known. He also attacked the older induction by simple enumeration which applies only when the class of "all" things referred to is finite and accessible, as in the statement: "the founding members of the Royal Society are all males and over the age of thirty years".[13] Bacon's new method of induction was believed to go beyond this Aristotelian method because it is able to produce generalisations about "all" things, not simple about some property of members of a finite enumeration.

However, Bacon was not unaware of the fact that we cannot prove the truth of an induction in a general sense. The idea of "all", he says, must always include the thought that there may be found an exception to the inductive generalisation, as this is always based on a finite number of instances. In this way, Bacon proposed that a single negative experience was all we needed to falsify an induction. Thus, although it was G.H. Von Wright and Karl R. Popper that expounded much later the principle that the laws of nature and theories are not verifiable, but only falsifiable, the credit of initial recognition of this principle should go to Francis Bacon.[14] Science, he thought, would develop by compiling vast tables of actual data accumulated with the help of experiment and observation. Of course, he believed that the mere accumulation of facts would not necessarily yield knowledge. There must be, he argues, a selection whose establishment is also quite problematic.[15]

Nevertheless, many scientists are known to have expressed, in varying degree, their adherence to Baconnian philosophy. For instance, Isaac Newton in his *Principia* (1682), explored and extended the inductive method from qualities of bodies on which experiments can actually be performed to "qualities of all bodies universally" (Rule 3, Bk. 3). In his words,

The sum total facts, which are not only given in sense experience but also the experimental philosophical propositions gathered from phenomena by induction, should be considered either exactly or very nearly true notwithstanding any contrary hypothesis, until yet other phenomena make such propositions either more exact or liable to exception.[16]

Bacon's writings inspired the concern by British philosophers for the analysis of the nature of inductive reasoning, a concern which culminated in J.S. Mill's *System of Logic* (1843). Importantly, while Bacon's classification of knowledge stands widely adopted, his

understanding of scientific methods presents an adequate framework. This is because he failed to appreciate the sense in which mathematics was already the language of science. He also underestimated the use of scientist need to make of imaginative hypotheses.[17] On this, he was criticized memorably by Immanuel Kant in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (B.XII. 4).

Yet, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Austrian philosopher and physicist, Ernst Mach (1838-1926) adopted Bacon's epistemology in his *The Science of Mechanics* (1893) and *The Analysis of Sensation* (1914). In his view, science is no more than a conceptual reflection upon facts whose elements are contents of consciousness, and are given to us in sensation. This means that scientific statements or theoretical terms must be reducible to statements about sensations.[18] This is contained in his famous "Doctrine of Elements".

Science as the Paradigm of Rationality

From the foregoing, we are presented with the idea of rationality as a privileged framework of principles and methods to which we can ultimately appeal in our understanding of reality. It was noted that the attempt to codify these principles and methods found its significant expression first in the programmes based on the (new inductive) method of inquiry advocated by Francis Bacon in combination with the analytic method of deductive reasoning emphasized by Rene Descartes.[19] The concern of these men was mainly to establish a "theory of knowledge", to discover a unique set of terms into which discourses may be reduced, or some privileged vocabulary by means of which discourses may be rendered commensurable. The programmes of inquiry initiated in the modern period were essentially attempts to establish our discourses on a secure foundation; that is, to justify our beliefs and actions, goals and policies with reference to a certain universal "tribunal of judgment".[20]

The validity of this foundationalist task of epistemology was reiterated during the first half of the twentieth century in the works of philosophers in the analytic tradition who sought to ground human knowledge in, or reduce all discourses to, a certain system of formal language.[21] Rooted in the works of Gottlob Frege, the analytic tradition influenced the works of Bertrand Russell, Alfred North Whitehead, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Rudolf Carnap, Moritz Schlick and several others whose ultimate concern was how to make philosophy rigorous and scientific.[22] They initiated a new tendency in philosophy, re-orienting epistemology towards an ideal system of propositions and methods; a complex of principles and rules. It is with reference to such a system that theories are to be constructed and corroborated.[23] The general aim of the new tendency was to sustain an adequate analysis of the character of

scientific investigations.[24] And so, epistemology as a "transcendental" inquiry into the meaning and conditions of knowledge was gradually replaced by a methodology pursued with an understanding of science as the source of genuine knowledge and paradigm of rationality.[25]

The first significant representation of science as the paradigm of rationality and model of genuine knowledge, came with the positivist orientation. Positivism, along with phenomenalism, pragmatism, operationalism, and empirico-criticism, belong to the empiricist tendency. For the positivist, an inquiry into the conditions of knowledge can be meaningfully pursued only as a methodological inquiry into the principles and methods for the construction and corroboration of scientific theories. Thus, at the heart of the positivist philosophy of science is the belief in the exclusive validity of science.

In his contribution, Karl Popper argued that the problem of this age, which is the possibility and method of achieving progress in human knowledge, can be resolved only in the appreciating of the growth of scientific knowledge. In this regard, it is in following the principles and procedures of scientific inquiry that we are likely to arrive at a system that accurately depicts the world.[26] Thus, researchers in various fields of inquiry, ranging from history to psychology and sociology, which have, with much vigour, engaged in the quest for laws and theories, usually felt apologetic whenever their discipline fell short of the ideas derived from physical science. In the field of education, curriculum theorists have often considered science to be one of the basics, and since the time of Herbert Spencer it has been regarded as an indispensable component of liberal education.[27]

The overwhelming popularity of this image of science arises, at least in part, from the great successes of recent science, particularly, physics.[28] In explaining this success, scientists argue that science has evolved some procedures of inquiry, and that the observed developments in science have been determined by acting on the basis of the outcome of the application of these procedures. These procedures constitute the scientific method, a privileged method in the hands of the scientific community, which disinterestedly and detachedly employs it to reach the scientific goals.[29]

The Post-Modernist World View[30]

In recent times, particularly since the second half of the twentieth-century, the intellectual world has witnessed the emergence of a certain shift in attitude towards reality (metaphysics or ontology), rationality and truth; a rejection of what could be referred to as the 'received view', and accompanied by a neo-Protagorean relativism. The idea of the 'received view' of rationality is here identified with the idea of a universal,

foundational, permanent framework of thought and discourse developed in the 17th century. The programs of discourse that represents this shift include those developed by Thomas Kuhn, Peter Winch, Donald Davidson, Paul K. Feyerabend and a host of others.

In his program, Paul Feyerabend proposed a pluralist conception of rationality, in particular, and worldview in general and meant to present this to stand in place of the enlightenment program characteristic of the modern period. For him, the modernist project has been shown to be sterile.[31]

The present study identifies the positivist worldview that constitutes the climax of modernism as well as the pluralist orientations of the post-modern which ushered in a rather reckless relativism. The study then goes further to establish a rejection of both positivist and post-positivist projects for reasons to be stated, and presents an alternative epistemology of the human person founded on a given ontology, while employing the methodology of education and a given scepticism to enhance a robust representation of the human person.

Feyerabend's 'Post' in the Post-Modern

In his representation, Paul K. Feyerabend sees the commitment to just one theoretical framework or cognitive scheme as 'Monomania'. The clearest form of this criticism today is best identified with Paul Feyerabend's postmodern orientation. A number of assumptions underscore his position. One such assumption is that, the theories, facts, and procedures that constitute the scientific knowledge of a particular time result from specific historical developments, and any such information cannot be about history-independent facts and laws – a rejection of the idea that tradition-independent points of view can overrule traditions. There are different points of view, ways of thinking and knowing. In the same vain, scientific theories branch out in different directions, use different and sometimes incommensurable concepts, and evaluate events in diverse ways. What counts as evidence or as an important or sound science or scientific procedure depends on time, profession and the research group. Nature can be and is indeed approached in many ways, and for every statement, theory or point of view believed to be true with good reasons, there exists conflicting arguments. Human experience, is not restricted to merely intellectual matters, but includes concrete human feelings, faiths and empathy, and involves more than just one single medium of discussion. And so, Paul K. Feyerabend is opposed to a certain program or tendency which, for want of a better name, is referred to as "Methodism", the idea of a method that contains fixed and binding principles for conducting the

business of science, politics or ethics. For Feyerabend, science is not the paradigm of rationality. It is just a belief like any other.

From the point of view of ethics, he privileges ethics without ontology. Furthermore, he proposes a movement from "boundaries without values to values without boundaries".[32] The core of Feyerabends moral philosophy is what he expressed in *Killing Time,* concerning the nature of moral character. For him, "A moral character cannot be created by arguments, education, or an act of will. It cannot be created by any kind of planned action, whether scientific, political, moral or religious".[33] Here, Feyerabend indicates what should not be associated with moral character or where it does not derive from. Morality is not a product of education or any rational intentional, planned action. He compares moral character with what he calls "true love, which he says is a gift, not an achievement". For him, the source or basis of morality or moral character is accidental, such as parental affection and friendship. These, he says, constitute the condition for some kind of stability or balance between what he refers to as "self-confidence" and "a concern for others".[34] According to him, it is possible for us to create these conditions: conditions that are meant to ensure the needed balance as we are never able to create the balance itself. It is only when the balance is enhanced, that the idea of guilt, responsibility, and obligation make real sense. But without the balance between self-confidence and concern for others, these ideas become not just empty words but obstacles.[35] The idea of self-confidence of course, connotes a reliance on ones abilities – abilities to engage one's experience, one's environment and one's reality. The product of employing this ability is to enhance the individual's wellbeing. The need for the project of modernity, of establishing a securely grounded thought system is compared to the vision of Archimedes. Thus, in the *Meditation* II, Descartes writes;

Archimedes, in order that he might draw the terrestrial globe out of it place, demanded that one point be fixed and immovable. In the same way I should have the right to conceive high hopes if I am happy enough to discover one thing only which is certain and immutable.[36]

This immutable foundation – ontological reference is rejected by the post-modernist position of Paul K. Feyerabend and replaces it with Heterogeneity, chaos and pluralism.

Post-modern Ontology

At this point, it is pertinent to ask the question, is there any theory of ontology proposed by postmodern philosophy? In response to this question, it is to be borne in mind that Paul K. Feyerabend, presenting a prototype of the post-modern worldview, rejects any attempt to propose one singular general ground totalizing framework that could be a

reference point, and that could be a foundation for any inquiry. This is with regards to, not only a universal theory of truth, a fixed model of knowledge, a standard reference to method, but, indeed a foundation. And so, it presents a no-foundation epistemology as well as proposing an ontology that is not characterized by relativism, but a pluralism. What this means is that reality could be created, truth is formulated, knowledge is fabricated such that ontology which is the study of being, could only be said to be presented and created or formulated as need be. Reading Feyerabend therefore, one is tempted to raise the question, is it not the case that in proposing a no-universal foundational fixed theory of reality, by itself, proposes a universal theory? To this extent, the post-modernist proposal that there is no fixed theory of knowledge, truth and reality is itself a theory of truth, of knowledge and of reality – a philosophical dead end. Perhaps, an alternative reading of the post-modernist theory of the human person would reject any fixed set of principles, axioms and assumptions, claiming that the character of the human person is hydra-headed and its features are not just pluralistic, but actually indeterminate. We are not to reduce the human person to any fixed model, be it scientific, legal, ethical, or social. Rather, it would be a combination of all these and more. The human person would then be seen as a mystery that can be comprehended only inadequately by anyone even the self.

Thesis and Concluding Remarks

Identifying, with Bernard Lonergan this paper posit that the essence of the human person has to do with the fact that humanity is to be recognized in four characteristics. These characteristics belong to the human nature representing a fundamental orientation in the human person. These are (i) Search for truth (ii) Search for the good (iii) Search for the absolute/infinite and, (iv) Search for love. The human person in relating with these realities that is, truth, good, absolute and love employs the capacity of the senses, of understanding and of judging. The actions of these variables and their relationship with the human person are so complex that they can only be understood imperfectly. The human person, therefore, is driven to the actualization of truth, the good and love. These efforts remain always in the state of progress towards actualization. To this extent, the human person remains an ongoing project.

Endnotes

[1] Ted Honderich, *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy,* 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005), 671.
[2] R. P. Peerrenboom, "Reason, Rationales, and Relativism: What's at Stake in the Conversation Over Scientific Rationality?," *Philosophy Today,* Vol. 34, No.14. (1990), 4.
[3] Toulmin, *Human Understanding,* 45.
[4] Toulmin, *Human Understanding,* 44.
[5] Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism,* 9.
[6] Fritjof Capra, *The Turning Point: Science and the Rising Culture,* (London: Fontana Paper Backs, 1984), 39, John Veith (Trans.) Descartes: *A Discourse on Method and Meditation of First Philosophy*, (London: Everyman's Liberty Press, 1979), 120-121.
[7] Meditation I, In Elizabeth S. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (Eds.), *Philosophical Works of Descartes,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 114.
[8] Haldane & Ross (Eds.), *Philosophical Works of Descartes,* 114.
[9] Haldane & Ross (Eds.), *Philosophical Works of Descartes,* 6.
[10] Haldane & Ross (Eds.), *Philosophical Works of Descartes,* 149.
[11] Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum,* I, IX, In John M. Robertson ed., The Philosophical works of Bacon (London: University Press, 1965), 51-8.
[12] O'Hear, *An Introduction to Philosophy of Science,* 5.
[13] Toulmin, *Human Understanding,* 57.
[14] Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*, 108-109.
[15] Isaac Newton, *Principia* Bk. I, Rule 4, In B.I. Cohen (Ed.), 150.
[16] Isaac Newton, *Principia* Bk. I, Rule 4, In B.I. Cohen (Ed.), 150.
[17] Cohen, *Revolutions in Science,* 150.
[18] Jostein Gaarder, *Sophie's World: A 3000 Year Adventure in Philosophy,* (Ibadan, Spectrum Books, 1996), 181.
[19] Antiquity had its own system constructors in Plato and Aristotle. The Middle Ages have St. Thomas Aquinas who attempted to link Aristotle's system with Christian ethics and theology. After this came the Renaissance with a welter of old and new beliefs about nature and science, God and man. But it was not until the seventeenth century that any significant attempt was made to assemble ideas into a coherent systematic whole.
[20] Randell, P. Peerenboom, 'Reason, Rationales, and Relativism: What's at Stake in the Conversation over Scientific Rationality?' *Philosophy Today,* Vol. 34, No. 14. (November, 1990), 4.
[21] James L. Battersby, "Professionalism, Relativism and Rationality" In P.M.L.A. Vol. 107, No. 1. (1992).
[22] Harre, *The Philosophies of Science: An Introductory Survey,* 18. Many of the germinal ideas of Frege's philosophy are to be found in his *Conceptual Notations* (1879). His philosophy influenced Russell's thought. In the preface to volume I of Russell and Whitehead's *Principia Mathematica* (1910), the authors wrote, "In all questions of logical analysis our chief debt is to Frege". In the same vein, Wittgenstein acknowledged Frege's influence on his thought. In the preface to

Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, Wittgenstein wrote, "I am indebted to Frege's great works and to the writings of Mr. Russell for much of the stimulations of my thoughts". Frege's influence on Carnap was also acknowledged by Carnap who studied under him at the University of Jenna.

[23] Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest,* 65.

[24] William Bechtel, *Philosophy of Science: An Overview of Cognitive Science,* (New Jersey: Lawrence Eribaum, 1990), 1-15.

[25] Ted Benton, *Philosophical Foundations of the Three Sociologies,* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), 21.

[26] Karl R. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, (London: Hutchinson and Co. Publishers Ltd., 1975), 15.

[27] A.F. Chalmers, *What is this Thing Called Science?: An Assessment of the Nature and Status of Science and its Methods*, (London: Open University Press, 1990), 1.

[28] Newton-Smith, *The Rationality of Science,* (New York: Routledge, 1981), 1.

[29] D.C. Philips, *Philosophy Science and Social Inquiry,* (Oxford: Perganon Press, 1988), 3.

[30] A system of beliefs that are interconnected: not merely a collection of separate, independent, unrelated beliefs, but an intertwined, interrelated and interconnected systems of beliefs.

[31] Paul k. Feyerabend presents his position most clearly in *Against Method* (London: Verso, 1987) and *Farewell to Reason* (London: Verso, 1993).

[32] Isaac Ukpokolo, "Navigating Feyerabend's Moral Philosophy from Boundaries Without Values to Values Without Boundaries" In *The Ethics of Subjectivity*, Elvis Imafidon Ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 201.

[33] Paul K. Feyerabend, *Killing Time* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 174.

[34] Feyerabend, *Killing Time,* 174.

[35] Feyerabend, *Killing Time,* 174.

[36] Elizabeth S. and G. R. T. Ross Eds. *Philosophical Works of Descartes*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 149.

2

WHAT SAYEST THOU OF THYSELF? SOME REMARKS ON THE ENTANGLEMENT OF LIFE AND NARRATION AND ITS ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PHILOSOPHICAL CANON

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I. Life and Narration

When we are asked who we are, we often answer in stories. Let us take a look at an example, namely at the answer given to that very question by John the Baptist as told to us by the John the Evangelist[1]. The Evangelist has the Baptist answer the question posed by the Jewish priests and Levites "Who art thou?" – "Σὺ τίς εἶ;" as follows:

I am not the Christ [Ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ὁ χριστός] (John 1:20).

The learned men do not understand this cryptic reply. They continue to interrogate John the Baptist:

What then? Art thou Elias? (John 1:21)

John the Baptist responds:

I am not [Οὐκ εἰμί] (John 1:21).

And a third question follows:

Art thou that prophet? (John 1:21)

John responds and, for the third time, only provides a negative confession: "No [Οὔ]" (John 1:21). The inquisitors become impatient:

Who art thou? […] What sayest thou of thyself? (John 1:22)

"What sayest thou of thyself?" – "τί λέγεις περὶ σεαυτοῦ;" That is a wonderful explication of the initial question "Who art thou?". Who John the Baptist *is*, εἶναι, *is* what he has to *say*, λέγειν, about himself. One could argue that at times the same can hold true for us: Who we are is what we have to say about ourselves and, of course, what others have to say about us. We *are* our stories. We can express who we are by telling –

even, as John does, in a highly condensed way – our story. In fact, it seems we have to express ourselves in stories, it seems to be a specific and rather necessary way of being alive as a human being, in other words, using Odo Marquard's phrase, "*narrare necesse est*" – "to narrate is necessary" (Marquard 2003, 56, 60, 64, 71).

Let us turn back to the Evangelists' narration. After his negative confession to Christ John the Baptist eventually determines himself positively:

I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias (John 1:23).[2]

The inquisition is still not over. Now the Pharisees proceed to question why John baptizes, if he is not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet. John replies:

I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose (John 1:26-27).

This is what John the Baptist wanted and had – narrare *necesse* est (to narrate is *necessary*) – to say about himself – "τί λέγεις περὶ σεαυτοῦ" (John 1:22): Initially it is vital to him to make his story distinguishable from the story of the one who is of the foremost importance. He is not the prophet; he is not Elias and – most notably – he is not Jesus. "Οὐκ εἰμί" – "I am not" is stated by John the Evangelist in strict opposition to the many times he records Jesus saying: "ἐγώ εἰμι …" – "I am …"[3].

Eventually John the Baptist declares who he is positively: He is the one who announces Jesus. Even this positive confession is a conscious redirection from himself and towards Jesus, the one who is coming after – "ὀπίσω" – him. John is the "voice of one crying" – "φωνὴ βοῶντος", he is announcing the one "whom ye know not;" – "μέσος ὑμῶν στήκει ὃν ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε". This story *is* who John the Baptist *is*. The story of John the herald of Jesus Christ *is* John. This story, John is convinced, is precisely what any person who wishes to know who he is must learn about him. John encounters himself through his story and he tells this story to those who wish to know him. Thus those – be it the Jewish priests, Levites, Pharisees or the reader of the story in the present day – need this story to understand him as the human being he understood himself as to be. "To comprehend anything human", Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset observed, "be it personal or collective, one must tell its history" (Gasset 1941, 214) – "Para comprender algo humano, personal o colectivo, es preciso contar una historia" (Gasset 1970, 49). And that means nothing else but: one must make accessible our *stories*.

Human beings attempting to comprehend other human beings need to learn about the other's life stories. Here we see that life and narration are, as Edmund Husserl's earliest disciples, Wilhelm Schapp described, *entangled* (Schapp 1953).

Not only are our histories vital for comprehending the other and that our lives and the stories we tell inextricable, even the stories tell do not necessarily have to be factual. Returning to our example, it does not even matter if we consider John the Baptist to be a factual or fictious person, the real herald of Christ or not. As Paul Ricœur states, "fiction is quasi-historical, just as much as history is quasi-fictive" (Ricœur 1990, 190). German novelist Siegfried Lenz notes we have to learn that even those experiences 'made' by fictious personal still hold relevance for us. Our being or vitality is very much alive in the fictitious experience. Lenz explains:

> "Experiences made by the invented person do not only concern them; they are transferable experiences. Novel characters would never challenge our interest in this way if we did not feel that our matter was being negotiated; we stop and say: that is how it will be. […] At such moments it becomes clear that we need the invented person if we want to give expression to the general or to find the hidden law that underlies human existence." (Lenz 1981, 437-438)[4]

From this we expand the essential nature of stories from being necessary for understanding others and a fundamental part of our lives to incorporate stories of both fact and fiction that bring vitality to our experiences and our understanding of ourselves and others. We could say, *narration is being alive*. It seems we would not be able to eradicate our aliveness out of narration, even if we wanted to. When the human being narrates it inevitably add its humanity or vitality into the narration. When the human being narrates it implicitly speaks – λέγειν – of the human being – ἄνθρωπος – in general. Conversely, narrating – λέγειν – implies to tell about the human - ἄνθρωπος. Anthropology implies narration as narration implies anthropology. Our aliveness remains alive when it is spoken, written, or sung, in any the narrative form. Indeed, we encounter narration as a form extracorporal human vitality.

Not only are we able to convey this vitality, we are in need of this vitality. It allows us to understand our story, it allows us to be understood and furthermore to understand other human beings. Interconnected human life itself comes to reality in stories just as stories come to reality in human life. Schapp even insisted, that access to the human being is "only possible through stories, only possible through his [her/their] stories" (Schapp 1953, 100)[5].

Being alive is narrative. The *telling of stories* at all, is possible, because we *are alive in a narrative sense*. It can be said that stories enable our existence, and our existence enables stories. Maybe we can even say that *the telling of stories enables the living of stories*, and *the living of stories enables the telling of stories*. Life is always life's story and life's story is always something living, something living in which we see our vitality reflected back to us. Returning to John the Baptist we see he is who he is, and he can tell his story because he is his story and he is his story because he can tell it. *Life is narration and narration is alive*.

This makes the story of John the Baptist being asked who he is a story that can affect us all, whether we understand him to be a herald of Christ or something entirely different. Certainly, we hear the story of the herald of Christ, but we find a human being narratively self-determining himself. This self-determination can speak to any human being. And here the significance of our telling the stories of ourselves takes on crucial importance: The question of "Who am I?" is connected at the very foundations of our existence with the question of "What ought I do?". These questions converge so dramatically at the foundations of existence that they seem to form only one single question: work on the question "Who am I?" seems to be the same work as that concerning the question "What should I do?". Martin Luther understood the Baptist in precisely this sense in a sermon on the Gospel according to John. He has John the Baptist say:

I know neither how to help nor how to advise you [scil. the inquiring scholars], nor indeed myself; but I know of one who can help me and you alike. […] [F]ollow [Christ], I and will do so as well (Luther 2002, 31).[6]

Follow Christ – that is what is to be done here. While we may know the story of John only in its outline, we know not only his actions, his being, but also his "Why?", his practical answer to the question "What ought I do?". We know John's ought-to-be: to be a follower – or a precursor – of Christ. This connection between being and ought, between what I am and what I ought to be is present in John's story *in concreto*, but it is present *in abstracto*, as the fight for self-determination, for anyone who comes across this narration.

When we hear the story of John, we also hear – without this having to be expressly spoken of – his normative narrative. A story, as we would like to put it, thus concerns the genesis of action and the reasons for it, or, put into philosophical terminology, is and ought and the connection between the two at the foundations of existence. Our biographical narrative is not an objective narration. In the biographical narrative, in the understanding of the world and oneself according to this biographical narrative, our normative understanding of the world is also reflected.

The biographical narrative tells not only of our being, but also of who we are, and this self-determination necessarily includes the ought to which we subject this being.

Let us summarize our findings: We *are* our stories. Being alive implies being entangled in stories, implies tell one's story – or at least desiring to have a story – and to deal with stories of other human beings. A hermeneutic of human life needs cannot be complete without taking into account that being alive happens qua narration. An epistemology of human understanding that disregards stories, as far as we can tell, will necessarily be an ignorant reductive epistemology. We have to take stories seriously as a part of the expressivity of human life. Ricœur remarked that "the novel occupied a still vacant place in the realm of human sciences" (Ricœur 1990, 191) – "le roman occupait ici une place encore vacante dans l'empire des sciences humaines" (Ricœur 1985, 278). We agree with Ricœur. However, we would like to broaden his understanding and insist that this holds true not only for the novel, but for stories in the broadest sense as we can find it in Schapp when he observed that even the "corporeal appearance" of a human being is actually "an appearance of his [her/their] stories" (Schapp 1953, 100)[7]. With stories, the narratives of life, we possess a reservoir of testimonies of human self-understanding that has thus far, despite the works of Schapp, Ricœur and others – been widely underestimated. We must finally and fully accept narrations as, in the words of Austrian thinker Robert Musil, "contributions to the intellectual dealing with the world" (Musil 1978, 942)[8].

II. Consequences

We have to tried to show the mutual implication of life and narration. Our hypothesis may seem prima facie deceptively simple, but there are some surprisingly powerful ethical consequences to it.

If it is true that stories – in the broadest sense – and human life are inextricably entangled then the disregard of some stories as irrelevant, beyond the canon, or primitive equals the disregard of those people who listen to and tell these stories. The western humanities have hegemonically determined for centuries what stories are of relevance. Those stories were mostly written by white, heterosexual men and those stories were mostly written down – even though some foundational figures of the western culture, most notably Socrates and Jesus, never wrote a single line of their own teachings. The African culture, for example, was and continues to be for its many people who continue to hand down their stories orally deemed 'primitive', pre-Western, of less relevance, inferior. However, if we take the entanglement of life and narrative seriously, we might have to give up the idea of a narrow canon.

Of course, can establish different parameters of, for example, the impact of different stories. The story of Jesus Christ has certainly had a great impact, but that does hardly make the stories of the Yoruba or Akan any less relevant. It is a still prevailing predominantly western misunderstanding that impact – often advanced by subsequent domination and subordination – is *the* parameter of relevance. We have to give up the idea of canonical stories as story of superior relevance, of a canon that one has to read to become a human being, of a canon that determines that only those who think within these given stories are truly thinking and thus entitled to speak their thoughts. We have to give up the idea of a *general canon*, because a general canon is necessarily an anti-inclusive and superiorist tool of domination that is compiled by those in power. However, power is not a philosophical argument. There is, if we agree to the interconnectedness of life and narration, no philosophical argument for a canon. Any argument for a general canon is an argument against the relevance of *all* human beings.

When we accept life and stories and stories and life as what they are by their blending, we have to understand that ignoring, disregarding, suppressing stories means to ignore, disregard and suppress human life. Africa was during the colonial era not allowed to have a story, was not allowed to continue her story. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel famously claimed that Africa is "no historical part of the world; it shows no movement or development" (Hegel 1986, 129)[9], and anything one might of relevance there is actually part of Europe's or Asia's history. Africa, in Hegel's opinion, which was highly impactful for the development of what is to be considered part of the philosophical canon and what not, has no story to tell and – and the colonial reality shows the transition of this philosophical assessment into tangible reality – thus there are no living beings to considered as fully human. This practice has to be discontinued. Philosophy has to desuperiorized, i.e. philosophy has to understand and dismantle the – implicit or explicit – assumptions of superiority in all its iterations. All must be able to determine who they are so that they can determine how they should act. Thus everyone is included in the ethical conversations of our times and we can collaboratively broaden our epistemological understanding and desuperiorize the philosophical canon by making it inclusive so that philosophy as a discipline can be a vital part of our coming history.

Endnotes

[1] We will use the King James Version to cite the English text of the New Testament and the Aland & Aland 26th edition for the Greek text.

[2] See Esaias 40:3.

[3] See for example John 6:20, 7:9, 10:11 and many more, furthermore see Thyen 2005, 112.

[4] This is my translation. The German text reads: "Erfahrungen, die die erfundene Person macht, betreffen nicht nur sie; es sind übertragbare Erfahrungen. Niemals würden Romanfiguren unser Interesse derart herausfordern, wenn wir nicht spürten, daß an ihnen auch unsere Sache verhandelt wird; wir stutzen und sagen: so ist es, so wird es sein. […] In solchen Augenblicken wird deutlich, daß wir auf die erfundene Person angewiesen sind, wenn wir dem Allgemeinen Ausdruck verschaffen oder die verborgene Gesetzmäßigkeit auffinden wollen, die dem menschlichen Dasein zugrundeliegt".

[5] This is my translation. The full German passage reads: "Wir meinen auch, daß der Zugang zu dem Mann, zu dem Menschen, nur über Geschichten, nur über seine Geschichten erfolgt".

[6] This is my translation. The German text reads: „Ich weiß euch [scil. den Gelehrten] nicht zu helfen noch zu raten, auch mir selbst nicht; sondern ich weiß und kenne einen, der mir und euch helfen kann. […] [H]änget euch an [Christus], ich wills auch tun".

[7] This is my translation. The German text reads: "das leibliche Auftauchen des Menschen [ist] nur ein Auftauchen seiner Geschichten ist".

[8] This is my translation. The German text reads: "Beiträge zur geistigen Bewältigung der Welt". Musil refers here only to the novel.

[9] This is my translation. The full German passage reads: "[Afrika] ist kein geschichtlicher Weltteil, er hat keine Bewegung und Entwicklung aufzuweisen, und was etwa in ihm, das heißt in seinem Norden geschehen ist, gehört der asiatischen und europäischen Welt zu".

SECTION I

ECCLESIASTICAL/THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES AND SEMINARY FORMATION

3

HERMENEUTIC OF CONTINUITY AND THEOLOGICAL FORMATION

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Abstract
The foundation of theology is Scripture. In an attempt to give a necessary clarification of this statement, I allude to the words of Anthony Akinwale: "The Bible contains the word of God. But the word of God is not contained by the Bible…" Since theology is fundamentally a speech about God, that speech has to be first of all 'a speech from God' before it can be 'a speech about God'. In other words, theology is a reflection on God who speaks (Word – *Logos*) and about his word that he speaks in Scripture and Tradition. This is the sense in which one understands Akinwale's statement, and how one ought to understand the basis of theology in Scripture. *Hermeneutics* is the branch of theology that deals with the principles of Biblical interpretation. Correct hermeneutical approach is therefore essential to a proper understanding of the truth revealed by God. For example, it is essential to the full understanding of the OT to employ a hermeneutic that many OT texts are types or prefigurements of Christ and his fulfilment of Scripture in the NT. One very important interpretive principle that Augustine enunciates in his *De Doctrina Christiana* is that one text of Scripture cannot be preferred to another or played off against another. The real truth conforms to everything that has been revealed. What this paper attempts to do is to apply this same principle of interpretation to how theology is done. In this understanding, Scripture cannot be reflected upon to the exclusion of the Magisterium and the tradition of the Christian faith, rooted in the Apostles and reflected upon by the Fathers of the Church.

Keywords: Hermeneutic, Magisterium, Apostolic Faith, Fathers of the Church, Continuity

Introduction

It is important to note that one cannot sufficiently discuss the subject of theological formation without also broaching the subject of theological method. In this sense, theological formation is formation in method. In his epic work, *Method in Theology*, which reflects on the operations theologians perform as they do theology, Bernard Lonergan says: "A Theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix."[1] Two things stand out in this statement: firstly, 'a cultural matrix', which is loosely interpreted as that from which a culture originates, develops, or takes form, and secondly, 'role of a religion', which can be here understood as the function of religion in the process of forming, shaping, and developing a culture. In this regard, religion plays a significant role in shaping a culture. What Lonergan proposes in his statement shows that theology mediates the role a religion plays in shaping a culture. The question is, with what special tool does theology carry out this mediation? Theology mediates as a speech about God. Therefore, how religion shapes a culture must necessarily relate a people and their cultural terrains to God as their beginning and their end. And since theology is fundamentally a speech about God, that speech has to be first of all 'a speech from God' before it can be 'a speech about God'. In other words, in theology we seek explanation and understanding of what God has revealed. In this context of mediation, theology sheds light on how religion shapes culture, so that in forming and shaping culture, the practice of religion is a response to what God has revealed. Consequently, every religious speech is a speech about God because it is a response to the word of God.

In laying out the framework for speaking about method in theology, Lonergan says: "Method is not a set of rules to be followed meticulously by a dolt. It is a framework for collaborative creativity. It would outline the various clusters of operations to be performed by theologians when they go about their various tasks."[2] He highlights eight distinct tasks for contemporary theology: research, interpretation, history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communications. What he refers to as functional specialties explains how he arrives at this list of eight distinct tasks. Again, when Lonergan speaks of method, he is not referring to a set of rules to be followed blindly but a framework for creativity. Within such dynamism, what is underscored is not 'writing theology' but 'method in theology'. According to him, the task of writing method in theology is not concerned with objects that theologians expound but with the operations that theologians perform. One must, however, avoid a hasty interpretation of Lonergan that opposes object of theology to theological method. No matter the method, there is always the fundamental object

of theology that method must not detract from, namely, the First Truth. Whatever the operation of the theologian, his task is denominated by the First Truth. In this way, theological method is not opposed to the object of theology, because the object determines the operation. As a matter of fact, God is not the object but subject of theology, and he determines the operation of the theologian.

For the purpose of this paper, we shall attempt to transpose the idea of Lonergan on how method works generally to how 'hermeneutic of continuity' functions in theological method and formation. According to Lonergan, "A method is a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results."[3] Two things are fundamental in this assertion: 'distinct operations' and 'relatedness of the operations.' From these two, Lonergan describes the function of method in such a way that shows the integrity and continuity of operations, yielding cumulative and progressive results. He says:

There is a method, then, where there are distinct operations, where each operation is related to the others, where the set of relations forms a pattern, where the pattern is described as the right way of doing the job, where operations in accord with the pattern may be repeated indefinitely, and where the fruits of such repetition are, not repetitious, but cumulative and progressive.[4]

What Lonergan states here gives the broad framework for speaking about hermeneutic of continuity and method in theology. Every authentic theological method must explore the interrelatedness of the distinct approaches to understanding the reality that is revealed and proposed for belief. This paper aims to show that hermeneutic of continuity in theological method and formation entails proper interpretation of scripture, tradition of the faith, and ecclesiastical texts, in order to emphasize their unity. The task of theology is to work for this unity rather than the too prevalent "hermeneutic of rupture." In this understanding, "Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God,"[5] and its authentic interpretation has been entrusted to the teaching office of the Church. For this reason, "sacred tradition, sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church are so connected and associated that one of them cannot stand without the others."[6] Thus, interpretation of the word of God is a task of the Magisterium of the Church: it is a task it carries out in fidelity to the tradition of the Christian faith; in fidelity to the *sensus fidei* of the whole people of God; with fidelity to the apostolic origins of Christianity; and with profound reference to the reflections upon the Christian faith by the Fathers of the Church.

The Function of Hermeneutics in Theological Method

The fact that Scripture is the foundation of theology shows that every theological enterprise is a reflection on the Word of God. It means theology is a reflection on God who speaks (Word – *Logos*), and about his word that he speaks in Scripture and Tradition. *Hermeneutics* is the branch of theology that deals with the principles of Biblical interpretation. Correct hermeneutical approach is therefore essential to a proper understanding of the truth revealed by God. This approach underscores the integrity of the whole of Scripture, and how theological interpretation functions in fidelity to the unity of the truth that is revealed. It is along this line that St. Augustine, in his *On the Christian Doctrine*[7], recommends that when interpreting Scripture, one text cannot be preferred to another or played off against another. Since everything the Holy Spirit intends to teach in Scripture is true, all texts which relate to a given problem must be examined for what they say about it, and the correct understanding will necessarily be an understanding which permits every text to retain its full force—that is, the real truth will conform to everything that has been revealed. Working against this "hermeneutic" is any tendency to interpret Scripture according to the "plain meaning" of a favorite text, while ignoring other texts which provide additional light on the same subject. This is the practice of quoting the scripture in isolation, and it is tantamount to "hermeneutic of rupture."

In order to highlight the function of hermeneutics in theological method, the correct principle of interpretation does not only apply to Scripture, but also to everything that God has revealed in the Christian tradition. Describing the interrelatedness of different scriptural passages, and the relation of scripture to magisterial texts, Jeff Mirus says:

Because the Magisterium of the Church teaches with the same authority as Sacred Scripture (after all, the same Holy Spirit inspires and guarantees both), a Catholic can properly understand a Christian teaching only if he takes into account everything that both Scripture and the Magisterium have said on a subject. Any understanding which fastens on what Scripture says to the exclusion of the Magisterium (as Protestants typically do) or which fastens on this or that statement of the Magisterium in preference to others (as Traditionalists typically do) is doomed to be incorrect. The proper interpretation will always be the one which allows for the truth of all the relevant Scriptural and Magisterial texts.[8]

What the statement of Jeff Mirus attests to is the unity of scripture, tradition and the magisterium. In chapter II of the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, where it discusses Transmission of Divine Revelation, the document states that all that God

had revealed for the salvation of all peoples should remain in their entirety, throughout the ages, and be transmitted to all generations.[9] "Therefore, Christ the Lord, in whom the entire Revelation of the most high God is summed up (cf. 2 Cor. 1:20; 3:16; 4:6) commanded the apostles to preach the Gospel, which had been promised beforehand by the prophets, and which he fulfilled in his own person and promulgated with his own lips."[10] The apostles transmitted what they received from the Lord to succeeding generations. In order to preserve the living and full Gospel in the Church, the apostles left bishops as their successors. They gave them "their own position of teaching authority."[11] The transmission of the faith from the apostles is the characteristic feature of the *apostolicity of origin*, since the Church was first organized by the apostles chosen by Christ; it is the feature of *apostolicity of teaching*, because what the Church teaches now is essentially what was taught by the Apostles; and it is the feature of *apostolicity of succession in office*, since there has been an unbroken historical transmission of episcopal powers, through ordination, from the Apostles to all the Bishops in communion with the Bishop of Rome today. This does not only guarantee faithfulness to revelation, but also to its continuity. Theology, which is a speech about God, because it is a reflection on God's word, must therefore employ, in its method, the principle of interpretation that functions on the unity and continuity of the Christian faith tradition. According to the fathers of the Second Vatican Council, "This sacred Tradition, then, and the sacred Scripture of both Testaments, are like a mirror, in which the Church, during its pilgrim journey here on earth, contemplates God from whom she receives everything, until such time as she is brought to see him face to face as he really is (cf. Jn 3:2)."[12] In this regard, Sacred Tradition and sacred Scripture are bound closely together, and communicate one with the other; they make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God, which is entrusted to the Church.[13]

The Council fathers further state that the task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition,[14] has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone.[15] The authority of the magisterium in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. It is not superior to the Word of God, but is its servant. It teaches only what has been handed on to it. The document *Dei Verbum* concludes the section on the "Transmission of Divine Revelation" with the profound statement of unity of Sacred Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium: "It is clear, therefore, that, in the supremely wise arrangement of God, sacred tradition, sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church are so connected and associated that one of them cannot stand without the others. Working together, each in its own way under the action of the

one Holy Spirit, they all contribute effectively to the salvation of souls."[16] Theologians have important task to perform in giving authentic interpretation of the Word of God. Since theirs is a service of the truth, whatever method they adopt must always work for the continuity of what God has revealed in Christ, which is rooted in the apostolic faith, and which is correctly interpreted and taught by the Magisterium. Therefore, the theologian does not engage in reckless scholarship that emphasizes his subjective views over the inherent truth of the Christian tradition; rather, he functions within the hermeneutic environment that is subservient to the teaching office of the Bishops. It must be noted here that "Both the teaching office of the Bishop and the teaching office of the theologian are at the service of the truth. For this reason, they are not at variance. However, the teaching office of the theologian is at the service of the teaching office of the Bishop."[17] A more specific scrutiny of the mission of the theologian is necessary to see how his service of the truth works for continuity rather than rupture.

Mission of the Theologian and Formation in Method[18]

The profound mission of the theologian is silence and contemplation. This seems both strange and paradoxical, since theology is fundamentally a speech. Yet, this is the primary mission of the theologian, because the purpose of silence and contemplation, as Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI, once said, is that "they serve, in the distractions of daily life, to preserve permanent union with God."[19] He stressed further that the purpose is so that "that union with God may always be present in our souls and may transform our entire being."[20] The theologian is one who is first and foremost called to a union with God. In contemplating God who is the First Truth, the theologian is transformed by the truth that he seeks to understand. It is only in this way that he can relate the fruits of his contemplation to others. Silence and contemplation are therefore the essential mission of the theologian. This is his mission if, in the loquacity of his every day, in the plethora of words, he makes the essential words heard. Through words, he makes present the fruits of his contemplation; he makes present the Word, the *Logos* who comes from God, the Word who is God. The theologian lives in a world where there is the possibility of the distractions that come from so many words. If he is to make the Word who comes from God present, it has to be through a process of purification of his thoughts, which in addition must be above all a process of purification of his words.

John the Evangelist says of the Word of God that was coming into the world that he was the true light that enlightens every man. "He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not" (Jn 1:10). The world did not know him because the

world did not enter that silence in which John was privileged to know the *Logos* of God and made him known. We cannot open the world and, indeed ourselves, to the Word without entering into the silence of God from which his Word proceeds. And as Benedict XVI says: "For the purification of our words, hence, also for the purification of the words of the world, we need that silence which becomes contemplation, which introduces us into God's silence and brings us to the point where the Word, the redeeming Word, is born."[21] To enter into silence and contemplation always means to hear something, to hear a speech. The one who enters into this silence is not the one who speaks, but he listens. In this regard St Thomas Aquinas, with a long tradition, says that in theology God is not the object of which we speak. This is our own normal conception. God, in reality, is not the object but the subject of theology. The one who speaks through theology, the speaking subject, must be God himself. And our speech and thoughts must always serve to ensure that what God says, the Word of God, is listened to and finds room in the world. For this reason, the practice of true theology cannot be the substitution of our words for the Word of God. In theology God speaks, and in the process the theologian must learn to forfeit his own words, so that through this process of purification his words may be nothing but the instrument through which God can speak, and, hence, that God may truly be the subject and not the object of theology.

When the theologian enters the silence in which God alone speaks, he must be attentive and seek the true word of God. A phrase from the first chapter of the First Letter of St. Peter easily comes to mind: "*Animas vestras castificantes in oboedientia veritatis*" (1 Pet 1:22). Here Peter speaks of the purification of the soul that comes from obedience to the truth. Obedience to the truth must "purify" our souls and thus guide us to upright speech and upright action. The lesson in this, as it relates to the mission of the theologian, is that when there is obedience to the truth, the theologian will avoid what Benedict XVI calls prostitution of words and of the soul. According to the Pope Emeritus, "speaking in the hope of being applauded, governed by what people want to hear out of obedience to the dictatorship of current opinion, is considered to be a sort of prostitution: of words and of the soul."[22] He explains further that the "purity" to which the Apostle Peter is referring means not submitting to these standards, not seeking applause, but rather, seeking obedience to the truth. In other words, the theologian must not only learn to forfeit his own words, but he must also constantly seek to be at the service of the true word of God. Such service to the word of God is only authentic when opinions are not substituted for the truth. This can sometimes be the danger in the theological enterprise. This is why the mission of the

theologian should draw its proper life and derive its impetus from the obedience to the truth.

The words of Benedict XVI aptly convey the authentic content and method of the theological enterprise when he says:

> And I think that this is the fundamental virtue for the theologian, this discipline of obedience to the truth, which makes us, although it may be hard, collaborators of the truth, mouthpieces of truth, for it is not we who speak in today's river of words, but it is the truth which speaks in us, who are really purified and made chaste by obedience to the truth. So it is that we can truly be harbingers of the truth.[23]

The same message is communicated in the words of St. Ignatius of Antioch: "Those who have understood the Lord's words understand his silence, for the Lord should be recognized in his silence."[24] We grasp the true significance and depth of the words of Jesus only when we attain that silence of the Lord, his being with the Father from which words come. The words of Jesus are born in silence on the Mountain, as is often said that he withdrew to the mountain to pray. The theologian, who has the mission to convey the words of Jesus, must also take his instance from this communion of the Son with the Father. Indeed, "words are born from this silence of communion with the Father, from being immersed in the Father, and only on reaching this point, on starting from this point, do we arrive at the real depth of the Word and can ourselves be authentic interpreters of the Word. The Lord invites us verbally to climb the Mountain with him and thus, in his silence, to learn anew the true meaning of words."[25] It is when the words of the theologian are born from the silence of communion with the Father and with Christ, the *Logos* of the Father, that it can be truly said of him: "Anyone who hears you hears me" (Lk 10:16). The content and context of Evangelization is the Word of God. If it is therefore true that those who hear us hear the Lord, then the task of evangelization already has its true force and its assurance of success, since the word of God stands for ever, and it accomplishes the purpose for which it is spoken (Cf. Is 48:8; 55:11). It is the word that is born from the silence of communion with the Father through the Son and in the Holy Spirit that is the force of Evangelization. The theologian must always enter this silence and contemplation.

However, the nature of authentic theology is that it is both a quest and a speech. Hence, it is the mission of a theologian that he searches and that he speaks. The quest and speech is primarily about God, and also about every creature in its relation to God as its first beginning and its last end.[26] In proposing what the nature and task of

theology is, I allude to the words of Anthony Akinwale: "This search and this speech can only be undertaken by one who encounters God, human beings, and the universe in an attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible manner. Each and all of these four levels of conscious intentionality must be sustained in prayer such that, in this encounter, the theologian is prayerfully attentive, prayerfully intelligent, prayerfully reasonable, and prayerfully responsible."[27] It follows that in its method, theology must always apply the principle of *fides quaerens intellectum*, where faith both informs and sustains the task of theology, and where the theologian does not yield to the recklessness of relativism.

We have considered how silence and contemplation are profoundly the mission of the theologian. Yet, because theology is also authentically a speech, the mission of the theologian is also essentially to speak about God. However, the one who endeavours to speak about God must also have a profound desire for God. Here is the meeting point of theology as speech and quest, because there can be no speech about God where there is no quest for God. Thus, in the larger picture of the mission of the theologian, as he speaks about God, his speech must be grounded in the silence and contemplation that we have talked about. The God who has placed in every human being the natural desire for him (*desiderium naturale in Deum*)[28] is at the heart of the quest that theology is. The quest is not a blind quest, but one that is born out of a sincere desire for God. In Athens the Greeks erected an altar "to an unknown God" (cf. Acts 17:23). As it were, they had a desire for what was unknown; and this is absurd. In Book VIII of his *De Trinitate*, St. Augustine establishes the principle that no one loves what he does not know. Thus, we do not love the unknown, but love to know the unknown. Here is how Augustine puts it:

> For, since 'we walk by faith, not by sight' [2 Cor 5:7], we certainly do not yet see God, as the same one has said: 'face to face' [1 Cor 13:12]. Unless we love him now, we shall never see Him. But who loves that which he does not know? For something can be known and not loved; but what I am asking is, whether something can be loved that is not known? If that is impossible, then no one loves God before he knows Him. And what does it mean to love God, except to see Him and to perceive him steadfastly with our mind? For He is not a body to be sought for with bodily eyes.[29]

It follows that to speak about God is to have a desire for God; and one cannot have a desire for what one does not known. Hence, we speak of the task of theology as a speech and a quest. And since one speaks about a person or thing to the extent that one knows the person or thing,

then the validity of what the theologian says about God must come from his deep knowledge of God. Such knowledge comes from the silence and contemplation into with the theologian enters. As a result, the knowledge is the fruit of both faith and reason.

The Church teaches that "God, the first principle and last end of all things, can be known with certainty from the created world by the natural light of human reason."[30] The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states further: "In the historical condition in which he finds himself, however, man experiences many difficulties in coming to know God by the light of reason alone."[31] Consequently, the knowledge of God that comes from reason must be from reason that is ennobled, enlightened, empowered and elevated by faith. What the Church teaches in the two instances is true and valid. In the first instance, from the things that have been made (cf. Rom 1:20), any reasonable and intelligent person can come to the conclusion that God exists. On the other hand, there are reasonable and intelligent people who have not been able to come to the conclusion that God exists. For the latter group, what is missing is faith. That God exists is self-evident in itself since the predicate is included in the essence of the subject. But it is not self-evident to us because we do not know the essence of God. It is for this reason that the proposition needs to be demonstrated by the things that are more known to us, though less known in their nature – namely, by effects.[32] From what we have said, it is true and valid that God can be known by the natural light of human reason from the created world. But because God is Mystery – not in the sense that God is unintelligible, but in the sense that who God is cannot be exhausted – to attempt to know God by the light of reason alone is fraught with so many difficulties. Reason must be enlightened and elevated by faith. The God whom the theologian seeks to speak about is a *mystery*, so the theologian must recognize that the created intellect cannot know God perfectly. God is knowable, and he is knowable infinitely. Yet the infinitely knowable God cannot be known infinitely by the finite intellect of the creature. And because the theologian cannot exhaust the meaning of who God is, he must fall in love with the *mystery* that God is, so that he may be purified, and so that his speech may truly be about God whom he has fallen in love with. He is called to live a holy life by constant conversion to God.

Furthermore, when the theologian speaks about God out of desire for God, it means "God is the subject matter of the speech that takes its inspiration from the natural desire for God and the God who fulfills that desire by revealing himself, and who gives the Church's Magisterium as a gift to ensure that what is revealed is rightly interpreted."[33] Theology is, therefore, a quest to understand God and what God has revealed about himself, and it is also a speech about God

who reveals himself. In this regard, "It is a search for understanding and a speech about the search, a speech in which the speaker seeks to understand for himself and seeks to explain to his audience the One he has found, or rather, the One who has found him."[34] If in the task and mission of theology, quest, speech and desire are interwoven, the mission of the theologian, vis-à-vis the task of interpretation and evangelization, must flow from a profound encounter with the God whom he has found and whom he loves, and his attempt to make this God known to others so that they too may love him. His speech will always be about the God of love so that those who listen to his explanation of the true word of God may also come to the knowledge and love of the God who speaks and is spoken about.

It must be noted that though theology is a speech about God, it is also a speech about creatures. However, theology cannot be reduced to discourse about creatures. As a matter of fact, when it is said that theology is a speech about creatures, that speech cannot be isolated from the speech about God. For this reason Thomas Aquinas teaches that theology is not concerned with creatures *in se*, but only as they are related to God as their beginning and end.[35] Thus, when the theologian speaks about creatures he is not to use the methods of the natural or social sciences – though he does not ignore the findings of these other branches of knowledge – he must speak about them as a theologian. In other words, it is in his speech about God that he must speak about creatures. As much as other branches of knowledge can be of help to theology, the office of theology must not be usurped by these other branches of knowledge. The implication of this is that the theologian must engage in the task of interpretation and evangelization as one who primarily and essentially speaks about God. What he does in his speech about God is seek to understand the God who has created all things, and this desire to understand the mystery of God gives theology its character as a quest. St. Anselm of Canterbury speaks of this effort of the human mind to understand the mystery of God when he wrote:

> I am not trying, O Lord, to penetrate thy loftiness, for I cannot begin to match my understanding with it, but I desire in some measure to understand thy truth, which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand in order to believe, but I believe in order to understand. For this too I believe, that "unless I believe, I shall not understand."[36]

It is clear then that, in his speech about God, the theologian does not first seek to understand before he believes, but he believes so as to understand (*credo ut intelligam*). These words of Anselm have given theology the classical character of "faith seeking understanding" (*fides*

quaerens intellectum). Long before Anselm, the Fathers of the Church, especially Augustine, demonstrated the truth in these statements. From the outset of his most profound theological work, *De Trinitate*, Augustine impressed on his reader that the starting point of his quest for the immaterial *imago Dei* was faith in the Trinity, and that throughout the quest he was going to be guided by faith. "The *De Trinitate* is a search, an *inquisitio*, as Augustine puts it. It is the embodiment of a principle of Catholic theology that Augustine constantly invoked and that St. Anselm later formulated: *fides quaerens intellectum*. Faith is, therefore, the starting point for Augustine. We cannot come to an understanding of the mystery of the trinity without the *initium fidei*.[37] The theologian who speaks about God must always have this *initium fidei*. The *initium fidei* of the theologian is not an isolated private revelation, nor is it a rupture from what the Christian community believes to be revealed through Jesus Christ, which the Apostles taught and passed on to succeeding generations of Christian disciples, the deposit of faith (*depositum fidei*). Thus, the mission of the theologian, in his task of interpretation, is to constantly work hermeneutic of continuity in the understanding and explanation of the Christian faith. His mission as theologian is one that he undertakes personally but on behalf of the believing community. In his regard, "The task of theology is to show that the act of faith and the act of good use of the human intellect are not incompatible."[38] And to have great impact in the task of interpretation, the theologian must be a man of faith, he must be intelligent and he must be reasonable.

Conclusion

This paper examined hermeneutic of continuity as the proper principle of interpretation, in which the unity and integrity of the faith tradition is the task of theology. Theological formation must therefore consist in the proper formation of theological method, so that the one who is thus formed recognizes his mission and his teaching office to be at the service of the truth and in obedience to the truth. For the theologian to be at the service of the truth is for him to work for continuity rather than rupture in the tradition of the Christian faith. As principle of interpretation, hermeneutic of continuity allows for the truth of the relevant scriptural and magisterial texts, mediated by the faith tradition that goes back to the apostles. This principle is opposed to any interpretive technique which severs one or more Magisterial texts, or one or more passages of Scripture, from other texts. Such a technique is a "hermeneutic of rupture". The right principle is a "hermeneutic of continuity", and this principle lies in the heart of true theological formation and theological method. For over two centuries now, "Western intellectual life, with the deep influence of modernism, has been dominated increasingly by a

"hermeneutic of rupture", a broad principle of interpretation of the Good which dismisses tradition and opts instead for the latest ideas, as if by the very fact of coming later in time, these ideas must be superior—a misconception arising largely from the Western notion of "progress"."[39] In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, this hermeneutic of rupture was imported into Catholic theology by those who fell victim to Modernism. Modernism essentially finds religious truth in the current lived experience of Christians. As a remedy, this paper proposes proper theological formation that is rooted in "hermeneutic of continuity", and in which the theologian sees his task as that of service to the integral truth of Scripture, sacred Tradition, and the Magisterium. The study of the Fathers of the Church must be an integral part of this theological formation.

Endnotes

[1] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), xi

[2] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, xi

[3] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 4

[4] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 4

[5] Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 10

[6] Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 10

[7] The following insight is an explanation of the thoughts of St. Augustine provided by Jeff Mirus in his article "Benedict's Hermeneutic of Continuity", written and uploaded for CatholicCulture.org, January 30, 2009. https://www.catholicculture.org /commentary/benedicts-hermeneutic-continuity/. Retrieved on December 30, 2019.

[8] Jeff Mirus in his article "Benedict's Hermeneutic of Continuity", written and uploaded for CatholicCulture.org, January 30, 2009. https://www.catholicculture.org /commentary/benedicts-hermeneutic-continuity/. Retrieved on December 30, 2019.

[9] Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 7

[10] Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 7

[11] St. Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, III, 3, 1

[12] Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 7

[13] Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 9, 10

[14] Cf. First Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith*, c. 3 (on Faith): Denz. 1972 (3011).

[15] Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 10. Cf. Pius XII, Encyclical *Humani Generis*, 12 August 1950: Denz. 1972 (3886).

[16] Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 10

[17] Francis Adedara, "Marriage and Family Life in Service of Truth: Theological Perspectives on Reception of the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*" in *Abuja Journal of Philosophy and Theology*, 7 (2017) 80-81.

[18] What I discuss in this section is the variation of a section of the paper I read at a Conference of the Southwest Association of Nigerian Catholic Theologians. See Francis Adedara, "The Mission of the Theologian and the Task of Evangelization: A Reflection on the Nigerian Context", in *The Theologian and the New Evangelization in the South-West of Nigeria, Conference Proceedings*, vol. I (Ibadan: A Publication of Southwest Association of Nigerian Catholic Theologians, 2014). The section on Mission of the Theologian is adopted and adapted for the purpose of this paper.

[19] Benedict XVI, Homily at the Eucharistic Celebration with the members of the International Theological Commission, Redemptoris Mater Chapel, Apostolic Palace, October 6 2006

[20] Benedict XVI, Homily at the Eucharistic Celebration with the members of the International Theological Commission.

[21] Benedict XVI, Homily at the Eucharistic Celebration with the members of the International Theological Commission.

[22] Benedict XVI, Homily at the Eucharistic Celebration with the members of the International Theological Commission.

[23] Benedict XVI, Homily at the Eucharistic Celebration with the members of the International Theological Commission.

[24] Ignatius of Antioch, *Letter the Ephesians*, XV, 2 (*Sources Chrétiennes* 10, pp. 84-85).

[25] Benedict XVI, Homily at the Eucharistic Celebration with the members of the International Theological Commission.

[26] See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologia* I, q. 1, a. 7

[27] Anthony Akinwale, "Catholic Theology and the Church in Nigeria," a paper presented at Graduate Theology Students; Colloquium, Ave Maria University, FL, September 14, 2007, p. 4

[28] The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: "The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for" (n. 27). The Second Vatican Council says in this regard: "The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists it is because God has created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts himself to his creator" (*GS* 19).

[29] Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VIII.6

[30] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 36. See Vatican Council I, *Dei Filius* 2: DS 3004; cf. 3026; see also Vatican II, *Dei Verbum* 6

[31] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 37; see Pius XII, *Humani Generis*, 561, where this historical condition is rooted in the consequences of original sin.

[32] See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 1 for a discussion of whether the existence of God is self-evident.

[33] Anthony Akinwale, "Catholic Theology and the Church in Nigeria," p. 4

[34] Anthony Akinwale, "Catholic Theology and the Church in Nigeria," p. 4

[35] Cf. *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 2, prol.: *"principalis intentio huius sacrae doctrinae est Dei cognitionem tradere, et non solum secundum quod in se est, sed etiam secundum quod est principium rerum et finis earum, et specialiter rationalis creaturae."*

[36] Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion*, Ch. 1 in *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ockham*, edited by Eugene Fairweather (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956). Cf. Is 7:9, as read by Augustine in the Old Latin version, and frequently quoted by him, for example, *Epist*. 120:1 (*CSEL*, 34, 706); *Sermo* 89:4 (*PL*, 38, 556).

[37] Francis Adedara, "The Image of God in Man and Original Sin in Augustine's *De Trinitate*" (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, 2011), see pp. 4-5

[38] Anthony Akinwale, "Catholic Theology and the Church in Nigeria," p. 7

[39] Jeff Mirus in his article "Benedict's Hermeneutic of Continuity", written and uploaded for CatholicCulture.org, January 30, 2009. https://www.catholicculture.org /commentary/benedicts-hermeneutic-continuity/. Retrieved on December 30, 2019.

4

FORMATION IN RITUAL STUDIES: TOWARDS A BETTER APPRECIATION OF CATHOLIC SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM

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Abstract
For a long while, the Roman Catholic sacramental understanding has been built upon Thomistic philosophy that is foundational on Aristotelian metaphysics. This approach to sacraments and sacramentality often obscures seeing sacraments as what they really are: rituals. More than ever before, there is need, both in understanding and in practice, to have recourse to ritual dimensions of sacraments. Liturgical acts are essentially ritual actions and as such deserves such a consideration. However, In the wake of the post Vatican II liturgical reforms, Romano Guardini (one of the fathers of modern liturgical movement), in his open letter to a German conference on liturgy in 1964 made an apt remark that worths considering in the formation of 21st century priests. He remarked that despite the ritual and textual problems that come with the reform, "the central problem seems to me to be something else; the problem of the cult act or, to be more precise, the liturgical act. As I see it, typical nineteenth-century man was no longer able to perform this act; in fact he was unaware of its existence." This essay therefore argues for the need of incorporating ritual studies into the formation of contemporary seminarians for a better understanding and practice of liturgical acts. The essay argues that ritual studies posits an invitation to a renewed understanding of sacrament and sacramentality. The ministers of the Word and Sacraments must be aware of the rituals they make, the inherent symbols, and how the symbols speak to the assembly that partake in the ritual actions. Also, needless to say that liturgical catechesis will become more common and effective, only if the teachers understand deeply the rituals they make, since *nemo dat quod non habet*.

Keywords: Sacrament, sacramentality, rituals, *ex opere operato*, symbols, ritual studies,

Introduction

One of the major lasting effects of the Second Vatican Council is the call for the revision of the rites of celebrating various sacraments in the Church. The entire reform of the liturgy – especially the celebration of the sacraments - is to emphasise the reality that liturgical acts are ritual actions.[1] As such the theology of the different sacraments should at the same time be directly drawn and inferred from the ritual practice. Little wonder that each general instruction to the various rites establishes the significance of the various liturgical celebrations upon the rite with which they are practiced. This is a deliberate move away from the scholastic approach to liturgical practices (prior to the Vatican II Council) which prioritizes the juridical implications of liturgical celebrations.

However, the reality on ground attests that the development that the reform of the liturgy by the conciliar fathers envisaged is still far from actualization in many quarters. In many places, the scholastic approach (using Thomistic philosophy built on Aristotelian metaphysics) to the sacramental system of the Church is still prevalent, and in many cases, the *only way* of understanding sacramental reality. The purpose of this presentation is to argue for another way of looking at the Catholic sacramental system – basically the meaning of sacraments and sacramental efficacy. It proposes that formation in ritual studies will enhance a better understanding and the practice of liturgy. The need for this formation in ritual studies was underscored by Romano Guardini, in his open letter to a German conference on liturgy in 1964 (few months after the call for revision of various rites) when he remarked that:

> A mass of ritual and textual problems will present themselves and long experience has shown how much scope there is for a right and a wrong approach. But the central problem seems to me to be something else; the problem of the cult act or, to be more precise, the liturgical act. As I see it, typical nineteenth-century man (*sic*) was no longer able to perform this act; in fact, he was unaware of its existence. Religious conduct was to him an individual inward matter which in the "liturgy" took on the character of an official, public ceremonial. But the sense of the liturgical action was thereby lost. The faithful did not perform a proper liturgical act at all, it was simply a private and inward act, surrounded by ceremonial and not infrequently accompanied by a

> feeling that the ceremonial was really a disturbing factor. From that point of view the efforts of those who concerned themselves with the liturgy must have appeared as peculiarities of aesthetes who lacked Christian sincerity.[2]

Guardini did not hesitate to acknowledge the importance of seeing liturgical acts as actions performed by sociological entities who are both human and spirit. He also pin-points the importance of the various elements – the time, place and things - involved in the external action called ritual. In these, one can deduce the inevitable call for formation in what will later be known as ritual studies for the better appreciation of the liturgical reform and the liturgy itself. He argues that the opportunity that the reform brings is the opportunity 'to relearn forgotten way of doing things and recapture lost attitudes.'[3] This is the same prospect that ritual studies offers.

This presentation will therefore proceed to highlight some justifications for the claim that 'there is a forgotten way' and 'lost attitude' to relearn and recapture respectively through formation in ritual studies. This will explore the patristic way of understanding sacramental reality vis a vis the renewed understanding of sacramentality today. Afterwards, the work will argue for the potency of ritual studies to illuminate catholic sacramental system.

Re-learning the Forgotten Way: Sacramentality Renewed

Before requesting for the revision of the various rites for celebration of the sacraments, the conciliar fathers acknowledged that there is a problem of a 'forgotten way' because 'with the passage of time, (however), there have crept into the rites of the sacramentals and sacraments certain features which have rendered their nature and purpose far from clear to the people of today.'[4] This reality calls for a reflection on the history and development of sacramental practice in order to highlight what was wrong and at what point.[5] While this work cannot cover the scope, let it suffice to note that the understanding of sacrament and sacramental efficacy in the Church has not been the same all through the history of the Church. Recent scholarship now favours the patristic understanding over the rigid and strict scholastic meaning.

The Second Vatican Council brought with it a new way of understanding Sacramental Theology. More than ever before, the council emphasised that creation has the capacity to reveal God who is both transcendent and immanent. Therefore, the fathers assert that 'there is scarcely any proper use of material things which cannot thus be directed towards the sanctification of men and the praise of God.'[6] This teaching ignited a revolution in Sacramental Theology, and 'Christian

theology today recognises that the ability of all creation to reveal the transcendent God is first and foremost through the initiative of God and then also because of the willingness of an immanent God to communicate that desire and allow it to be known in human heart.'[7] David Brown underscores these two attributes of God – transcendence and immanence – as unique ways of mediating divine presence through the material world. For him, transcendence does not mean absence; rather it stresses the otherness of God, while immanence makes possible his closeness.[8]

Sacramentality does not mean that God is in all things, but that all things are capable of revealing God (or at least something about God).[9] It was Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, who remarked that 'sacramentality is not a general principle that the world is full of "sacredness": it is the very specific conviction that the world is full of the life of God whose nature is known in Christ and the Spirit.'[10] Since all of creation is the handiwork of God, creation possesses a bit of 'God' in them and are so enabled to 'reflect' God. Sacramentality thus 'acts as a prism, a theological lens through which we view creation and all that is in this good earth as revelations of God's presence and action among us here and now.'[11] Hence, sacramentality is a theological concept covering a vast sphere of reality and cannot be narrowed down to the ecclesial (seven) sacraments. In the words of Larson-Miller, 'the elusive nature of the term "sacramentality" is its strength, in that it can lure Christians beyond the narrowness of ecclesial sacramental terminology to a broad context in which other terms can find a home, both contextualized and rational and capable of development.'[12]

The elusive nature of the term, 'sacramentality' recognised by Larson-Miller is not a new discovery. From the earlier usage of the term *sacrament* (from which sacramentality is derived), it has always carried a variety of meanings. Though Augustine refers to *sacrament* as 'a sign of a sacred thing' it was applied to a variety of realities.[13] True to its etymological meaning, the Latin word for sacrament, *sacramentum* is derived from the word *sacrare* meaning 'to make or be holy.' It can refer to 'a person or thing constituted holy by divine right, a function reserved for public authority to "consecrate," the one who performs the consecration, the consecration itself, the person or thing consecrated, and the means used to effect it.'[14] Also the word *sacrament* has a traceable root in the Greek term *mysterion*. In the New Testament, Paul uses *mysterion* to refer to the hidden plan of God (cf. Rom. 16:25-26). Also, in this Greek sense, *mysterion* means something unfathomable, something so extraordinary and overwhelming that it cannot be comprehended.[15] It is in this light that Joseph Martos noted that 'any ritual or object, person or

place, can be considered sacramental if it is taken to be a symbol of something that is sacred or mysterious.'[16]

Furthermore, Augustine used the term 'sacrament for three classes of things: (1) the religious rites of both the Old and New Testaments and rites of paganism, (2) symbols and figures, and (3) revealed teaching of the Christian religion.[17] These include imposition of hands, blessed ashes, holy water, sign of the cross, ordination, religious profession, the Lord's prayer, feasts, and the word *Amen* among many others.

While the term 'sacraments' in the Roman Catholic Church is often associated with the seven sacraments as defined by the Council of Trent (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme-unction[now Anointing of the sick], Holy Orders and Matrimony), the renewed understanding of sacramentality has opened up deeper ways of understanding sacraments. Contemporary theology incorporates the patristic notion of sacraments into how sacraments should be understood today. Hence, we speak today of primordial sacraments – first to describe Christ and, second the Church[18] -, the seven ecclesial sacraments and other sacramentals.[19] Indeed, according to Paul Tillich, 'any object or event is sacramental in which the transcendent is perceived to be present.'[20]

Moreover, the theological principle of sacramentality justifies the use of earthly materials as sacred signs in the liturgy. Creation does not only reveal God, but also *praises* God in itself and through the works of human hands. Sacramentality is therefore based on the belief that everything God created is good and they can be used in the worship of God and the sanctification of humans. According to Irwin, 'sacramentality is a worldview that invites us to be immersed fully in the here and now, on this good earth, and not to shun matter or avoid the challenges that such earthiness will require of us, even as we pray through liturgy and sacraments (and other means) to enter into heaven when this earthly pilgrimage has ended.'[21] The engagement of humans with creation in its goodness continues the purpose of God in creation, reveals his presence among us and manifest his actions in and on us. Hence, 'holiness, salvation, and redemption are given to us in the sacraments because of the principle of sacramentality and mediation.'[22]

The fundamental means of mediation of the experience of the divine is through the human body. In recent times theologians pay more attention to the role of the human body in sacramental theology, perhaps partly because the body is 'the physical channel of meaning.'[23] This attention is mainly due to 'the recognition of the human being, inseparable from his or her context-dependence on the living organism of the earth, as the conduit through which any and all theology is

constructed.'[24] In a sense, 'sacramental theology is explicably a prayer of the body.'[25] This centrality of the human body in mediated liturgical experience is however not new as Tertullian had earlier asserted that the body is the instrument of salvation. For Tertullian, this is linked to the mystery of Incarnation. At the incarnation, the eternal Word of the Father took flesh and by so doing, he saved us and we in turn can come to worship God through our bodies with which we encounter all of creation. Narrating how the mediation works, the comment of Tertullian on the Resurrection of the flesh is enlightening:

> The flesh is the hinge on which salvation depends. As a result, when the soul is dedicated to God, it is the flesh which actually makes it capable of such dedication. For surely the flesh is washed, that the soul may be cleansed; the flesh is anointed that the soul may be consecrated; the flesh is sealed, so that the soul may be fortified; the flesh is shadowed by the imposition of hand, that the soul too may be illumined by the Spirit; the flesh feeds on the body and blood of Christ, that the soul as well may fatten on God.[26]

Though the actions Tertullian spoke of are specific to the sacraments of initiation, his assertion captures adequately what sacramental realities do. In this way, sacraments are seen first and foremost as ritual events and not a metaphysical reality.

Recapturing Lost Attitude: The Ritual Studies

This section of the presentation argues that through a formation in ritual studies, the faithful can develop the proper attitude towards the sacraments and its celebration. But what does ritual studies entail? In the words of Ronald Grimes:

there is a broad and narrow use of the term "ritual studies." On the one hand, it means simply "the study of ritual" regardless of discipline and regardless of the status, professional or amateur, of those who carry it out. On the other hand, it refers to the study of ritual by scholars who devote most of their research time and energy to doing it. In the former sense, many engage in it; in the latter, few.[27]

In this work, we shall consider ritual studies from the broad dimension. While many liturgical theologians are not schooled in this field (ritual studies), the works of experts in this field have been highly beneficial to the understanding of Christian rituals and liturgy in general. Their works give prominence to the various elements of rituals and that the elements are fundamental to understanding the belief of the people and their expression of such belief. Prominent among these are the works of Catherine Bell and Ronald Grimes, on which I will largely

depend in this section. Our aim here is to show in bits how ritual studies can illuminate our understanding of sacrament and sacramental efficacy through the interplay of the ritual elements.

But what is Ritual Studies? Ritual studies is 'a unified, interdisciplinary approach which aims to avoid false conflicts and excessively narrow definitions of ritualistic phenomena.'[28] It is an interdisciplinary field that engages sociology, psychology and cultural anthropology. Since sacraments are for people (*sacramentum propter hominem*) who belong to a society (faith community), psychological, sociological and anthropological investigation (through ritual studies) into sacraments is apt in understanding sacramental efficacy. Michael G. Lawler rightly captures this interconnection between ritual studies and sacrament when he says: 'an investigation of human behaviour and existence throws light on sacraments, just as sacraments are disclosive of the human experience and existence.'[29] Understanding what people do when they come together and how they make a meaning of what they do is key in understanding how what they do works by effecting what they intend. According to Louis Bouyer, '[I]ndeed, the more perfectly we know the human aspects of Christianity, the more perfectly we shall understand the part of it which is the result of divine intervention. This is not to say that the human and the divine should be found in it separated from one another. It is rather that the divine reveals itself in the transformation it effects in what is human.'[30]

Every animal – rational, social or irrational – ritualizes. Ritual actions range from the actions carried out almost instinctively and without any consciousness to those that are planned for and even transcend our present situation.[31] Ritual is basic to human activities like eating, drinking, exchanging pleasantries through handshake, moving about, mating, giving birth, dying, praying, celebrating anniversaries and so on. We engage in ritualizing to give *'stability to our behaviours and to serve as vehicle of communication.'*[32] For this reason, Tom F. Driver concludes that 'ritualization is our first language, not our "mother", but our "grandmother" tongue, as such it is something we do not outgrow.'[33]

Though rituals are generally human activities, in its technical usage, the term is considered to be 'more fittingly applied to forms of religious behaviours associated with social transitions.'[34] In this sense, the behaviours - events, prayers, gestures and materials - involved in the celebration of sacraments fall within the scope of ritual activities. Despite the attempt to define ritual, one would admit that ritual is wider in scope than the descriptions. Because of this diffuse nature of rituals, scholars prefer to speak of family characteristics of rituals rather than giving a water-tight definition. In other words, there are some basic characteristics that a particular action should meet before it can be said to

be a ritual action.[35] Ronald Grimes highlighted different ways by which actions can be ritualized. These include by:

- Traditionalizing them, for instance, by claiming that they originated a long time ago or with the ancestors
- Elevating them by associating them with sacredly held values, those that make people who they are and that display either how things really are or how they ought to be
- Repeating them – over and over, in the same way – thus inscribing them in community and/or self
- Singularizing them, that is, offering them as rare or even one-time events
- Prescribing their details so they are performed in the proper way
- Stylizing them, so they are carried out with flair
- Entering them with a non-ordinary attitude or in a special state of mind, for example contemplatively or in trance
- Invoking powers to whom respect or reverence is due – gods, royalty, and spirits, for example
- Attributing to them special powers or influence
- Situating them in special places and/or times
- Being performed by specially qualified persons.[36]

The celebration of the sacraments (and indeed all liturgy) can adequately be regarded as a ritual activity as it meets the characteristics laid out above. They are communal events developed over time by the Christian community, and are celebrated at particular times to enter into a hierophany. They are carried out at specific places by designated persons following the prescribed way of doing them. In carrying out these actions, *meaning* and *communication* become more important than mere function. As Grimes noted, when this happens, ritualization has begun to occur.[37]

Liturgy, as human and divine action, cannot be spoken of except within the context of rituals. Little wonder Lawrence Hoffman considers liturgy as 'acted-out rituals involving prescribed texts, actions, timing, persons and things, all coming together in a shared statement of communal identity by those who live with, through and by them.'[38] Liturgy, as a ritual event, is also underscored by the principle of sacramentality expressed above. To escape ritualization, we will have to escape our bodies, which is impossible.[39] The body that grounds the principle of sacramentality and mediation also makes ritualization an inevitable human activity. The reality of our lives is that ritual actions are always around us and are unavoidable. Despite all efforts of modern men and women to move away from rituals, we cannot do without them.[40]

Kinds/Genres of Rituals

As pointed out, it is obvious that ritual actions are inevitably numerous since different ritual actions perform different roles at different moments. However, attempts have been made by scholars in the field to categorize the different kind of rituals in their study. For the purpose of our work, we shall focus on the six categories of ritual actions proposed by Catherine Bell.[41] These are: rites of passage, calendrical rites, rites of exchange and communion, rites of affliction, feasting, fasting and festival; and political rites.

a) **Rites of Passage:** These are the ceremonies that accompany and dramatize such events as birth, coming-of-age initiation for boys and girls, marriage, and death.[42] These celebrate both biological and socio-cultural changes. These rites celebrate and facilitate real changes that take place in people's lives. In Christian liturgy, the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist), matrimony, and holy Orders fall within this category, as do the rites of Christian funerals.
b) **Calendrical Rites:** These are the 'rites that give socially meaningful definitions to the passage of time, creating an ever-renewing cycle of days, months and years.'[43] Some occasions are calculated with the solar calendar (like Christmas day on December 25 and New Year Day on January 1), while others are marked by the lunar calendar (e.g. Easter Sunday). The rites are celebrated periodically – annually or sometimes weekly (like the Sunday liturgy).
c) **Rites of Exchange and Communion:** These are the rituals of making offering (often to a divine being) in order to receive a blessing in return. The process of making offering and receiving blessing also involves a communion, when there is a union of the human and divine worlds.[44] To some extent, the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church are rites of exchange and communion as in them prayers are offered to God who in turn grants his blessings (or graces).
d) **Rites of Affliction (Healing and purification):** These are 'the rituals that attempt to rectify a state of affairs that has been disturbed or disordered.'[45] Hence, they are also called rites of healing and purification. In the Christian liturgy, the sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the sick readily comes to mind as healing rites. Also, the RCIA contains a number of rites that fall under this genre, among which are the anointings, laying on of hands, *ephphetha*, exorcisms and scrutinies.
e) **Rites of Fasting, Feasting and Festivals:** These are 'rituals people often use to publicly express – to themselves, each other, and sometimes outsiders – their commitment and adherence to basic

religious values.'[46] In feasting, sharing of food is involved as a sign of solidarity and charity, and in fasting, adherents abstain from food often as sign of contrition. In Roman Catholicism, the seasons of Advent and Lent are seasons of fasting. They are periods of preparation for festivals of the birth of the Lords on Christmas day and resurrection of Jesus on Easter day respectively. Though none of the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church fall under this ritual, the ritual fast is often recommended for the reception of the sacraments, especially Eucharist.[47]

f) Political Rites: 'These rituals can be said to comprise those ceremonial practices that specifically construct, display and promote power of political institutions (such as kings, state, the village elders) or the political interests of distinct constituencies and subgroups.'[48] The rites are also called rites of power because they do not only give form to power and invest people with power; they also create power in the tangible exercise of it.[49] The rites by their very nature make power both tangible and effective.[50] The sacrament of Holy Orders celebrates a political rite where men are invested with the power of governance, and lay persons can also cooperate with the power of governance by the virtue of their baptism.[51]

The explanations of the different kinds of rites reveal that there are no strict rules demarcating the various rituals or restricting them to only a genre. For instance, the celebration of the sacrament of baptism or orders can at the same time reflect the aspect of rites of passage, of exchange and communion, of feast, and of power (political).

Elements of Rituals

In all the genre or kinds of rites discussed above, there are some fundamental elements that cut across them and are essential for the efficacy of the rites. As such, it is expedient that we analyse the elements of ritual in our process of understanding how they work. Ronald Grimes underscores the importance of this analysis for two other reasons.[52] Firstly, such analysis guards one against oversimplification of ritual process and exposes how each of the elements contribute to or detract from the whole process. Secondly, it assists in noticing ritual transformation, recognising how the process develops or unfolds.

Grimes identified seven elements of ritual; viz: ritual actions, ritual actors, ritual places, ritual times, ritual objects, ritual language and ritual groups. He noted that there are no rigid rules about them or how the categories are named. Rather, what matters is how they interact; an interaction which is not predetermined by a theory but from observing specific ritual events.

a) **Ritual Actions:** Though one can begin analysing a ritual with any element, 'choosing ritual action as a default starting point is both pragmatic and a reminder to focus on ritual.'[53] It emphasises the fact that rituals are, foremost, actions of persons - human or divine. Ritual actions are different from mere movements in the sense that they are characterized by intention. 'Things *move* but people *act*.'[54]Ritual actions carry with them the force of enacting through *inter-actions*. It is noteworthy that the aim of ritual action is not merely to entertain (even though sometimes it does), rather, they are designed to achieve an effect. Hence, we can say that 'people *enact* rituals, especially when a rite seems capable of accomplishing a deed or bringing about an effect.'[55] Ritual actions do not speak for themselves in isolation, but in their interaction with other actions that precede or follow them. As such, the meaning of a particular action can be modified by the action that precedes or follows it.

In the context of Christian sacramental rituals of the RCIA, there are several ritual actions like kneeling, standing, laying on of hand, anointing with oil, profession of faith, movement to the font and signing of the senses. All these gestures and postures are not just to show something; but work in the ritual system to have a desired effect.

b) **Ritual Actors:** Foremost, we must note that ritual actors are different from stage actors in that when the term 'perform' is used for both, they do not mean the same thing. The term 'perform' is only used for a ritual actor to underscore that his actions are done in the presence of people. In the case of a stage actor, he performs in the presence of people and he is supposed to be pretending (although they may in fact be).[56] Though the ritual actor may or may not be aware that he/she is being observed, his 'performance' is intended to effect something.

Ritual actors, like actions, do not act alone. As social agents, they also interact with other actors either as objects or subjects of various actions. Their actions are done among and with other people. Though ritual actors are distinguished as leaders or followers, ministers or candidates, every participant in a ritual event is important irrespective of the role they play. Even those who simply show up without 'doing' anything, other than observing, contribute to the ritual performance.

In Christian initiation, there are various actors at different stages. Prominent among these are the ministers (often the priest and catechists), catechumens, sponsors, and the entire congregation. The presence (and sometimes absence) of any of these actors play important role(s) at the various celebrations.

c) **Ritual Place/Space:** Rituals always take *place*. Rituals are always sited in a location, even when ritual actors do not value the location. The spatial rootedness of the human life is key to understanding ritual places despite the claim that ritual sometimes involves the divine and trance experiences. The human body which makes human activities possible is spatio-temporal and cannot be conceived without a location, earthly or heavenly. Thus, a ritual place is any place where a ritual occurs. It is that ritual environment that 'encompasses the totality of what surrounds it and interacts with it.'[57] In this sense, some rituals can only take place at some particular places, while others can take place anywhere. If some rituals are not done in the particular places demanded by their rite, they often lose their force.

Ritual space is basically marked by boundaries 'implied by ritual actions, generating a centre and a circumference, both of which can fluctuate, the centre receding and advancing or momentarily disappearing altogether as subgroups disperse and recongeal.'[58] However, this boundary marks are often delineated by walls forming the space into a building like a church or mosque. Ritual places should not be confused with sacred places. Grimes cautions that 'even though ritual happen in places and make them ritual spaces, not all ritual spaces are sacred spaces, and not all sacred spaces are permanently so. The sense of a place can change, and a single person can hold conflicting attitudes towards a place.'[59]

Ritual space/place both speak and act. A baptistry, for instance is capable of speaking of the history of salvation through its shape and the painting projected on the walls.[60] When the ritual place speaks, sometimes the meanings are to be inferred from the actions taking place there and sometimes it 'speaks more clearly to those who have ears trained to hear what it says.'[61] Rituals places can be shaped by ritual actions and at the same time they shape ritual actions. When people come into a ritual space for a ritual action, they leave with feelings, images and impressions of the space. The place gives meaning to what they do while what they do also gives meaning to the place.

d) **Ritual Time:** Ritual actions, like every human activity has its starting point as well as its terminating point. Likened to performing arts, 'rituals "eventuate." They arise, persist for a while, and then disappear, perhaps leaving the traces on the environment, in memory or in text.'[62] Ritual time can be spoken of in various ways. *The ritual duration* (length of a ritual performance measured by clock, bodily tiredness or position of the sun) is not always evident. *Ritual endurance* refers to how long a ritual last historically. *Ritual timing*

denotes 'when' – the day, hour, week, month, or season- of ritual occurrence. The timing of some rituals is fixed while some vary. Ritual timing serves various purposes and can affect what is being done. For instance, the same action performed at sunrise and midnight impacts the body differently and speaks different meanings. Ritual timing is purposeful, and this is evident in the case of Easter Vigil emphasising the darkness/light theme very evident in the service of the light, the exsultet, the readings and the baptismal liturgy. *Ritual regularity* refers to how often a ritual occurs in terms of the evenness of intervals between enactments.[63] *Ritual phases* are chronological subunits and can be mechanically marked by sounds or even without dividers. It often demarcates time for various actors to start or stop particular actions.

All these dimensions of ritual time are applicable to Christian rituals especially the rites of the Christian initiation. There are times for the different periods and stages of the catechumenate. The days for some rites - like acceptance into catechumenate, enrolment/election and scrutinies - are spelt out in the RCIA. The time for different actions like kneeling, laying on of hands and sending out after the liturgy of the Word are also marked. The Easter Vigil is the preferred night for the actual celebration of the sacrament when candidates journey from darkness into light.

e) **Ritual Objects:** These are materials actively used in rituals. An object, irrespective of its material, content, beauty or conditions of its production, becomes a ritual object when it is used in ritual action or ritual space. Regarding the distinction between ritual object and sacred object therefore, Grimes noted that '"sacred" is about value; "ritual" is about use.'[64] Among the ritual objects in the RCIA are water, oil, white cloth, and candle.

f) **Ritual Language:** This includes ritual words, ritual sounds and ritual texts. Through these, *rituals declare facts, convey meaning and 'do things.'* Like place and actions, words and music have the capacity to do work. They are capable to do so because in ritual (by extension in liturgy), words are used in symbolic context.[65] As symbolic language, words are used in ritual as performative utterances. Words, in this sense, do not just declare facts and convey meaning, but also accomplish tasks.[66] In the words of John L. Austin, under the necessary conditions, 'saying it makes it so!'[67] For instance, 'I pronounce you husband and wife' in marriage, is not a mere declaration or the description of an action, 'but the performance of a deed.' In the same way, 'I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' goes beyond a narration of an

article of faith, but the performance of the action that cleanses the soul from sin and brings rebirth.

Regarding ritual texts (which are words, put in writing), Grimes opines that they function to facilitate ritual performance at least in two ways. Firstly, texts serve as mnemonic device as an alternative to memorization, and secondly, they function as ritual objects when in ritual performance they are 'read aloud by leaders, tracked silently by followers, touched, fanned, elevated or revered.'[68] While ritual texts perform these dual function, it should be noted that performance do not always mirror the text, even when the leader is being prompted by or claims to be reading from the text. When performance and text do not tally, there are spectrums of possibilities of the meaning intended and meaning communicated.

g) Ritual Groups: Rituals are built on affiliations.[69] People involved in ritual actions do not only do so as individuals but in interaction with other actors. Rituals always belong to a cultural home as they are created by a cultural group and enshrines the values of the group.[70] The group designs the ritual to meet the immediate and further needs of the group. As such, the general outlook of a group is reflected in its rituals. It is in this light that we can speak of the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church or how the Eucharistic liturgy of the Roman rite can be distinguished from the Orthodox rite.

Ritual Process: How Rituals Work

In defining what rituals are, Grimes noted that they are 'designed assemblages.'[71] They are 'designed' because they are planned and constructed in a way that enables form and dynamic to flow to one another; and they are assemblages because there exist a sculptural technique of composing a group of unrelated, fragmentary or discarded objects into a work of art.[72] The ritual elements create meaningful patterns when they overlap and interact with one another. Taking the case of performative utterances (ritual language) for instance, Austin noted that to claim 'saying it makes it so,' 'it is always necessary that the *circumstances* in which the words are uttered should be in some way, or ways, *appropriate*, and it is very commonly necessary that either the speaker himself or the other persons should *also* perform certain *other* actions, whether 'physical' or 'mental' actions or even act of uttering further words.'[73] In other words, 'ritual words' actually work, not on their own but within the framework of the ritual process, the interaction of the ritual elements.

A deeper understanding of how ritual works is to consider ritual performance as symbolic events. This is possible because the elements

of ritual, (not just ritual language) are capable of being symbolic. Ritual actions, places, actors, objects, time, and group, act as symbols when interacting in a ritual process. As such, when we speak about ritual performance, we are at the same time speaking of symbolic events.

Symbols and Meaning

Symbols must be differentiated from signs even though the distinction is not clear-cut as it often seems. While a sign is just as much a reference to another reality, a symbol in one way or the other refers to itself, because it participates in the reality to which it refers.[74] While signs makes reference through a rational process and thus a product of agreement, symbols are perceived intuitively and touches the whole person at the level of feeling and the senses, and as such do not rest on agreements.[75] Consequently, while signs can be altered by agreement when its meaning is no longer clear, symbols call us to stop, ponder and meditate since it is 'the thing without being the thing, and yet is the thing.'[76] More importantly, signs have one clear meaning while symbols have multiple meanings. Symbols refer to deeper reality, a farther horizon, a wider landscape.[77]

As an example, the red colour of the traffic light is a sign calling road users to stop. It simply calls them to stop and nothing more. The meaning of this sign is learned and that is why it is expected that all drivers should be able to know road signs and these signs are presumed to mean the same thing for every road user. To think of another meaning, no matter how little it differs, other than a call to stop, is to break traffic rule and perhaps cause accidents. If at a later time, the red sign no longer refers to 'stop,' it only needs to be changed by agreement. On the other hand, water being used in the sacrament of baptism carries a polyvalent meaning. It first partakes in the reality of washing which it symbolises. It could make reference to the baptism of Jesus and his mandate to his apostles to go and make disciples of all nations by baptizing in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit (cf. Matthew 28:20). It may refer to the deluge in the time of Noah, or the exodus experience when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and River Jordan. The immersion in the water could symbolise dying and rising, death and rebirth, movement of darkness and light (as the one being baptized could not see when immersed in water until he comes out), and even becoming a new creature coming out from dirts already washed. The sprinkling of holy water at celebrations could bring together all these meaning, and the meanings are endless. Because of its polysemic nature, if a symbol seems not to communicate a particular meaning (or the meaning is inaccessible to the observer or the observers are unable to decode the meaning), it does not call for a change through an agreement.

Rather, it calls us to pause and ponder on the reality unfolding before our senses. In relation to the sacramental symbols, ritual s will facilitate the ability to 'pause and ponder'

Moreover, it is noteworthy to reiterate that the distinctions made between sign and symbol are not always clear as they might seem. Signs can become symbols and symbols can be reduced to signs. According to Susanne Langer 'it is the human operation that makes the difference between sign(al) and symbol… rather than words and images in themselves.'[78] Every word, image, object and action has the potential of multiple significance and multiple reference of language. The context in which they are employed and the interaction they have with other objects, words, image or actions provides the ground for their possibility of multiple meanings. The danger for observers or participants in a ritual performance (liturgy inclusive) is the temptation to reduce symbols to signs. Symbols are reduced to signs when we tend to restrict them to a particular meaning and not beyond that.[79] In Christian parlance, we should not think that the meaning of a ritual event consists of or is tied to the thoughts of a theologian, pastor or the Christian community that designed them. Rather, 'ritual meaning consists just as surely of the random thoughts and gestures that occur during the ritual.'[80] There is no doubt that official meaning provided by the Christian community or theologians can aid in giving insight to what is being done at liturgy. However, as David Power warns, 'any effort to tie down the meaning of liturgical symbols to a single or preconceived meaning thwarts their efficacy.'[81] Rather, we are to allow other meanings to complement the other predominant meaning(s).

Sometimes, symbolic actions perform the mediation role. In this sense, the ritual process creates the atmosphere for the divine to work. The creation of the atmosphere consists in the overlapping of the meaning of the ritual space, the actions, objects and/or the performative language used. The rituals in the words of Joseph Martos works as 'doors to the sacred'[82] leading the participants into an hierophany. Through the symbols therefore, we enter into the experience of sacred meaning.

The other way we can speak of how ritual works is in the light of means-end context. While this context may not be applicable to all rituals, Grimes argues that some rituals essentially work that way. Among these are the rituals of healing and fertility.[83] The sacrament of Anointing of the sick falls under this category. The prayers and the action of laying on of hands (symbolic action) and actual anointing with sacred oil (symbolic object) accompanied with prayers (symbolic words) serve the healing purpose through the means-end reasoning. However, this does not exempt the working of the divine agent (God), nor does it exclude the assertion that it also creates the atmosphere for the divine

work of healing or strengthening (among other meanings) that is intended and/or expected. Thus, Grimes says 'rituals itself is sometimes considered a spiritual ecological technology.'[84]

Conclusion

With these few tips on some aspects of ritual studies, it is evident that the formation of seminarians in ritual studies will go a long way in appreciating the Catholic sacramental system. The studies undertaken in Sociology, Cultural Anthropology and Psychology can be better directed to include how these sciences relate to the celebration of the sacramental mysteries. This will inevitably enhance the full, conscious and active participation that the Vatican II fathers advocated. In the same way, it opens a new way of considering the inculturation project that was encouraged by the council. Also, formation in ritual studies no doubt is a formation of the human person, enabling the person to appreciate signs and symbols in his environment and in worship. It sharpens one's sense of the sacred and leads one to a hierophany.

Endnotes

[1] See Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* no.63.

[2] See Romano Guadini, 'Open Letter' in *Foundation in Ritual Studies: A Reader for Students of Christian Worship*, eds. Paul Bradshaw & John Melloh, (London: SPCK, 2007), 4.

[3] Ibid.

[4] *Sacrosanctum Concilium,* no.62.

[5] For a comprehensive treatment of the topic see Kevin W. Irwin, *The Sacraments: Historical Foundations and Liturgical Theology*, (New York: Paulist Press, 2016), 1 - 116; Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to the Sacrament in the Catholic Church* (Missouri: Ligouri Publications, 2014)

[6] *Sacrosanctum Concilium,* no.61.

[7] Lizette Larson-Miller, *Sacramentality Renewed: Contemporary Conversations in Sacramental Theology*, (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2016), 6.

[8] David Brown, *God and Enchantment of Place: Reclaiming Human Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 40.

[9] Far from equating this notion of sacramentality with pantheism, created materials are used in worship in relation to words and texts. It is only within the context of the words and texts that we speak of materials as used in the liturgy being means of speaking of God, experiencing God and worshipping God. See Kevin W. Irwin, *The Sacraments: Historical Foundations and Liturgical Theology* (New York: Paulist Press, 2016), 211-212.

[10] Rowan Williams, Foreword to *The Gestures of God: Explorations in Sacramentality,* ed. Geoffrey Rowell and Christian Hall (London: Continuum, 2004), xiii.
[11] Irwin, 210.
[12] Larson-Miller, *Sacramentality Renewed*, 9.
[13] See Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, Book II, 1:1 (NPNF Vol. II, p. 535)
[14] Irwin, 11.
[15]Ibid.
[16] Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to the Sacrament in the Catholic Church* (Missouri: Ligouri Publications, 2014), 4.
[17] See Irwin, 53.
[18] See Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God,* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1963); Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church,* (New York: Image Books, 2002), 55 -67.
[19] Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC no. 1667) says: Holy Mother Church has, moreover, instituted sacramentals. These are sacred signs which bear a resemblance to the sacraments. They signify effects, particularly of a spiritual nature, which are obtained through the intercession of the Church. By them men (sic) are disposed to receive the chief effects of the sacraments. And various occasions in life rendered holy. (See also *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 60).
[20]Martos, 3. Quoting Paul Tillich.
[21] Irwin, 210.
[22] Ibid., 214.
[23] Mary Douglas, *Implicit Meaning: Essays in Anthropology*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), 85.
[24] Siobhan Garrigan, *Beyond Ritual: Sacramental Theology After Habermas*, (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2014), 41.
[25] Nathan D. Mitchell, *Meeting Mystery: Liturgy, Worship, Sacrament* (New York: Orbis Books, 2006), 153.
[26] Tertullian, *On Resurrection of the Flesh*, Ch. 8. (ANF Vol. III p. 551).
[27] Ronald L. Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies* (Oxford: University Press, 2014), 7.
[28] Ronald L. Grimes, 'Modes of Ritual Necessity' *Worship* 53, no 2 (1979): 126.
[29] Michael G. Lawler, *The Symbol and Sacrament: A Contemporary Sacramental Theology* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 1.
[30] Louis Bouyer, *The Rite and Man,* Trans. M. Joseph Costelloe (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1963), 2.
[31] Ronald L. Grimes refers to them as different modes of ritual sensibilities. These are the attitudes that seem to predominate in a ritual performance. These are ritualization, decorum, ceremony, magic, liturgy and celebration. See Ronald L Grimes, *Beginnings in Ritual Studies,* 3rd ed. (Waterloo, ON: Ritual Studies International, 2013), 35-50.
[32] Tom F. Driver, *The Magic of Ritual: Our Need for Liberating Rites that Transform Our Lives and Communities* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 23.
[33] Ibid., 13.
[34] Victor W. Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967), 95.

[35] See Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 138-169. Here, Catherine Bell identified six characteristics or ritual-like actions as: formalism, traditionalism, disciplined invariance, rule-governance, sacral symbolism and performance.
[36] Ronald L. Grimes, 'Religion Ritual and Performance' in *Religion, Theatre and Performance: Acts of Faith*, ed. Lance Gharavi (New York: Routledge, 2012), 39. Cited in Ronald L. Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies*, 194.
[37] Grimes, 'Modes of Ritual Necessity,' 127.
[38] Lawrence Hoffman, *Beyond The Text: A Holistic Approach to Liturgy*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 3.
[39] Grimes, 'Modes of Ritual Necessity,' 127.
[40] See Leonel L. Mitchel, *The Meaning of Ritual,* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), xii - xv. Here, Mitchel argues about the impoverishment of our age that only looks at the natural world and sees only a collection of physical phenomena, and as such claims that we can do without ritualization. For Mitchel, the question is not about if we can do without ritualization, but how do we understand religious rituals today. See also Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Exploration in Cosmology,* 2nd ed. (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1973), 19-39.
[41] See Bell, *Ritual: Perspective and Dimension,* 93-137. Ronald L Grimes highlighted twelve categories: rites of passage, funerary rites, marriage rites, festivals, pilgrimage, purification, civil ceremonies, rituals of exchange, sacrifice, worship, magic, healing rites, interaction rites, meditation rites, rites of inversion, and ritual drama. See Ronal L. Grimes, *Research in Ritual Studies* (Metuchen, N.J: Scarecrow Press, 1985), 68 -116. The categories given by Bell are more relevant to our work because they usually associated with clearly defined religious traditions, and have long been dominant examples and primary data for ritual studies. (Bell, 93).
[42] Bell, 94.
[43] Ibid., 102.
[44] Ibid., 112.
[45] Ibid., 115.
[46] Bell, 120.
[47] Code of Canon Law, no. 919: "One who is to receive the Most Holy Eucharist is to abstain from food and drink, with the exception of water and medicine, for at least the period of one hour before communion."
[48] Bell, 128.
[49] Ibid., 136.
[50] Ibid., 129 citing Clifford Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), 102, 104, 131.
[51] See Code of Canon Law, no. 129.
[52] See Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies*, 234-5.
[53] Ibid., 242.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid., 243.
[56] Ibid., 249.
[57] Ibid., 259.

[58] Ibid., 256.
[59] Ibid., 257.
[60] For further reading on symbolism of baptistries see Robin M. Jensen, *Baptismal Imagery in Early Christianity: Ritual, Visual, and Theological Dimensions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012).
[61] Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies*, 258.
[62] Ibid., 263.
[63] Ibid., 266.
[64] Ibid., 267.
[65] See David N. Power, *Unsearchable Riches: The Symbolic Nature of Language,* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1984) 64-65. David Power noted that words/language can be used in three different contexts. He wrote: 'There are three contexts in which the lexical significance of words, or the primary nature of things and actions, receives determination of meaning and designation. The first context is the ordinary, everyday affairs. Here the people are concerned to deal with situations and interact among themselves in common sense, practical fashion, and so eliminate ambiguity as far as possible. In this world, it is preferable for words, things and actions to have clear purpose and meaning. A jug is meant to hold liquids, a knife to cut, announcement of time to eat is clearly an invitation …. In the second context, the world of science, meanings are more abstract in character, but they are still clearly and technically defined. Equivocity or polysemy is not considered a virtue. Mathematical symbols, the naming of chemical elements, types of experiments, the forms of logical reasoning, all eradicate the multiplicity of meanings as far as possible, because the world ruled by science and technology runs better when meanings and uses are fixed. In contrast to both the uses of sign and language, the world of the symbol, the third context, intentionally deploys the multiple possibilities of meaning. A flag flying on top of a building recalls past history, evokes in the passer-by a sense of national pride, and reveals the parliament is in session, all at once. In this case, although the immediate obvious functional indication is that the country's legislators have not gone home, the whole setting is symbolic in intent.'
[66] Grime, *The Craft of Ritual Studies*, 276.
[67] John L. Austin, *How To Do Things With Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), 8.
[68] Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies*, 278.
[69] Ibid., 279.
[70] Ibid., 282. See also Ronald L. Grimes, *Deeply Into the Bone: Re-Inventing Rites of Passage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 3-4.
[71] Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies*, 232.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Austin, *How to Do Things With Words,* 8.
[74] See Gerard Lukken, *Ritual in Abundance: Critical Reflection on the Place, Form and Identity of Christian Ritual in Our Culture* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 19 -20.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid., citing T. Todorov, *Théories au symbole* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1977), 239.

[77] Ibid., 18.
[78] David N. Power, *Unsearchable Riches*, 69. Citing Susanne Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (New York: Scribner's, 1957), 26.
[79] For further readings on the fields of meaning, see Lawrence Hoffman, "How Ritual Means: Ritual Circumcision in Rabbinic Culture and Today" *Studia Liturgica* 23 (1993): 79-84.
[80] Grimes, 'Mode of Ritual Necessity,' 140.
[81] Power, *Unsearchable Riches*, 67.
[82] Martos, 8.
[83] Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies*, 298.
[84] Ibid.

5

PRIESTLY VOCATION AND DISCERNMENT: ESPOUSING THE GAMALIAN APPROACH IN SPIRITUAL FORMATION.

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Abstract
The priestly vocation is a mystery and its discernment is metaphysical because the reality of the call to the Roman Catholic priesthood is ultimately divine, therefore it calls for proper discernment from both the formandee and the formators. The Letter to the Hebrews Chapter Five makes it clear that "no one takes the honour upon himself". Vocation to the Priesthood which is a call as well as a precious gift from God "is the love of the heart of Jesus" as congregation for the Clergy reminds us in June 7, 2013, the World Day of prayer for the sanctification of Priests. In this light, Gamalian Spirituality is born out of the way of life, the reputation and the way in which Gamaliel; a Pharisee approached the issue of the conflict between the Sanhedrin and the persecutions of the early Church when Peter and John were persecuted cf. Act 5:34-40. Gamaliel said, "so in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this undertaking is of men, it will fall; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrown them. You might even be found opposing God!" To this effect, in the formation and the discernment of priestly vocation, Gamalian spirituality is very important.

Keywords: Priestly Vocation, Seminary Formation, Spirituality, Gamalian Spirituality, Discernment

Introduction

Priestly vocation is a mystery, life itself is a mystery and the task of discernment of the call itself is indeed a mystery. Francis Cardinal Arinze

was once asked to explain his vocation to the priesthood he however, gave a brief history of his life how he was influenced by Blessed Michael I. Tansi (his former parish priest who is now a Blessed). Cardinal Arinze said, "Only God can finally analyze the reason a person is attracted to the Catholic priesthood." In the book titled "SAINT JOHN PAUL II THE STORY OF MY LIFE Gift and Mystery", our loving Saint Pope John Paul II gives the reality of this mystery![1] Vocation to the Catholic priesthood is a mystery. How can one know that he is called? How could this call be discerned by those in charge of forming candidates for the priesthood? In fact, formation could be defined as 'deciding for God' those whom he has chosen. This tells us that formation as a process or art is not an easy task. How can formators despite human limitations recommend young men whom "they may not know in totality" for the priesthood? This is also a mystery. To further this mysterious nature of this vocation we are led back to its discernment. The story of the way David was anointed readily comes to mind. Before Samuel could discerned that David was the one chosen by God after God rejected seven sons of Jesse tells us the difficult task of discernment cf. I Sam 16:1-13.[2] It is on this note we shall look at some terms that need clarification as follows: Priestly Vocation, Seminary's Formation, Spirituality, Gamalian Spirituality, and Discernment.

Priestly Vocation

The priestly vocation, is a mystery, it is a call to become another Christ. Vocation is from the Latin word *vocare* which means to call. In the Latin Rite, it is to be a celibate. By the laying on of hands and the prayer of consecration the man that was in the seminary becomes another Christ. This means that priestly vocation is a called to discipleship. In fact, the Holy Orders is a sacrament of service. In the Latin rite, we have seven sacraments, three of these are sacrament of initiation while two are sacrament of healing, and the other two are sacrament of service namely: Holy Orders and Matrimony. The priestly vocation as the sacrament of service, is a call to become another Christ and a mystery. To this effect, because of who the priest is, the Church as laid down through experiences ways in which young men are admitted to the seminary so that they could be formed and their calling to this great ministry discerned; this is why formation in the seminary is necessary.

Seminary's Formation

The Council of Trent in the sixteenth century instituted Seminary formation. The seminaries were given directive for the formation of men for the priesthood. It is imperative to know what is a Seminary before going to the seminary's formation. Seminary is a nursery ground for the

training of those preparing for the Catholic Priesthood. It is reserved to schools instituted, in accordance with a decree of the Council of Trent, for the training of the Catholic priests.[3] A theological seminary (grand *séminaire*) provides courses in Holy Scripture, philosophy, theology and so on to give young men immediate preparation for ordination.[4] A priest is the representative of Christ among men: his mission is to carry on Christ's work for the salvation of souls; in Christ's name and by His power, he teaches men what they ought to believe and what they ought to do: he forgives sins, and offers sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ. He is another Christ (*sacerdos alter Christus*). His training, therefore, must be in harmony with this high office and consequently different in many ways from the preparation for secular professions. He must possess not only a liberal education, but also professional knowledge, and moreover, like an army or navy officer, he needs to acquire the manners and personal habits becoming his calling. To teach candidates for the priesthood what a priest ought to know and to make them what a priest ought to be is the purpose of seminary formation.[5]

It is to this effect that the Seminary's formation is divided into four major parts as it had been laid down by the church from experiences through the inspiration of the 'finger of God', the Holy Spirit who is going to lead the Church to the complete truth (cf. Jn 16:13) and in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* of Pope John Paul II numbers 42 to 59 the four areas of Priestly Formation as follows: (1) Human Formation, the Basis of All Priestly Formation, (2) Spiritual Formation, in communion with God and Search of Christ, (3) Intellectual Formation, Understanding the Faith, and (4) Pastoral Formation, Communion with the Charity of Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd.[6] These areas of formation is indeed good and useful for forming candidates for the priesthood in its synthesis and none of this parts should be neglected as if it were unimportant. For Christ to be formed in an individual candidate, these areas of formation must as a matter fact, be united. In fact, I would like to call it "an indispensable tetra-formative process" and in parts they cannot formed but in their unity we see another Christ, who is human, spiritual, a scholar and a pastor as well. To this end, we look at the spiritual formation of a candidate by examine Spirituality. As noted by the fathers of the Second Vatican Council, spiritual formation is a necessity for priestly formation. And just as religious institutes use the period of novitiate to introduce their candidates to their spiritualities, that is, (to the way in which connection with God is sought and established in their particular traditions) the spiritual year is a duration set apart for initial spiritual formation in view of the priestly life and ministry.[7] And this

spiritual formation continues in major Seminary or theological Seminary.

Spirituality

In order that the term spirituality might be understood in its entire dimension, it is necessary to explain what is meant by the term spirit. Spirit is from the Latin word, *spiritus* meaning *breath, Spirare to blow, breathe* which is an animating or vital principle held to give life to physical organisms, a supernatural being or essence.[8] Spirit is mysterious in nature and it is ascribed to a divine origin.[9] In the Bible, the Spirit is called the creative, animating power or divine influence of God (cf. Joel 2:28).[10] So when we are talking about spirit, we refer to the activating or essential principle influencing a person, an inclination, impulse, or tendency of a specific kind and a special attitude or frame of mind.[11]However, in as much as there are different kinds of definition of spirituality this paper uses the definition provided by Fagun when he was asked the meaning of Spirituality. He says,

> Spirituality is a core aspect of religion though some non-conformists try to create some spirituality in the air. Spirituality is essentially based on religious practices. In fact it leads to the height of religious experience. It consists of a particular experience of what is divine. I say a particular experience because there are many sides to spirituality based on one's faith and character. For according to my slogan, "A kìí ṣe ìgbàgbọ́ kọ́já ìwà ẹni" - one's character is basic to one's spiritual life, because character would dictate the level of cooperation with divine grace. Authentic faith is a gift of God, and it is grace that inspired the spiritual person who freely cooperates.[12]

So, the context in which this paper shall adopt as regard spirituality is the influence of the Spirit of God in an individual irrespective of the person involved and how this stimulus reflects in the individual day-today living and most importantly, noticing the Spirit of God at work in a certain person or in a given situation most especially a particular way of experiencing the divine as noted by Fagun. In the aspect of spirituality, spirituality means being spiritual, relating to, consisting of, or affecting the spirit, incorporeal, connected with religious values, related or join in spirit.[13]Relating to or affecting the human spirit as opposed to material or physical things, relating to religious belief.[14] What then is spirituality? Spirituality, therefore, means sensitivity or attachment to religious values, the quality of being spiritual.[15] That is, a soul is acted upon by the Holy Spirit.[16] The basic truism from this

definition is that spirituality has a transcendental dimension which goes beyond physical reality for it is a religious term. This implies that spirituality, as a concept is a broad concept. That is why we have different kinds of spirituality like African traditional Spirituality, Buddhist Spirituality and Christian spirituality. In Christian Spirituality, there are many kinds of Spirituality.

Some words associated with spirituality are piety, devotion, godliness and holiness.[17] The word "Spirituality" and "mysticism" are somewhat used in an equivalent way.[18] Spirituality etymologically suggests "life", and "dynamism" and "breathing". And that is what the spiritual life aims to be: coming to life in all one's dimensions.[19] The word "Spirituality" a word obviously "contaminated" by the "spirit"[20]often refers to a way of living in line with a particular way of life. To further this example, let us examine what Donald Dorr has to say about Spirituality.

Now I prefer to begin at the other end to accept that the most privileged 'place' in which God speaks to me is my own spirituality. This means that I can no longer think of a person's spirituality as something that comes from outside. Rather it is that which is most deeply personal. My spirituality is me. Not the 'me' that so often is distracted, scattered, and inauthentic; but the most genuine and profound 'me' that exists.[21]

This tells us how spirituality is personal and entails a communication of the divine to the human person. It is the sum total of religious or ethical values that govern a person's life. Spirituality is that which determines and directs one's life.[22] Christian spirituality is therefore, a participation in the mystery of Christ through the interior life of grace, actuated by faith, charity, and the other Christian virtues. The life that the individual receives through participation in Christ is the same life that animated the God-man, the life that the incarnate Word shares with the Father and the Holy Spirit; it is, therefore, the life of God in the august mystery of the Trinity. Through Christ, the spiritual life of the Christian is eminently Trinitarian[23]

The difficulty in constructing a theology of the spiritual life consists in the fact that the spiritual life is at once a *mystery* and a *problem.* It is a mystery specifically since it is life, indeed divine life, a sharing in the Christ-life. Although one may experience this life in the depths of his being as a life of union with God, it is nevertheless ineffable because the supernatural and transcends human comprehension.[24] However, living well is at the heart of all serious spirituality.[25] This implies that no matter how secularized the word spirituality is we cannot remove religiosity from it if it is to be authentic. It is on this note we have different kinds of spirituality: like Islamic Spirituality, African Traditional Spirituality and Christian Spirituality which follows a doctrine or a way of life of a

particular religious figure. For example, Jesus for the Christians and Muhammad for the Islam and the practices with different gods in African Traditional Religion in relation to the Supreme Being (God). As noted earlier that spirituality is a broad term, and that its definition in particularity might be very difficult. This same difficulty is also apparent in Christian Spirituality that sometimes becomes difficult to define it with any specificity. In other words, Christian Spirituality manifests in different forms, and so, it is difficult to find one common form of Christian Spirituality.[26] However, in the heart of any Christian spirituality is Jesus Christ and the working of his Spirit. Fagun defines Christian spirituality as imitation of Christ when he was asked in an interview the question: "What is Christian Spirituality"?

Christian spirituality is a life of spiritual perfection in the imitation of the lifestyle of Jesus Christ as he taught his followers to be perfect (Matthew 5:48). And this perfection requires placing spiritual values over and above the material in practice (cf. Matthew 19:16-29).[27]

Let us examine the definition of Spirituality according to Balthasar. The notion of spirituality is a modern one, found neither in the tradition of religious philosophy nor of biblical theology. It is therefore important to determine its content and bearing. In General (negative speaking) it may be said that there is no reason for the Christian to limit spirituality to the context of Christianity; just as Christians speak of a "medieval" or a "Carmelite" or a "lay" spirituality, so can we speak analogously of "Buddhist" or a "Sufi" spirituality. On the basis of the same common understanding of the idea, spirituality may be approximately defined as that basic practical or existential attitude of man which is the consequence of expression of the way in which he understands his religious or more generally, his ethically committed existence; the way in which he acts and reacts habitually throughout his life according to his objective and ultimate insights and decisions.[28]

Gamalian Spirituality

The Pharisees are one of the Jewish religious sects in Jesus' time. This particular sect was always at loggerheads with Jesus. In fact, Jesus Christ had confronted them with statements like: "woe to you Pharisees", "you hypocrites" and so many others unkind statements. In fact, there is no less than six woes for the Pharisees and scribes in the gospel according to St. Matthew (cf. 23:13-39) this is because of the ways in which the Pharisees presented themselves and ultimately the way they organized and practiced the Jewish religion. This statement by Jesus to the Pharisees was because of their external observance of law and religious practices that were not truly internalized or even practiced with the spirit of the law. Hence, they followed the law (*Torah*) to the latter as against

the spirit behind the law. Another aspect of this pharisaic way of life is the trait of self-righteousness, which Jesus Christ was totally against when he gave the parable of the tax collector and the Pharisee who were in the temple for prayer and the Pharisee's prayer was rejected because of the lack of humility which is an essential element of an authentic prayer to God (cf. Lk 18:9-14).

Be that as it may, there exist questions that could be raised from the above and which need careful consideration. Firstly, is everything wrong in being a Pharisee on one hand? If this is yes, why would Jesus Christ recommended that people should observe and practice everything that the Pharisees tell them? (cf. Mt 23:3). But then, this recommendation has a clause and that is "what they do". In other words, this recommendation by Jesus excludes "what they do". Secondly, can anything good come from a Pharisee? Or are the Pharisees totally bad? These are basic questions which this paper tries to address that despite the disputes that existed between Jesus Christ and the Pharisees in the gospel we can have a spirituality that could be useful for Christians which is named after the Pharisee called Gamaliel. The aim and objective of this work is to examine and expose Gamalian Spirituality and show how a Christian Spirituality may be gotten from a Pharisee namely: Gamaliel and how it can be applied to the discernment of priestly vocation.

Discernment

Discernment is the process of gaining insight into a situation in order to arrive at appropriate judgment, often times in view of taking or not taking a certain action. In spiritual direction, one analyzes how a person's spirit is moved to determine whether or not the movement comes from the Holy Spirit. It is quite possible, even in what appears to be favorable inspiration that comes from the evil spirit or from the person himself.[29] But in priestly vocation it means the process of recommending a candidate for the priesthood. Of Course, in the major Seminary or the theological seminary it is the sole responsibility of the rector in conjunction with other formators to decide whether or not a candidate is suitable for the priesthood. The management of the seminary is in the hands of the rector, who alone under the bishop governs the seminary, calls to orders, admits and dismisses the students; a treasurer has full charge of temporal matters, while to a spiritual director is entrusted with the formation of the students in piety(which is the Spiritual formation). The professors are merely teachers. However, all the formators have a share in the administration of the seminary; and all important matters are decided by a vote of the faculty. The spiritual directors and confessors of the students have no voice in the faculty meetings when one of their

penitents is concerned.[30] To this end, discernment in spiritual matters as well as priestly vocation is not an easy task. Since vocation to priesthood is a mystery so it discernment is demanding. For example, a Seminarian was expelled in a minor seminary in view of priestly vocation upon the issue he honestly did not know anything about. But has providence would have it, this same rejected stone by the builder became the cornerstone not just a cornerstone but "a special-cornerstone". It will interest you to know he became a deacon, a priest and a bishop who has 'the fullness of priesthood', 'the successor of the Apostles' who was raised to the higher level greater than those who expelled him.[31] When it comes to issue of vocation one need to trend with caution and that is why Gamalian Spirituality is paramount in this case. St. Pope John Paul II in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* No. 2 was aware of the difficulty in the discernment of priestly vocation when said:

> For this reason, the total trust in God's unconditional faithfulness to his promise is accompanied in the Church by the grave responsibility to cooperate in the action of God who calls, and to contribute toward creating and preserving the conditions in which the good seed, sown by God, can take root and bring forth abundant fruit. The Church must never cease to pray to the Lord of the harvest that he send laborers into his harvest, (cf. *Mt*. 9:38). She must propose clearly and courageously to each new generation the vocational call, help people to discern the authenticity of their call from God and to respond to it generously, and give particular care to the formation of candidates for the priesthood. The formation of future priests, both diocesan and religious, and lifelong assiduous care for their personal sanctification in the ministry and for the constant updating of their pastoral commitment is considered by the Church one of the most demanding and important tasks for the future of the evangelization of humanity. The Church's work of formation is a continuation in time of Christ's own work, which the evangelist Mark illustrates in these words: "And he went up on the mountain, and called to him those whom he desired; and they came to him. And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons" (*Mk*. 3:13-15).[32]

Gamaliel to Gamalian: A Christian Spirituality

To this end, the major concern of this aspect most especially the different kinds of spirituality we have apart from Christian Spirituality and the Christian (Catholic) Spirituality in particular had been exposed. This aspect is to attribute Christian spirituality after Gamaliel and that is, Gamalian Spirituality. It is a way of life lived after Gamaliel, a Pharisee, as recorded in Acts of the Apostles chapter five. Hence, "Gamaliel to Gamalian" is the transposition of Gamaliel's way of life to a Christian way of life in all its good aspects.

Furthermore, Gamaliel, as a person belonged to a particular religious sect called the Pharisees. So for better understanding of the background to which Gamaliel belonged to at that time, it is very important to examine the spirituality of some religious sects of Judaism. The working definition of spirituality that this paper adopts is the definition by Fagun that had been cited earlier. In it, Fagun gives credence to the fact that religion and spirituality are closely related when he says: "Spirituality is essentially based on religious practices."[33] The sect we are going to examine is the Pharisees since it is to this sect that Gamaliel belongs.

The Pharisees

The word Pharisee is from the Hebrew word [34]פְּרוּשִׁים*perusim* meaning separated, separated ones, separators.[35] They are called Hasidim;[36] as a continuation and development of *Hasidaeans* the Hebrew word *pᵉrûším*; Aram. *pᵉrîšayyā*, from which the Greek word *Φαρισαίοι* is derived means those who had "separated themselves"[37]. The Pharisee, 'separate' or 'detach' as the name connotes. In this regard, from whom did the Pharisees separate themselves? From those, particularly priests or clerics, who interpreted the Law in a different way than they; from the common people of the land or people of the earth *am*-ha-*ares* (Cf. John 7:49); from Gentiles or Jews who embraced the Hellenistic culture: from certain political groups? All these groups of people the Pharisees would have been determined to avoid in their decision to separate themselves from any type of impurity proscribed by the Levitical law — or, more specifically, their strict interpretation of it.[38] They were an active, vocal religious Jewish sect in the centuries before and after Christ appeared on earth. They represented by and large the intellectual sector of their people, because they were passionate, continuous students and teachers of Jewish religious law. Their intensity and single-mindedness resulted in a harsh and uncharitable emphasis on the legal aspects of religion at the expense of charity and loving concern. Jesus represented a threat to their intellectual security and leadership. They tempted him at every opportunity. They tried to trap him into wrong answers (Mat 22:15-22).

They opposed questions, hoping to prove contradictions (Mat 22:34-40). They criticized the company he kept. They objected to his Sabbath activities (Mk 2:15-17).[39] These appellations were given to describe what the Pharisees stood for at that time. But then, this does not mean that the Pharisee do not have spirituality on which their religious practices are based. It is on this note that their spirituality shall be examined.

The Spirituality of the Pharisees

The teaching of the sect was based on the oral tradition as well as on the written Law. The Pharisees held such religious truths as the resurrection of the body and the existence of angels. Since these doctrines were not clearly taught in the Pentateuch (the only Scripture accepted by the Sadducees), the Pharisees founded their belief in them upon later writings and oral traditions. In the field of morals, the Pharisees taught a rigorous observance of the Sabbath and insisted on legal purity and the payment of tithes. They offered various opinions on observance of these and other precepts degenerating into rigorism and casuistry. The result was frequently a sterile externalism destructive of a real religious spirit. After the destruction of the Temple, and the overthrow of the Jewish state, the Pharisees, became practically the only influential group among the Jews. They held the Jewish people together. Later rabbinical schools looked back with admiration upon the Pharisees as the true upholders of Israel's Law and traditions. The rabbis of the Talmud[40] were their spiritual descendants.[41]In order to join this spiritual association and be called a Pharisee, it was necessary to have an exact knowledge of the Mosaic commandments (the written Torah) and the Traditions of the ancients (the oral Torah), to adhere with mind and heart to the teachings of the doctors of the party, and to distinguish oneself by the exact fulfillment of all their precepts. As Josephus Flavius points out, the Pharisees concerned themselves with the strict interpretation and observance of the Torah, and spared themselves no efforts to fulfill the Law in every detail, earnestly and consistently striving to practice the ideal propounded by the Torah scholars. In that sense, they were the classic representatives of the course adopted by Judaism in its inner developments during the post-exilic period. Juridical science of the Pharisaic rabbis manifested itself particularly in three points: the observance of the Sabbath, legal purity, and the payment of the sacred taxes.[42]Many of the Pharisees, like the Essenes, believed in doctrines such as resurrection of the body, Day of Judgment, apocalyptic holy war and life in the world to come, while Sadducees disagree with Essenes and Pharisees, over these doctrines. The Pharisees hold only the written Torah as authoritative [43] and they agree that the Torah admitted of variation in applications, but Jesus pressed the variation further than they

did.[44]With regards to the Sabbath rest, they had multiplied prohibitions, going into even the smallest details. On the question of impurities, the most minute prescriptions had been added to the Mosaic legislation regarding foods, diseases, corpses, apparatus in daily use, ablutions and purifying baths, contact with persons and things considered impure, and so on. As to the tithes to be paid to the priests and Levites, the list of goods, revenues, and products affected had been considerably lengthened.[45]The rabbinical writings show that the problems raised by the observance of these traditions suggested refined casuistry. Thus, with respect to the Sabbath: was it permissible to eat an egg laid on such a day, or fruit plucked from the tree on that day? With regards to ablutions: which kind of water purified best, and how far must one throw one's hands into that water? Regarding taxes: was it lawful to eat vegetables or fruits bought at the market without knowing for certain whether the tithe had been paid on those products.[46]This is the religious sect which Gamaliel belongs. To this effect, who is this Gamaliel?

A Biography of Gamaliel

Gamaliel, Rabban Gamaliel I, so called, to distinguish him from his grandson Gamaliel II who lived around 100 A. D. Gamaliel is also called 'the Great'. He was a Pharisee and a member of Sanhedrin which judged Peter and John. Gamaliel intervened in favour of the apostles with prudent reasons. He intervened in their judgment noting that if the Christian movement were merely human, it would of itself break-up but if it were from God then it would endure. He then admonished his colleagues to exercise caution (Acts 5:34-39). In his address to the Jews in Jerusalem, Paul claimed that he had studied under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3).[47]The word, Gamaliel, is a Greek form of the Hebrew name meaning 'reward of God'.[48]He had a son named Simeon. He was of the city of Jerusalem, and a noble family, of the sect of the Pharisee, which were above others in the accurate knowledge of the laws of their country.[49]But it seems that he took a special interest in social reform, particularly in bettering the legal status of women.[50] Base on who Gamaliel is, Fagun has this to say when he was asked the question "Do you know anything about Gamaliel of Acts 5:34-40?"

Gamaliel was a rabbinic scholar of the school of Hillel, the liberal minded, as against the school of Shammai, the far right in Israel. He was one of the chief judges in the Sanhedrin court at the time of the Apostles of Jesus Christ, and Paul would later boast of being his student (Acts 22:23), because he was a highly esteemed and popular scholar (Acts 5:34).[51]

From the above, we see clearly the personality of Gamaliel and his reputation. His name designates in the New Testament a Pharisee

and celebrated doctor of the Law. Gamaliel is represented in Act 5:34ff as advising his fellow-members of the Sanhedrin not to put to death St. Peter and the Apostles, who, notwithstanding the prohibition of the Jewish authorities, had continued to preach to the people. His advice, however unwelcome, was acted upon. So great was his authority with his contemporaries.

Gamalian Spirituality: Theological Look at Acts 5:34:40

In order that we may better understand Acts 5:34-40 which shows Gamaliel's intervention or advocacy for the apostles during the persecutions in the early Church at Jerusalem, it is very important to recall what happened in the previous chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the Acts of the Apostles in order to understand what led to Gamaliel's intervention of which Gamalian Spirituality is solidly based. The Holy Spirit had just descended upon the apostles (cf. Acts 2ff) and the apostles were able to preach with confidence without fear of the Jews (cf. Jn 20:19). As a result of Sadducean jealousy at the apostles' reputation for the healing of a man lame from birth (cf. Acts 3:2) and many other signs and wonders, they had been arrested and put to jail, only to be released by an angel (cf. Acts 5:12-20). When the Sanhedrin convened, their captain and officers eventually tracked the apostles down in the Temple, and brought them before the council (vv. 21-27). The high priest demanded to know why the apostles persisted, in spite of prior threatening, to teach in Jesus' name. They replied thus: "we must obey God rather than men." They also accused the Sanhedrin of murdering the saviour (vv 27-32). Condemnation of death at that moment seemed certain (v 33).[52] It is in this certainty that Gamaliel gave the following admonitions to the council which is the foundation of Gamalian Spirituality:

> So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this undertaking is of men, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God! (Act 5:38-39)

Gamaliel intervened and cautioned against imprisonment and further persecutions. His standing in the Sanhedrin is assumed to be great, in that he commands the apostles to be put outside for brief time (v 34). He, then, urges caution, and gave instances of Theudas and Judas the Galilean which had come to nothing. The apostles also will fail, if their movement is of men (vv 35-38). If their movement is of God, Gamaliel argues that the Sanhedrin would be unable to prevail, and it will even be a fight against God (v 39). Having been convinced by Gamaliel's arguments, the Sanhedrin released the apostles after flogging them and repeated the old command, not to speak in Jesus' name (v 40, cf. 4:17).

However, the apostles were very happy to suffer for the sake of Christ and they did not cease to talk about Jesus. The second and last mention of Gamaliel occurs in Acts 22:3, during a speech of Paul, in which the apostle claims to have been instructed at the feet of Gamaliel with an exact knowledge of the ancestral law.[53]These passages give credence to the fact that Gamaliel is a person with high integrity. To this end, Gamaliel's counsel to the council is the bases for the Gamalian spirituality which calls all to a life of tolerance, respect for human dignity and being sensitive to the action of the Holy Spirit. Gamaliel was able to be sensitive to the signs of time and his expression testifies truly he was a man of high repute as earlier described by the evangelist (cf. Acts 5:34).

An Application of Gamalian Spirituality to Priestly Vocation and its Discernment

The priestly vocation is indeed a spiritual thing and through the application of Gamalian Spirituality to the spiritual formation and the entire process of formation there will definitely be a proper judgment, helping the seminarian to better appreciate his call, give him another opportunity this will definitely makes him to value the mystery of his call, a mystery that goes beyond the one who is called the letter to the Hebrews 5:4 tells us: "And one does not take the honour upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was."Pope John Paul II gives credence to this point in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* when he says:

> The absolute primacy of grace in vocation is most perfectly proclaimed in the word of Jesus: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide (Jn 15:16). If the priestly vocation bears unequivocal witness to the primacy of grace, God's free and sovereign decision to call man calls for total respect. It cannot be forced in the slightest by any human ambition, and it cannot be replaced by any human decision. Vocation is a gift of God's grace and never a human right, such that "one can never consider priestly life as a simply human affair, nor the mission of the minister as a simply personal project" Every claim or presumption on the part of those called is thus radically excluded (cf. Heb 5:4ff). Their entire heart and spirit should be filled with an amazed and deeply felt gratitude, an unshakeable trust and hope; because those who have been called know that they are rooted not in their own strength but in the unconditional faithfulness of God who calls.[54]

Conclusion

To end, the fact that priestly vocation is a mystery calls for a careful discernment of which Gamalian Spirituality is very important. Fr. Michael Bunmi Olofinlade, in his book "*Mystery of God's Call: A Reflection on Discipleship*" reflecting on the mystery of vocation and the choice of the twelve by Jesus out of many that he had called says: "Thus, Jesus Christ is the one who determines the choice of his disciples, it is not a human choice despite human instrumentality in its discernment."[55]This, therefore, is a pointer to the reality that seminarians are not to give up. If they do not become Catholic priests they can still be useful in the church. They must not use it to alienate themselves from the church or become anti-Catholics. If one becomes a Catholic priest after one's seminary training, we can only attribute it to the grace of God. The Letter to the Hebrews tells us, '*no one takes this honour upon himself*'. That is why vocation is a gift as well as mystery, says St. Pope John Paul II.[56] Pope Francis reminds us in his message for 2018 World day of Vocation that: "the Lord's call – let it be said at the outset – is not as clear – cut as any of those things we hear, see or touch in our daily experience…"[57]. This tells us that both the formed and the formators are to tread with caution in this discernment there must not be harsh judgments base on sentiments. In fact, Gamalian spirituality gives credence to probation by which the formators gives second chance to a given seminarian. As regards vocation, all that can be expected is not indeed certainty, but probability.[58] And this is why the formators recommend candidates for the priesthood while dismissal from the seminary means no more than that the student is not considered fit for the priesthood. But then, Gamalian Spirituality will plead to give more chance(s) because if they have the call they will definitely be. Just has the Bishop who ordained me into Catholic priesthood was expelled in the minor seminary but he later became a Bishop! Can we say the judgment was wrong or that was the path that God wants for him? But history proves he was expelled but later exalted. Prof. Plo Lumumba says: "history is a fair judge, it is a judge that is able to identify the things that speak for themselves". And if Gamalian Spirituality is applied in formation it will save many fruitful vocations. But then, Gamalian spirtuality is not an advocate of seminary where anything goes! It is about a careful discernment.

Endnotes

[1] Cf. Saint John Paull II, *The Story of My Life: Gift and Mystery,* (Vatican; Libreria Editrice Vaticana: 1996, In Paulines Publications Africa, 2014 with a new title: The Story of my life on the occasion of the canonization of Pope John Paul II) It must be

noted that the title that was given to this Book when it was first published in 1996 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana was "Grace and Mystery" But on the Occasion of his Canonization in 2014 the Paulines Publication added the title "The Story of my Life".

[2]The Holy Bible Revised Standard Version, 1 Samuel 16:1(RSV) Says " The Lord said to Samuel, 'How long will you grieve over Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehmite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons" This explains that even before David was anointed had already been chosen by God. Applying this to formation one could say that before a seminary formation a seminarian had been called by God himself. For example in the life of David, he was already a Shepherd and the qualities of a leader has been inculcated one could say his formation was on the field he was called on the field. This could be applied to the story told by Francis Cardinal Arinze that he was influenced by his former parish priest Blessed Michael I. Tansi the influence that Blessed Tansi had on the lad, Francis Arinze provided a suitable ground for his seminary formation. This too is a mystery!

[3] Viéban, A. (1912). Ecclesiastical Seminary. In The Catholic Encyclopedia. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved April 26, 2010 from New Advent: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13694a.htm.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Pope John Paul II, *Apostolic Exhortation 'Pastores Dabo Vobis' I Will Give you shepherd,* (Vatican: St Paul Publications Africa, 1992) 42-59

[7]"The Spiritual Year" in Ikenna Henry Okoroji, *Catholic Seminaries Directory Nigeria,* 1st Edition (Abuja: Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria Abuja, 2011) 67.

[8] Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary,* 11th Edition, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) 1391.

[9] "Spirit" in The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of The English Language (USA: Deluxe Encyclopedic Edition, Trident Press, 1977) 1210.

[10]Ibid.

[11] Fredrick C. Mish (et.al.), *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary,* 11th Edition, (USA: 2004) 1203.

[12]Michael, Fagun, "A Theological Appraisal of Gamalian Spirituality in Acts 5:34-40." An Interview, Ado-Ekiti: September 23, 2018. It worth noting that Fagun is Emeritus Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Ekiti, He was ordained as a Bishop on October 10, 1971 he is an Historian and he had authored many books.

[13] Fredrick C. Mish (et.al.), *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary,* 11th Edition, (USA: 2004) 1203-1204

[14] Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary,* 11th Edition, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) 1391.

[15] Fredrick C. Mish (et.al.), *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary,* 11th Edition, (USA: 2004) 1204.

[16]The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of The English Language (USA: Deluxe Encyclopedic Edition, Trident Press, 1977) 1210.

[17]William M. Thompson, *Christology and Spirituality,* (New York: Crossroad Publication, 1991) 4.
[18] Ibid, 5.
[19]Ibid., 4.
[20]Ibid., 5.
[21]Donald Dorr, *Spirituality and Justice, (*New York: Macmillan, 1984) 19-20.
[22]Abraham Kadaplackal, *The Spirituality of the Diocesan Priest,* (Bandra: St Paul's Publication, 2010) 15.
[23] Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology,* (London; Sheed and Ward Stagbooks; 1980) 18.
[24] Ibid.
[25]Richard S. Briggs in Kevin J. Vanhoozer (et.al), *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible,* (USA: Baker Academic Publisher, 2001) 768.
[26]Obi Oguejiofor, "The World As Summum Bonum: Impact of African Idea of Ultimate Reality on Christian Spirituality" in MarySylvia Nwachukwu and Augustine Oburota, *Theological Perspectives on Spirituality and Piety In Nigeria,* Proceedings of the 19th Conference of CATHAN(The Catholic Theological Association of Nigeria) Held at St. Augustine's Major Seminary, Jos 14-16th April, 2004,(Enugu: 2005) 101.
[27]"What is Christian Spirituality?" Michael, Fagun, "A Theological Appraisal of Gamalian Spirituality in Acts 5:34-40." An Interview, Ado-Ekiti: September 23, 2018.
[28] Hans Urs Von Balthasar, "The Gospel as Norms and Test of All Spirituality", In Christian Duquoc and Claude Geffré et al, *Spirituality in Church and World*, Vol. 9 (New York; Concilium Paulist Press, 1965) 7.
[29] Theodore W. Walters, *A Guide For Spiritual Direction* (Kenya: Paulines Publication Africa, 2015) 48.
[30] Viéban, A. (1912). Ecclesiastical Seminary. In The Catholic Encyclopedia. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved April 26, 2010 from New Advent: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13694a.htm
[31] It worth noting that this is a life Story of the Bishop Who ordained me into Catholic Priesthood. Cf. *Portrait of A Servant of God: Biography of Bishop Ayo-Maria Atoyebi, O.P. @ 70* (Ilorin: Published by Catholic Diocese of Ilorin 70th Birthday Committee, 2014)
[32] Pope John Paul II, *Apostolic Exhortation 'Pastores Dabo Vobis' I Will Give you shepherd,* (Vatican: St Paul Publications Africa, 1992) 2.
[33] "What is Spirituality?" Michael, Fagun, "A Theological Appraisal of Gamalian Spirituality in Acts 5:34-40." An Interview, Ado-Ekiti: September 23, 2018.
[34] Hebrew word for Pharisees https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharisees Accessed on 3 March, 2019 9:35 pm
[35]John A. Hardon, *Pocket Catholic Dictionary: Abridged edition of Modern Catholic Dictionary,* (New York: Doubleday, 1985) 326-327.
[36]William Bridgewater (et al.,) *The Columbia-Viking Desk Encyclopedia,* (London: Macdonald, 1968) 843.
[37]New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. XI (USA: Catholic University of America, 1967) 252.
[38]"Pharisees"https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/pharisees/(3/3/2019)
[39] John A. Hardon, *Pocket Catholic Dictionary: Abridged edition of Modern Catholic Dictionary, (*New York: Doubleday, 1985) 326-327.

[40]The Talmud (/ˈtɑːlmʊd, -məd, ˈtæl-/; Hebrew: תַּלְמוּד*talmūd*) is the central text of Rabbinic Judaism and the primary source of Jewish religious law (*halakha*) and Jewish theology. Until the advent of modernity, in nearly all Jewish communities, the Talmud was the centrepiece of Jewish cultural life and was foundational to 'all Jewish thought and aspirations', serving also as "the guide for the daily life" of Jews. Cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talmud (7/3/2019).

[41]New Catholic Encyclopedia, (London: Catholic University of America, 1969) 252.

[42] Francis Pereira,*Gripped by God in Christ: the Mind and Heart of St. Paul, (*Bangalore: St. Paul Publications, 1993) 24.

[43] John T. Pawlikowski and James A. Wilde, *When Catholics Speak About Jews,* (New York: Liturgical Training Publications, 1987)24.

[44] Ibid.., 25

[45]Francis Pereira,*Gripped by God in Christ: the Mind and Heart of St. Paul, (*Bangalore: St. Paul Publications, 1993) 24.

[46]Francis Pereira, *Gripped by God in Christ: the Mind and Heart of St. Paul, (*Bangalore: St. Paul Publications, 1993) 25.

[47]The New World Dictionary *Concordance to the New American Bible, (*USA: Catholic World Press, s.d,) 2000.

[48] Gigot, Francis. "Gamaliel."The Catholic Encyclopedia.Vol. 6. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1909. 26 Apr. 2010 <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06374b.htm>.

[49]Josephus Flavius, *The Works of Josephus, (*USA: Hendrickson Publication, Transl. by William Whiston, 2006) 12.

[50]New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. VI, (USA: Catholic University of America, 1967) 275.

[51]Michael, Fagun, "A Theological Appraisal of Gamalian Spirituality in Acts 5:34-40." An Interview, Ado-Ekiti: September 23, 2018.

[52]Bruce Chilton in David Freedman, *Anchor Bible Dictionary,* Vol. 2 (London: Yale University Press, 2008) 904.

[53]Ibid.

[54] Pope John Paul II, *Apostolic Exhortation 'Pastores Dabo Vobis' I Will Give you shepherd,* (Vatican: St Paul Publications Africa, 1992) No. 36

[55] Michael B. Olofinlade, *The Mystery of God's Call: A Reflection on Discipleship, (*Ado-Ekiti: AFUSCO Printing Press, 2001,) 24-25.

[56] Cf. St. John Paul II *The Story of My Life: Gift and Mystery*, (Libreria Editrice Vaticana: 1969 in Paulines Publications Africa 2014)

[57] Pope France *Message for the 2018 World Day of Vocation*, Vatican: 3 December, 2017.

[58] Viéban, A. (1912). Ecclesiastical Seminary. In The Catholic Encyclopedia. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved April 26, 2010 from New Advent: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13694a.htm

6

THE RELEVANCE OF EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS IN SEMINARY FORMATION IN THE LIGHT OF JOHN 14:1-14

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Abstract
The formation of the human person has always been a herculean labour as a result of the complex nature of human beings. The human specie has similarities with other animal species but some other features radically distinguish human beings from other living beings. Outstanding of these features is the power of reasoning and freewill. The human person can make decisions based on the level of reasoning and disposition. The formation of the human person can never be imposed as a result of the freewill. This means the human person can be impervious to formation passing through the person. John 14:1-14 presents a conversation between Jesus and his disciples about his imminent return to his father. In this pericope, Jesus takes up both Thomas and Philip over their shallow knowledge of him in spite of their closeness to him. Thomas did not know that Jesus is the way and Philip failed to see God in Jesus. Their familiarity with Jesus did not simply afford them this experiential knowledge. This paper opines that it is a possibility for seminarians to spend years in the seminary learning about Jesus without actually knowing him. Experiential knowledge of Jesus is different from academic knowledge. Academic knowledge is necessary in as much as it leads to the experiential knowledge. The danger, however, comes when the knowledge the seminarian has of Jesus during his seminary formation is limited to the academic knowledge. This can hamper his effectiveness as a priest in the 21st century.

Keywords: Experiential knowledge, Jesus, Seminary Formation, John

Introduction

Seminary formation is the process young men aspiring to become Catholic priests pass through in order to become priests in the Catholic Church. Seminary formation affords the candidates for the priesthood to acquaint themselves with the essential doctrines of the Church which have their basis in the scriptures. Seminarians, in the course of their seminary training, are given formation in four crucial areas namely human, pastoral, spiritual and academic. They are to be well-grounded in these four areas so as to be effective ministers of both the word and sacraments after their ordination. These areas are integral to the wholistic formation of candidates for the priesthood. They are thus to immerse themselves in formation and not lag behind in any of these four areas. However, experiences have shown that it is possible to go through the entire seminary formation without necessarily allowing the formation to permeate one's life. In other words, one may pass through the seminary without the seminary passing through the person. We may, therefore, have intelligent and hard- working priests who act only like functionaries. They know a lot about Jesus and can talk so much about him too. However, in all their dealings as priests, something still seems to be missing. They lack that inner touch that only someone with a personal knowledge of Jesus and an intimate relationship with him can have. This is what this write-up is all about- experiential knowledge of Jesus. The bone of contention is: how can the academic knowledge of Jesus be transformed into experiential knowledge? It is the stance of this writer that if the candidates for the priesthood are able to have the experiential knowledge of Jesus before leaving the seminary, they would be in a better position to "bring all to Christ and Christ to all".

Definition of Terms

For an easy understanding of this work, some terms that are operational are clarified and their use explained. The words are experiential knowledge and seminary formation.

Experiential Knowledge

According to The New International Webster"s Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language, experience is "knowledge derived from one's own action, practice, perception, enjoyment, or suffering"[1]. This means that experience is something personal to the individual and must come from one's perception of reality. Experiential too has been defined as "pertaining to or acquired by experience; empirical"[2]. This also suggests that experiential emanates from experience. It is empirical

and not abstract. Knowledge on the other hand is defined as "a result or product of knowing; information or understanding acquired through experience".[3] There is another aspect of knowledge which the Dictionary points out namely that it is "information; learning; specifically, the cumulative culture of the human race".[4] Knowledge, therefore, is the accumulation of all that is learnt either through learning or experience. Bearing the foregoing in mind, experiential knowledge as used in this work refers to that knowledge that is gotten from experience rather than one that is gotten from mere learning through academics.

Seminary Formation

Seminary formation refers to that process whereby young and interested men are trained towards becoming priests in the Catholic Church. They undergo some rigorous training in both philosophy and theology and thus become mature intellectually and otherwise to be able to proceed to the priesthood. Seminary formation spans some few years of aspirancy, spiritual year, philosophical studies, pastoral year and theological studies. It also involves the work of discernment on the part of the formators who together with the rector have the responsibility to recommend candidates to the bishops for ordination at the end of their training. Seminary formation, therefore, as used in this paper refers to the training of young men for the Catholic celibate priesthood.

John 14:1-14: The conversation between Jesus and his disciples

In this passage, Jesus engages hi disciples in a conversation during which he tells them that he is about to leave them and return to his father. He assures them that he would not abandon them but would go and prepare a place for them so that where he is going, they too would follow later. This is because they know the way to the place. It was at this point that the first scandal occurred. Thomas, one of the disciples listening to Jesus betrayed his ignorance about the way. He says: "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" (v.5). At this culpable ignorance of Thomas, Jesus does not hide his disappointment. However, he seizes the opportunity to teach them that he is the way (*ego eimi he hodos*), the truth (*kai he aletheia*) and the life (*kai he zoe*) (v.6). He continues by saying "no one comes to the Father except through me". This means that the knowledge of the Father is in the Son and that of the Son is in the Father. So, if the disciples truly know Jesus, they have known his Father as well (v.7). In the words of Teresa Okure, "A most consoling message for the disciples is that they know the way to where Jesus is going (v. 6). Jesus is the way to God: they need to walk along it and have no fear of stumbling. He is the truth: they need to hold on to him and rely on him without fear of being failed by him. He is the life:

they need to live it, live in him, and have no fear of death."[5] This knowledge is necessary for a continued relationship between Jesus and his disciples. Jesus reveals the identity of the Father to the disciples and through this revelation, they are able to sustain a relationship wωith Jesus. "The link between Jesus' words and those of the Father who sent him", says Pheme Perkins, "is grounded in the picture of Jesus as the agent of the Father (e,g. 3:34; 7:17-18; 8:28,47; 12:47-49)"[6]

Jesus makes the knowledge of him and his father a joint one so that anyone who has the knowledge of one also has the knowledge of the other. There are two key words used in this passage to express this namely οιδα and γινωσκειν. These two verbs denote knowing with ειδω and γινωσκω meaning "I know". γινωσκω means to perceive, gain knowledge of, know, learn, understand, judge, determine, decide, think and to resolve.[7] It follows from this that γινωσκω has a wider meaning than οιδα. These two words are key in this passage. The use of γινωσκωin the perfect here means knowledge already attained.[8]However, this knowledge is not perfect yet as it becomes obvious from the question Philip asked afterwards.

In v. 8, Philip cuts in to the discourse of Jesus by asking Jesus to show them the Father so as to quench their doubt, ignorance and curiosity. Jesus is once again taken aback by this display of ignorance by Philip. What Philip is actually asking for here is not that clear. Is it like one of the great theophanies that Moses and Elijah enjoyed or the visions of the heavenly court enjoyed by the prophets? Hence, Brown concludes thus: "In the context of the evangelist's own time, perhaps Philip is made the innocent spokesman of those heretical Christians who seek after or claim a mystical vision of God."[9] Jesus reprimands him and continues his teaching regarding the unity that exists between the Father and himself. This knowledge is open to only those who are close to Jesus. They are the ones expected to have a first-hand knowledge of who Jesus is and what he stands for. However, in spite of their close affinity to Jesus, the disciples, Thomas and Philip, could not fathom the real personality of their master. Thus, "the disciples are ignorant of truths that are fundamental for an understanding of who Jesus is, what he is doing, and where he is going."[10]It must be noted that this reprimand was not meant for only Thomas and Philip but for all the disciples as it is evident in the use of the plurals in v. 7 εγνωκατε,γνωσεσθε γινωσκετε and εωρακατε and in v. 11 with the use ofπιστευετε and αιτεσετε . These plural verbs suggest that even though Thomas and Philip were the disciples who displayed publicly this ignorance about Jesus, the teaching that followed was not meant just for the two of them but for all the disciples.[11]

This discourse regarding the relationship between Jesus and his Father continues till v. 14. Here, Jesus makes it abundantly clear to his disciples that he is God's representation on earth. To have seen him is to have seen his Father too. Seeing and knowing Jesus is tantamount to seeing and knowing the Father. The fact that the disciples have not yet arrived at this level in their knowledge does not make them a failure but in the words of Moloney, "The disciples have not failed completely to know Jesus (as "the Jews" had done: viii 19); yet their questions indicate that they do not know him perfectly."[12] Jesus seizes this opportunity to enlighten and educate them on his real identity, where he comes from and where he is returning to. He also tells them that even if they do not believe on account of his words to them, his works are there as outward manifestations of his personality and his relationship with God the Father. "Real belief in the works", according to Moloney, "involves the ability to understand their role as signs- the ability to see through them to what they reveal, namely, that they are the work both of the Father and of the Son who are one, and thus that the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father."[13] The discourse ends with the invitation to the disciples to ask for anything in the name of Jesus which he would grant (v. 14).

The point at issue in this pericope is not so much the discourse of Jesus with his disciples as the interventions of the disciples to Jesus' words. The betrayal of their shallow knowledge of him and his Father points to the fact that it is possible to know many things about someone without really knowing the person. This fact is made clearer by the immediate response of Jesus to the request of Philip ("Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied." v. 8) namely, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? (v. 9). This response must have been worsened because of the ignorance displayed earlier on by Thomas who did not know that Jesus was the way to the Father. It was as if the disciples of Jesus did not actually know the true identity of their master even though they were very close to him listening to his words and seeing his marvelous deeds. The truth of the matter is that if his disciples did not know him well enough, how would they be able to make him known to the people around them who were not close to him, that is, the pagan world? Nevertheless, the point must be made that this is not an indictment on the part of the two disciples, Thomas and Philip, as their requests were not ridiculous or outrageous. It only shows how imperfect they were in their understanding of the person and mission of Jesus on earth.

Seminary Formation in perspective

The task of the seminary is to train and form men who would be ordained as priests to minister to the needs of the church. To facilitate

this task, priests are chosen and sent as formators to the seminary to accompany the candidates on their journey to the priesthood. Seminary formation is thus divided into different stages with studies in philosophy and theology. There are four major areas of seminary formation which are spiritual, pastoral, intellectual and human. These run through the different stages of seminary formation. The seminarians are expected to develop in the four areas of formation without leaving any one behind. To achieve this end, auto formation is highly encouraged but with the formators accompanying the seminarians to be able to reach the requisite maturity for ordination. The formators by their words and examples accompany them to respond positively to God's call.

Philosophical Studies

As part of the prerequisites for ordination, seminarians are to undergo studies in philosophy to sharpen their power of reasoning and enable them to make mature decisions resulting from critical analysis. Through the study of ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary philosophical thoughts of philosophers, they arrive at a moment when they are disposed to receiving different thoughts and opinions with the aim of sifting out the truth. Philosophy enables the candidates to have an open mind towards the opinions of others and to approach issues with equanimity. With the aid of studies in logic, metaphysics and epistemology and other related disciplines, they learn to articulate their thoughts in a convincing way to win people over and are also circumspect regarding what they hear. The knowledge acquired in philosophy serves as a preparatory ground for theology which is "faith seeking understanding". Also within the years in philosophy some theological courses are taken by the candidates to balance up their study in philosophy before they proceed on the pastoral year.

Theological Studies

On the return of the seminarians from their one year pastoral year, they begin their theological studies in earnest. In the course of the years in theology, they undergo studies in scriptures, dogma, canon law, liturgy and morality. It must be noted that the essence of these courses is to acquaint the candidates with the knowledge of Jesus Christ as revealed to us in the Old and New Testaments, in the Fathers of the Church and in the Teaching Office of the Church. With this requisite knowledge it is believed that the seminarians have reached an appreciable level of maturity to advance to ordination. The rector and the entire formation team do not come to this conclusion without first examining and assessing the candidates. This process is called evaluation. First, they are assessed on the basis of their academic performance which the various

examinations they do reveal. Before the reception of any ministry, the candidates are also tested and evaluated to ascertain their readiness to advance towards the priesthood. In the final year of their priestly formation, candidates who have been judged worthy and suitable are recommended to their bishops for diaconate ordination. Those who are ordained serve as deacons for six months till the close of the session. They are then further recommended for priestly ordination after a thorough evaluation has been done by the rector and the formators.

Lack of in-depth knowledge of Christ by the seminarian

It has been observed by many people that there seems to be a great dichotomy between the seminary and the parish. The seminary is the house of formation for future priests while the parish is where the ordained minister functions. Due to the nature and function of the seminary, seminarians do all in their power to abide by the rules and regulations of the seminary. This, more often than not, is as a result of the saying that "if you keep the seminary rules, the seminary would keep you". Therefore, seminarians often put on their best behaviour while in the seminary so as not to be expelled but to be recommended for ordination in due course. Sometimes, this attitude leads to a lot of pretence such that the true colour of seminarians does not come out until after ordination. The seminarians in this category pass through the seminary formation and even excel in the various aspects. To the formators these seminarians have met the requirements to be admitted to ordination into the Catholic priesthood. However and quite unfortunately, immediately after ordination, the newly ordained priest begins to act in a way that is incongruous with the training he has just received. He begins to behave in a way that is at variance with the examples of Jesus Christ whose herald he has now become according to the words of ordination. He feels and acts as being on top of the world with the whole world answerable to him forgetting Christ who says: "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." (Mark 9:33).

One finds some situations in the parishes that make people to ask if a particular priest ever passed through a seminary. They do things in ways that show that they only passed through a seminary without the seminary passing through them. There seems to be a general belief that there is a contradiction between seminary life and parish life. This perhaps accounts for words like "Do you think I'm still a seminarian? Do you think we are still in the seminary? I am no longer a seminarian etc. Some believe that there is no consensus between the theory in the seminary and the practical in the parish. Therefore, for such priests, once the seminary formation is ended, so also is anything that has to do with

it. As such, some practices in the seminary are the immediate victims of this kind of attitude like praying the Office of the Hours, doing adoration and benediction, praying the Rosary and so on. The pertinent question is this: why is there such a dichotomy between the life of the seminarian while in the seminary and the life of the priest after ordination? It is the opinion of this writer that the lack of an in-depth knowledge of Jesus is responsible for this dichotomy.

The Relevance of Experiential Knowledge of Jesus for the seminarian in the 21st century

Experience, they say, is the best teacher. The Dictionary defines experience as "Knowledge derived from one's one action, practice, perception, enjoyment or suffering."[14] Experiential I also defined as "Pertaining to or acquired by experience."[15] Experiential knowledge, therefore, refers to the knowledge acquired through experience. It is quite different from mere theoretical knowledge which is a knowledge acquired through learning alone. With theoretical knowledge one learns with the head alone without necessarily involving the heart. This is why one can learn something and forget it thereafter. It is not the case with experiential knowledge. More often than not, whatever one learns through experience does not depart from the person. It rather becomes part and parcel of that person.

In the episode of John 14:1-14 discussed earlier in this piece, Thomas and Philip were among the disciples of Jesus who have been with him for some time listening to him and learning from him. They seem to know so much about their master except his real identity as the visible image of God on earth. This accounts for their questions to Jesus while he was discussing with them. Thomas asked for the way Jesus was going while Philip asked to see the Father so as to be satisfied. The amazement of Jesus at these questions reflected in his response tells the whole story. As his close friends and companions, they were expected to have known him through and through having listened to him and seen all his marvelous deeds. However, their lack of this in-depth knowledge of him surprised him and he seized the opportunity to educate all the disciples on his real nature and personality. This does not in any way put these disciples in a bad light but only exposes their imperfection. They still had so much to learn from Jesus who even after his death and resurrection promised to send them the Holy Spirit who would lead them to the complete truth (John 16:13).

The seminarian in the 21st century, in order to be true to his calling to be a priest after the heart of Jesus, must not only have the theoretical knowledge of Jesus but also the experiential knowledge. This will enable him to live out more concretely the values of the priesthood

in a world that is hostile to the gospel. This experiential knowledge is relevant today because it helps the seminarian to see continuity between life in the seminary and life in the parish. The seminary training is to enable the seminarian when ordained to become a good and holy priest. He must not see the discipline he received in the seminary only as a means to become a priest but as a discipline for life. This is one of the benefits of experiential knowledge that the seminarian is able to see the seminary formation not just as a means to an end but a way of life that must be lived out in the priesthood.

Another way that experiential knowledge can impart positively the life of the 21st century seminarian is that having embraced the life of Christ as his own, the things of this world are not his immediate priority after ordination but to do the will of God just as Jesus said in John 4:34, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work". This is quite different from what we observe today among newly ordained priests. Even before ordination, the preoccupation of the deacon preparing for ordination is on the material acquisition like the kind of car(s), latest gadgets in town, large sum of money in his bank account and a host of others. This is not to suggest by any means that these things are not necessary for the ministry. It is rather the inordinate desire for them at any cost that calls our preparedness for service to question. After all, the master, Jesus, when he was sending out his disciples on their mission said: "As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or staff; for laborers deserve their food" (Matt. 10:7-10). Hardly can we find today disciples who are ready to plunge themselves into the ministry without first looking for comfort and conveniences. I once heard of a deacon preparing for his priestly ordination who came up with a list of things needed for the ordination and commencement of priestly service. The total cost of all the items on the list runs into several millions of naira. It is not a bad thing for the disciples to be comfortable in the course of their work but the truth of the matter is that comfort and conveniences should not be the *conditio sine qua non* for service or what the disciples would be pursuing. Otherwise, these things could act as encumbrances to the carrying out of our duties as priests. An experiential knowledge of Jesus who had nowhere to lay his head would help achieve this (Matt. 8:20).

The Difference between mere Functionaries and real Pastors of souls

There is a vast difference between functionaries and ministers of the gospel. Functionaries can be likened to hirelings who feel nothing for the sheep but only carrying out the task they are being paid for. These are the people Jesus refers to in John 10:11-13 when he says "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away- and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep". It can be said then that any minister of the word and sacraments who pursues only his own interest and not that of the sheep entrusted to him is only a hireling. Such a person does not possess the experiential knowledge of Jesus. We find so many of such hirelings in the ministry today. They are not ready to dive into the deep for a catch of fish but are busy pursuing their own selfish interests and ambitions and whenever and wherever these are not satisfied, there is trouble and discontentment. Thus, they could be referred to as mere functionaries, performers and artistes.

Real pastors, on the other hand, having experienced Jesus as one who has come to serve and not to be served, are always ready to go in search of souls to be won for Christ. They are prepared to be sent anywhere to minister to people as long as human beings are there. They do not pick and choose where they are going to work. Wherever their bishop or superior sends them, they are happy to go there. On resuming there, they do not put their own needs first. Rather, their preoccupation is to elevate the life of the people and make them better than they met them. They try to imitate the Good Shepherd himself who knows his sheep just as his sheep know him too (John 10:14). They identify with the people not only when things are going on well for them but also and more importantly in their moments of crisis and suffering.

The Role of the Seminary and Diocese in imparting experiential knowledge to the Seminarians

There is no gainsaying the fact that both the seminary and the diocese play important roles in the formation of seminarians. Theirs, therefore, is a collaborative ministry and to succeed in this, all hands must be on deck. The seminary. among all the other functions that it performs, must ensure that seminarians are given sufficient time and space to really discover themselves. While in the seminary, everything must not be subjected to a matter of horarium. If everything is about horarium the seminarians would always abide by it and participate in all the programs of the seminary even when they are not convinced or disposed towards

it. However, if some of the programs in the seminary are presented as private which by no means indicates optional, they are better able to make up their minds on what to attend and for how long. Though this idea may seem to subject seminary formation to the whims and caprices of the seminarians, the intention behind it is to prevent the mechanical obedience to seminary programs. In this way seminarians would be better known and those having challenges can be better helped.

The diocese of the seminarians has a role to play too in giving to them the experiential knowledge of Jesus. Seminarians go on pastoral work every year and they are sent to work in parishes. It must be ensured that they are well guided to carry out real pastoral works and not just some menial or domestic assignments in the parish or rectory. Besides, since examples are better than precepts, priests must always show them good examples for them to emulate. It is often counter- productive when they hear one thing from priests and yet observe another. Also, more often than not, people learn bad things faster than good ones. Seminarians must see priests do the right things so that they can learn them and be able to put them into practice when they eventually become priests themselves.

Conclusion

The encounter of Jesus with his disciples, Thomas and Philip, as enunciated in this work has opened up the discussion on the meaning of experiential knowledge as distinct from mere theoretical knowledge. These disciples as well as others have been with Jesus for a while and yet their knowledge of him has been somewhat shallow. They know him well in the flesh but their knowledge of him as a divine being is inadequate. They still had doubts regarding his divinity. That accounts for why these disciples questioned Jesus the way they did. F. Moloney's words are apt here when he says "To know Jesus is to know the Father, and Philip is exasperatingly ignorant in asking Jesus to show the Father (v.9). The problem lies in the disciples' lack of faith."[16] It is the opinion of this piece that the same thing happens to seminarians who only have theoretical knowledge of Jesus without advancing to the experiential knowledge. They know so much about Jesus but Jesus himself they do not know. This is a clarion call on all those responsible for the formation of future priests and the seminarians themselves to interiorize whatever theoretical knowledge they have about Jesus so as to make Jesus more real to the 21st century world.

Endnote

[1] The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language. Typhoon Media Corporation, 2010. P.447.
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[3] Ibid 706
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7

THE BLINDNESS OF MATERIAL WEALTH IN MARK 10:17-27: A LESSON FOR THE SEMINARIAN OF 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract
The seminarian of the 21st century lives in an era characterized by grave political instability, insecurity and economic crises laden with a high cost of living. Thus, to forestall this unbearable situation, many youths have abandoned their schools, trades, towns, families to embark on various crude and evil means of survival. Some have taken to prostitution, seeking greener pastures via the crude Libyan route, kidnapping, advance free fraud etc. The consequence of this enormous, the streets, shops and craft workshops are deserted without apprentices and families are in pains and tears at the death of their children who have lost their lives. Again, the insufficient manpower in various communities has heightened the level of suffering and poverty in the land. Apart from that, it is really difficult to convince the few youths left at home not to embark on such venture since the few who are acclaimed 'successful' display their flirts of cars and material wealth in a fascinating manner for all to see. However, the encounter between Jesus and the young rich man in the text of Mk10:17-27 reveals the essence of human life and its destiny and the blindness of material wealth. The tragic decision to turn down the invitation of Christ reflects a greater love for his material possessions than for the everlasting bliss of eternal life offered by Christ Jesus. This brings to mind the basic question *what is the essence of life? And what is the meaning of success and the source of happiness? How can a disciple of Christ define his identity in this situation?* Thus, this paper hopes to undertake a detailed exegesis of the text, its theological functions in its immediate and wider context and its theological significance for the seminarian of the 21st century. It will also proffer a number of recommendations to strengthen the discourse on the authentic formation of the seminarian of the 21st century.

Keyword: Blindness, Wealth, Seminarian, Youth, Human life, Formation

Introduction

The 21st century is an epoch of immense human, economic, scientific, social, and political expansions and prospects but loaded with grave crises, challenges and failures. The struggle to make the world a global village aided with information and communication technology has enhance the identity, values, proficiency, productivity and needs of the human person within the globe. On the other hand, this era is typified by grave unstable political climate, insecurity, unemployment, climate change, health issues, economic crisis e.t.c. These crises have great effects on the life style, creativity and identity of the human person in a society where economic power is the centre of gravity. Consequently, the human person is tempted to mislay its values and ultimate goal in the bid to survival. Here, material wealth becomes a vital tool of continued existence and happiness.

So, to avert these unbearable circumstances, many youths have abandoned their schools, trades, towns, families to embark on various crude and evil means of survival. Some have taken to prostitution, seeking greener pastures via the crude Libyan route, kidnapping, advance free fraud etc. The consequence of this is enormous on the true realization of human dignity. The streets, shops and craft workshops are deserted without apprentices and families are in pains and tears at the death of their children who have lost their lives. Again, the insufficient manpower in various communities has heightened the level of suffering and poverty in the land. Apart from that, it is really difficult to convince the few youths left at home not to embark on such venture since the few who are acclaimed 'successful' display their flirts of cars and material wealth in a fascinating manner for all to see.

However, the encounter between Jesus and the young rich man in the text of Mk10:17-31 reveals the essence of the true dignity of the human life and its destiny against the blindness of material wealth. The tragic decision to turn down the invitation of Christ reflects a greater love for his material possessions than for the everlasting bliss of eternal life offered by Christ Jesus to bring mankind to its fullness of human dignity. This brings to mind the basic question *what is the essence of life? And what is the meaning of success and the source of happiness? How can the person of the 21st century define his Christian identity and dignity as disciple of Christ in this situation?* Thus, this paper undertakes a detailed exegesis of the text, its theological functions in its immediate and wider context and its theological significance for the person of the 21st century. It will also

proffer a number of recommendations to strengthen the discourse on the authentic formation of the human person of the 21st century.

The Text of Mark 10:17-31

a. The Text

17 Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ εἰς ὁδὸν προσδραμὼν εἷς καὶ γονυπετήσας αὐτὸν ἐπηρώτα αὐτόν· διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ποιήσω ἵνα ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; 18 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός.19 τὰς ἐντολὰς οἶδας· μὴ φονεύσῃς, μὴ μοιχεύσῃς, μὴ κλέψῃς, μὴ ψευδομαρτυρήσῃς, μὴ ἀποστερήσῃς, τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα. 20 ὁ δὲ ἔφη αὐτῷ· διδάσκαλε, ταῦτα πάντα ἐφυλαξάμην ἐκ νεότητός μου. 21 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἐμβλέψας αὐτῷ ἠγάπησεν αὐτὸν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἕν σε ὑστερεῖ· ὕπαγε, ὅσα ἔχεις πώλησον καὶ δὸς [τοῖς] πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἕξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολούθει μοι. 22 ὁ δὲ στυγνάσας ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ ἀπῆλθεν λυπούμενος· ἦν γὰρ ἔχων κτήματα πολλά. 23 Καὶ περιβλεψάμενος ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ· πῶς δυσκόλως οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσελεύσονται. 24 οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ ἐθαμβοῦντο ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς πάλιν ἀποκριθεὶς λέγει αὐτοῖς· τέκνα, πῶς δύσκολόν ἐστιν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν. 25 εὐκοπώτερόν ἐστιν κάμηλον διὰ [τῆς] τρυμαλιᾶς [τῆς] ῥαφίδος διελθεῖν ἢ πλούσιον εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν. 26 οἱ δὲ περισσῶς ἐξεπλήσσοντο λέγοντες πρὸς ἑαυτούς· καὶ τίς δύναται σωθῆναι; 27 ἐμβλέψας αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει· παρὰ ἀνθρώποις ἀδύνατον, ἀλλ᾽ οὐ παρὰ θεῷ· πάντα γὰρ δυνατὰ παρὰ τῷ θεῷ. 28 Ἤρξατο λέγειν ὁ Πέτρος αὐτῷ· ἰδοὺ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν πάντα καὶ ἠκολουθήκαμέν σοι. 29 ἔφη ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐδείς ἐστιν ὃς ἀφῆκεν οἰκίαν ἢ ἀδελφοὺς ἢ ἀδελφὰς ἢ μητέρα ἢ πατέρα ἢ τέκνα ἢ ἀγροὺς ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ ἕνεκεν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. 30 ἐὰν μὴ λάβῃ ἑκατονταπλασίονα νῦν ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ οἰκίας καὶ ἀδελφοὺς καὶ ἀδελφὰς καὶ μητέρας καὶ τέκνα καὶ ἀγροὺς μετὰ διωγμῶν, καὶ ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχομένῳ ζωὴν αἰώνιον. 31 πολλοὶ δὲ ἔσονται πρῶτοι ἔσχατοι καὶ [οἱ] ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι.

b. Translation of Mark 10:17-31

[17]And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" [18]And Jesus said to him "why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. [19] You know the commandments: `Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.'" [20]And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have observed from my youth." [21]And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing; go, sell what

you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." [22] At that saying his countenance fell, and he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions. [23]And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it will be for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" [24] And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! [25] It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." [26] And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?" [27] Peter began to say to him, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you." [28] Peter began to say to him, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you." [29] Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, [30] who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. [31] But many that are first will be last, and the last first."

The Background of the Text of Mark 10:17-31

The text of Mark 10:17-31 is situated within the larger corpus of the journey outside Galilee and movement towards Jerusalem. Here Mark appears to regard this text as a single unit which expresses the true meaning of discipleship and presents the necessary condition for entrance into the kingdom of God. Thus, he places it after chapter 10:13-16 which defines the entrance into the kingdom and encloses it by the third major prophecy of the passion of Christ in 10:32-34.

This is based on the purpose of projecting the Christian faith in a climate of uncertainty where martyrdom poses a grave danger to the faith of the people.[1] In view of that, the Marcan Christ continues to speak and act meaningfully in the context of crisis. In order to achieve this, the evangelist employs vivid narrative style characterized by simple sentence structure, parataxis, direct speech and historical present in order to make Jesus the contemporary of those who hear or read the account.[2]

Consequently, the text serves as caveat to the audience of the Gospel and post Marcan audience on the dangers and blindness of the love for material wealth against the forfeiture of the eternal life offered by Christ.

Content Analysis of the Text of Mk 10:17-31

Vv. 17-22 -- The Rich Young Man (10:17-22)

The setting of the amazing encounter between Christ and a young man in the text of Mark 10:17-31 is indicated by the verb *ἐκπορευομένου*, *(*as he was setting out) which is the present genitive middle masculine

participle of *ἐκπορευομαι* in v. 17. The eager approach of the man while Jesus was setting out on a journey characterized with his kneeling posture, the formal address and the weighty value of his question suggest a deep respect for Jesus and the genuine sincerity of the man. He did not insist upon a private conference with Jesus by night like Nicodemus. He came to consult Jesus as a distinguished rabbi and showed him the deference reserved for revered teachers of the law.[3]

The designation of Jesus as *διδασκαλε agaqe* (good teacher) in the masculine vocative is a sincere tribute to the impression Jesus had made upon him. Though in the OT and Judaism, only God is characteristically called "good" but can be used in derived sense of "the good man".[4] However, Christ would have him looked upon him to be God, since none is good but God. Again the question of the young man *τί ποιήσω ἵνα ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω;* (what must I do so that I may inherit eternal life?) places the discussion which follows in an eschatological perspective. Ἵνα (so that) here signifies a purpose clause defining the function of *τί ποιήσω* (what must i). Also, the use *κληρονομήσω* (I may inherit) in proleptic aorist stresses the certainty of *ζωὴν αἰώνιον* (eternal life) to the young rich man.[5] In addition, the form of the question implies a piety of achievement which stands in contrast to Jesus' teaching that man must receive the kingdom as a gift from God in his helplessness like a child in 10: 15. Thus in v. 20 the man thought that there were other conditions beyond those written in the *torah*.

However, Jesus' appeal to the commandments serves to re-echo the old OT teaching that the man who obeys the law will live (Deut. 30:15, Ezek. 33:15). He mentions the six commandments of the second table, which prescribe our duty to our neighbor, but puts the fourth commandment last, as that which must be remembered and observed. While the tenth commandment is put as "Do not defraud" showing that it is a rule of justice not to advance or enrich ourselves by doing wrong or injury to any other.[6] These commandments clearly and incisively focus upon relationship with others as the discernible measures of a man's reverence for God and obedience to his mandate.[7] Here, Jesus does not accept as good any other will than the will of God revealed in the law. Hence his affirmation of the commandments is a demand for obedient action which recognizes both the sovereignty of God and the existence of neighbor.

In v. 20, the impulsive reply of the man ταῦτα *πάντα* ἐφυλαξάμην (all these I have kept) with the verb φυλάσσω in global aorist indicative middle reveals that he had made the law the norm of his entire life and had confidently fulfilled its demands perfectly. The reference to *ἐκ νεότητός μου* (from my youth) indicates a boy of twelve years who assume the yoke of the commandments and was held responsible for

their performance.[8] In this sense, Mark presents the inquirer's idea of goodness as defined by human achievement, which has a sense of confidence that he had fulfilled the commandments from time but seeks to discover from another 'good' man what he can do to assure eternal life. But the referral of the question to God puts Jesus' response within the context of the lordship of God.

Nevertheless, the response of Jesus to the young man in v. 21 is not designed to shame him by exposing the real depth of the commandments but is an expression of genuine love for him and to set in correct perspective the honor of God.[9] Thus, Jesus discovers the one thing he lacks, is the self- sacrificing devotion which characterizes every true follower of Christ. Thus, Jesus invites him to follow him now and experience the demands of life and the kingdom with the twelve disciples. This brings to fore that the keeping of the individual commandments is no substitute for the readiness of self –surrender to the absolute claim of God imposed through the call of the gospel.[10] In this context obedience to the law is rendered ultimately in discipleship. Self- surrender means a renunciation of his achievement and the reception of messianic forgiveness through which man is released to stand under the law and to offer the obedience of love.[11] Therefore, the command to sell his property and to distribute the proceeds to the poor was appropriate to this particular situation. Since the promised treasure signifies the gift of eternal life at the revelation of the kingdom of God.

However the true answer to the question in v. 17 lays not so much on the command to sell all but as a necessary condition to answer the call to follow Jesus.[12] In this sense, the Marcan Christ clearly defines the cost of discipleship. Consequently, Mark in this text shows that Jesus separated persons from their normal historical existence as showed also in 1:16-20, 2:14, 3:13, in order to introduce them to a new quality of existence based upon fellowship with him. Jesus demand is radical. He claims the man utterly and completely, and removes anything that could interfere with an unconditional obedience. So following Jesus implies that Jesus himself is the answer to humankind's quest for life and authentic realization of true human dignity.

The grave disappointing and sorrowful response of the young man in v. 22 to the invitation of Christ in v. 21 is described by two verbs; στυγνάσας aorist participle active nominative masculine singular of stugnάzw and ἀπῆλθεν 3rd person aorist indicative active singular ἀπέρχομαι. The verb 'stugnάzw' occurs only twice in the New Testament in the text of Matt 16:3 and Mk 10:22. It means *"become gloomy or dark, be shocked or appalled"* but with ἀπῆλθεν in the aorist indicative active signifies temporal adverbial participle demonstrating two simultaneous actions of the young man of being 'shocked and went

away'. So, his tragic decision to turn away reflects a greater love for his possessions than for his life as Jesus states in Mark 4:19. Again it shows the depth of the demand of discipleship and the uniqueness of the twelve who abandoned everything in order to follow Jesus. Another crucial finding of mark in this text is that the law had not yet fulfilled its function of bring man's satisfaction with this world to an end and energized the thirst for righteousness and life.[13] Consequently, Mark indicates for the first time that the man was rich in v. 22.

Vv. 23-27 -- The Danger of Riches (10:23-27)

The gesture of Jesus in v. 23 to look round depicted by the verb περιβλεψάμενος in aorist participle middle nominative masculine singular demonstrates the contrast of the running and kneeling approach in v. 17 and the slow retreat that ends the amazing encounter in v. 22. Thus, it became imperative for Jesus to turn and catechize those who have abandoned everything to follow Jesus. The comment of Jesus in v. 23b reaffirms the danger of attachment to wealth to the rejection of an infinitively important everlasting life that leads to the fullness of human dignity. This danger lies in the effects of wealth on the spiritual life, which claims the total dependence on God and develops a false sense of security. Material abundance therefore, is an enemy to the 'abundant of life' offered by Christ.[14]

Surprisingly, this response of Jesus meets with great amazement from the disciples. Mark expresses this 'shocked or amazement' of the disciples with another verb ἐθαμβοῦντο in an ingressive imperfect describing the shock that ended with the teaching of Christ as distinct from the amazement of the young man that did not allow for catechesis. The amazement of the disciples probably stems from the belief that prosperity is the blessing and favor from God for righteousness.[15]

However, Jesus did not fail to repeat his solemn warning of v. 23 in an absolute form in v. 24b , saying *how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God,* which is calculated to provoke careful reflection on the part of those confronted with the call of the Gospel. Consequently, he addresses his audience as τέκνα (children) in the vocative neuter plural, not in the sense of biological growth but in terms of understanding the divine principles of the kingdom of God. The hyperbolic comparative between the largest animal (camel) and the smallest opening (eye of a needle) used by Jesus with the verb εὐκοπώτερόν (easier) in the comparative adjective in v. 24b is the only existing comparative found in the NT.[16] And it expresses what, humanly speaking, is impossible or absurd.[17]

Consequently, Jesus' response to the total rejection of his invitation leaves an exceeding astonishment in the face of the disciples which led to an inquiry; καὶ τίς δύναται σωθῆναι; (Then who can be

saved?). Accordingly, the response of Jesus in v. 27 to the query of the disciples in v. 26 places salvation beyond the spheres of human possibilities into the hands of God as his gift to humankind.

Vv. 28-31 -- The Reward of Discipleship

In v. 28 Peter acts as the spokesman for the disciples and shows an absolute understanding of v. 21. His affirmation which seems to be a note of self-congratulation is in positive contrast to the refusal of Jesus' invitation in v. 21 of a man who prices material wealth than the invitation of the divine and supreme Creator.[18] This is based on the fact that the disciples have fulfilled the two requirements of complete renunciation and of following Jesus.[19]

Conversely, the response of Jesus in vv. 29-31 to peter declaration in v. 28 defines Christianity in terms of promise and persecution, and history as the interplay of blessedness and suffering. This is pivoted on the divine principle that God takes nothing from a man without restoring it to him in a new and glorious form. So, whatever is lost in one society in v.29 will be regained a hundredfold in the new society created by the dynamics of the Gospel in v.30.[20] In this sense, the promise of eternal life in the age to come looks beyond the conflict of history to the glorious triumph assured through radical of obedience of anyone to the will of God. The discourse ends in a caveat couched in antithetical parallelism in v. 31, in which Jesus demands a total and radical commitment sustained only in the act of following him faithfully.

Theology of Mk 10:17-31

The vivid narrative style of Mk 10:17-31couched in simple sentence structure, parataxis, direct speech and often intersected with historical present is knitted with various theological themes. They are:

The Prophetic Mission of Christ Jesus

The actual encounter of Jesus with the rich man in Mk 10:17-31 clearly defines the prophetic identity of Jesus as the true Messiah who teaches and saves. Jesus' identification as *διδασκαλε agaqe* is based on the impression of his distinctive teachings, exercise of authority over demons and miracles on the mind of the people. (Mk 1:22, 27). Jesus' exclusive declaration of the attributive adjective *agaqe* to God is a self-revelation of his Christology and divinity. Indeed God only can be acclaimed perfectly good and not man. Since, God is all goodness and there is no evil in his nature. In this sense, only God has the authentic prophet mandate that can truly teach, sustain and lead humanity to its goal and fullness of dignity as destined by God. This is in line with the Lucan manifestos of

Christ in 4:18-19 "the spirit of the lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the lord". Similarly, the Marcan Christ who consistently speaks and acts meaningfully in the context of crisis has the prophetic role to set humanity aright at all times. The implication is that humanity must realize its need to depend on God and do his will in order to fulfill its destiny and dignity. Thus, the imperative is that humankind must listen to him. (Mk 9:7b).

Material Wealth in Mark's Theology

A closer survey of the Gospel of Mark reveals that he does not totally condemn wealth but does not seem to attach much importance to it in relation to the gospel message.[21] Accordingly, the disciple of Christ is called to totally depend on divine providence and not on the temporary false security which wealth seems to provide. As a result, to follow Christ demands the adoption of the simplest way of life and subordination the comfort of life to the mission of Christ Jesus.[22] Consequently, following and listening to Jesus without the distraction of material wealth is a source of abundant divine blessings, since the heavenly treasures offered by Christ is supremely greater than material wealth.

However, the young man's tragic decision to turn down the invitation of Christ to an everlasting and abundant life is a reflection of an absolute foolishness. This unique rejection of divine bliss is based on the lack of the authentic understanding of the true identity of the self and its divine goals. The alignment and total dependence of the human person upon the securities and pleasures which material wealth offers is deluding and destructive blindness to the nature of the human spirit and its end. Hence, for Jesus the human person who is enslaved by material wealth has made external bliss impossibility like the head of a Carmel going through the eye of the needle. (Mk 10:25). This invitation of Christ is typified by consistent sharing and self-giving of one's self and material wealth to others.

Consequently, the young rich man lost Christ's offer to a great friendship, development and great adventure to be God's fellow worker in shaping the world. He fails to see the danger of material wealth to spiritual life and true dignity. This hazard of wealth lies in the fact that the means have a subtle way of becoming ends. Indeed, "wealth can imprison a man in a world of illusion and thus develop a false sense of security. In this sense the centre of gravity moves from personality to power, and such personality shrinks in the process."[23] Thus, the gospel becomes an enemy to the abundant life which material wealth offers.

The Law and the Gospel of Christ

The invitation to follow Christ for Mark requires self-sacrificing devotion, self- surrender and sacrificial love which cannot be achieved through the observance of the *torah* alone. This radical demand of the gospel is the litmus test of discipleship. Indeed, this is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets as set out by Jesus in Matthew 5:17. The walking away of the young man is an indication that the observance of the law only did not fulfill the demand of the gospel of sacrificial love of the new covenant and the required dignity. So, dependence on wealth and earthly desires are antithetical to the good news proffer by Christ Jesus. Thus entrance into the kingdom of God in this sense requires total self-surrender to the person of Christ. This cannot be attained through the observance of the law alone but via total dependence on God. This self-surrender to Christ brings the divine justice and love of God towards those who accepts the Christ's invitation but not without suffering and persecution.

The Lesson of Mark 10:17-31 for the 21st Century

The human person of the 21st century is called to witnessing and discipleship of Christ Jesus like the Apostles, who left everything and followed Christ (Mark 10:28). He has the unique mission to continue the ministry of Jesus handed down by the apostle. As a disciple of Christ, he/she is offered like the young rich man to adopt the itinerant and simplest lifestyle of Jesus and his first followers in order to save souls and shape the world.[24] Accordingly, being with Jesus and sharing in his mission of teaching and healing entails the adoption of the simplest possible way of life and subordinating one's personal comfort to the mission. Thus, as a witness and disciple of Christ, he is faced with the choice of spending his life in Christ or embracing a world that celebrates material possession. In wise manner, the human person of the 21st century should make a fundamental option to witness to Christ and share in the divine blessedness of the elect.

Similarly, the rich young man's rejection of Jesus' invitation arises from his unwillingness to adopt the simple lifestyle required for the ministry of Jesus. His great love for possessions hindered him from participating in the mission of Christ. This demand of Christ's disciples is antithetical to the dependence and false security material possessions offers. The excessive crave for wealth to the detriment of the salvation of the soul will completely and totally separate one from eternal happiness. Again, the use of dubious means in acquiring wealth like fraud and robbery, selling of body parts, kidnapping, prostitution e.t.c is totally unbecoming of a Christian lifestyle laid down by the Gospel of Christ.

The imperative is to seek eternal life offered by Christ Jesus and not transient happiness offered by material wealth.

Another basic issue that this text of mark10:17-31 seeks to address is the essence of life and the source of the ultimate happiness. It completely rejects material wealth as the essence of life and the ultimate source of happiness. Also it teaches that being rich can prevent one from entering the kingdom of God. The joy and security of life is not based on what one owns but total surrender and dependence on the God the creator (luke12:15). Thus the life created by God cannot derive its true meaning and fulfillment from the created things except from the creator alone. The rich young man lost the blessedness of the spirit because he was shaded with the dark lenses of wealth. Jesus challenges the rich young man to admit that there are even greater blessings than being rich in life and playing the benefactor (Mark10:21).

Again, the text teaches that life must be lived as a gift from God and used as an instrument for pleasing God the creator. The rejection of the invitation to share his wealth with the poor and store up treasure in heaven (Mark10:21), is a pointer that the rich young man lack this basic understanding of life. This same mindset is common in the 21st century of those who take to various dubious means to amass wealth and pursue it as the ultimate goal of life. Life must not be lived in a competitive and self-centered manner but rather with the disposition to share and live for others. This Jesus did by climbing the cross. Thus, the authentic realization of the human dignity in the 21st century must entail a good disposition to sacrificial love, total dependence on God and the consistent attitude of sharing with others. This is the unique identity of the first century Christians that shaped and transformed the world. (Acts 2:45)

The text of Mark10:17-31 also teaches in vv. 28-31 that there is reward for those who take up poverty in the service of Jesus' mission of proclaiming the kingdom of God. The reward will both present and future. Indeed there is a better reward for those who accept the simple and poor life of Jesus Christ, with the promise of a new family and new possessions, and eternal life in the age to come (Mark10:30). In this sense, the person of the 21st century should live his life for eternal bliss than for transient material wealth.

Conclusion

This study critically examines the text of Mark 10:17-31 and reveals its theological functions and values on the cost of the discipleship and the use of material wealth. It argues that the ultimate goal of Christ for the rich young man is his salvation. The imperative to share his material wealth with the poor is an invitation to share in the life style of Jesus

Christ and enjoy eternal happiness. The gospel of Christ teaches that human life and material wealth should be lived and shared with others. This is essential to the authentic realization of the dignity mankind the 21st century who lives in a world that celebrates and adores material wealth, even when it is acquired via dubious means. This will help to strengthen the faith and build life style on the person of Christ who is the ultimate source of life and happiness.

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8

DISCERNMENT IN THE FORMATION OF FUTURE PRIESTS IN A TRANSISTION PERIOD: AN EXAMINATION OF THE VOCATION OF SAMUEL (1 SAM. 3.1-10).

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Abstracts
The passage of our consideration narrates the 'call of Samuel' and how the priest Eli guided him to properly decipher the voice of Yahweh and disposed him to the vocation and mission that Yahweh would assign to him and how he on his part made a final and definitive response to his Vocation in a transition period in the life of the Jewish people (1 Sam. 3.1-10). His formation has an enduring implication for the Jewish nation by providing a necessary guidance and needed unique identity in the Ancient world upon which successive generation continue to build on. This passage is still relevant today as we celebrate the Silver Jubilee of our seminary and examine the theological relevance of priestly formation in this third millennium, prospects and challenges. Therefore, a proper examination of this passage will help candidates to the sacred priesthood present themselves for proper formation that has a transforming effect for the work of evangelization to which God is calling them. However, without proper disposition and opening of self to true discernment which is the action of the Holy Spirit, in the humble efforts of the Formators, who like Eli, should help the candidates to decipher and discern the true voice of God calling; it will be difficult to achieve the desired result, which is furthering the kingdom of God on earth.

Keywords: Discernment, Formation, Vocation, Formators, Holy Spirit

Introduction

There are so many concerns about the books of Samuel among scholars but some areas that constantly receive scholarly attention include the composition of the book itself, the source and the question of its authorship. These areas continue to re-appear in biblical scholarship and they often generate and shape the direction of the discussion among scholars. That this is nearly so can be seen in the work of Moshe Garsiel.[1] In his work, he notes that the book of Samuel appears at the most "crucial period in the history of the Israelites…The book, as is seen even at first sight, is a unique combination of historiography, literary poetics and ethical and theological perception."[2] However, other scholars have also contributed to the discussion by raising the relevance and the novelties of the different narratives, the characters, their social and theological innovations for social and religious transformation, the geographical settings and their importance for the future of the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and his Chosen People.[3]

Making a comprehensive excursus into the different debates will be too cumbersome for this paper. Therefore, the scope of this paper shall be limited to the Character of Samuel and his involvement in the different transitions that led to the stability of the Chosen People and gave a unique identity to them as a nation and see how it can be a guide for a nation like Nigeria in her identity crisis. The approach to be employed will be synchronic and canonical, as such, the textual criticism of the pericope may not be necessary.

This passage reflects the final stage as it were in the formative period of the life of the young Samuel who was dedicated to the service of Yahweh immediately after he had been weaned by his mother.[4] "*And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh. And the child was young….Therefore I have lent him to the LORD. As long as he lives, he is lent to the LORD.*" *And he worshiped the LORD there."* (1 Sam 1.24-28).

When Samuel was given to Eli, the best the mother could have hoped for, was to assist the old priest of Yahweh at Shiloh, because priesthood in those days was tribal and hereditary, of which his family was not a part of (Num 18.1; 1 Sam 2. 28, 30). Thus, the young Samuel's works would have consisted of, looking after the person of the priest, Eli and the place of worship, taking charge of the work connected to the place of worship. The proper sacrifice and the sacred vessels shall be handled by the priests of Aaronic lineage (Num 18.2-4). It is for this reason that the Chroniclers in their short genealogical tree of the workers at the Temple named his grandson Heman among those who were listed as choirs of the temple by King David (1 Chron 6.18). While doing this,

the boy Samuel was growing physically and inwardly as he also found 'favour with God and man' (1 Sam.2.26). This terminology is found only once again in the whole of the Bible in the Gospel of Luke when the boy Jesus was found in Temple teaching elders and later followed his parents home (Luke 2.52).

However, the historical context of his call showed a nation in transition and the need for a strong, God fearing, committed and faithful leader, who would help to direct and midwife the various institutions necessary for its continued existence as a nation and as the Chosen People of God (I Sam. 2.26).[5] He was called particularly to guide and to take a leading role in this transition, so that, this plans of God would not be truncated. Giving a summary of the life of Samuel, the author of the book of Sirach notes that he "*was the beloved of his Lord; prophet of the Lord, he instituted the kingdom, and anointed rulers over his people. By the Law of the Lord he judged the assembly, and the Lord watched over Jacob. By his loyalty he was recognized as a prophet, by his words he was known to be a trustworthy seer*" (Sir. 46.13-15). This alo corresponds to the Deuteronomic summary of his life (1 Sam. 3.19-20).

The Literary Classification 1 sam 3.1-10.

Every piece of literature can be classified according to its literary genre. While many scholars classify this pericope as 'the call of Samuel', they do not assign a special literary structure to it or at best they compare it with other prophetic commission narratives especially that of Moses.[6]

A commission narrative is usually the last process of a call narrative and as such they are two different things. There are so many commission narratives in which nothing are known about their birth such as those of the prophets and the apostles yet God called and sent them on mission. Some others see the passage as that of the Birth narrative like other birth narratives of great people in the bible.[7] It should be noted that birth narrative is a prelude to the story of a great personage of historical importance; it may not necessarily lead to a special vocation. Others see it as a divine revelation or a theophany of Yahweh to the young Samuel.[8] In another respects some compares it to the dreams in the Ancient Near East.[9]

It is true that this passage has some characteristics of theophanic revelatory call and dream like commission narratives; it is the opinion of this work that it best fits into the literary pattern of the vocation narratives. Vocation as a literary type or genre has its own form in both the Old and the New Testament. An examination of a few examples will show the pattern of this literary structure as a unique genre for this pericope.[10]

Call of Moses: Ex. 3
Initiative of the Deity: Natural State: Moses was tendering the Flock of Jethro Ex. 3.1
Apparition of the Deity: The angel of the Lord appeared Ex. 3.2
Sacred Location; The Burning Bush Ex. 3.2,5b
Call by Name: Moses, Moses Ex. 3.4b
Challenges of Certainty: Moses turned around to look Ex. 3.3-5a
Confirmation of the Call: Ex.3.6
The Reason for the Call: I have seen the affliction of my people Ex.3. 7-9
The Commission- I will send you to Pharaoh Ex.3.10
Time for Maturity and Assurance: Discussion between the Deity and the person, Ex. 3.11-4.17
Positive Response: He returned to Jethro. Ex. 4.18

Call of Samuel I Sam. 3.
Initiative of the Deity. Samuel was sleeping; 1 Sam 3.3
Apparition of the Deity: The Lord stood by him; 1 Sam. 3.10a
Sacred Location: The Temple and the Ark of God 1 Sam. 3.3
Call by Name: The Lord Called Samuel; 1 Sam. 3.4,6,8,10b
Challenges of Certainty: The boy Samuel went to meet with Eli thrice; 1 Sam. 3.5-8
Confirmation of the Call: The Boy Samuel answered; 1 Sam. 3.4,10c
The reason for the Call: God wants to do a terrifying thing in Israel; 1 Sam 3.14
Time for Maturity: Discussion between the deity and the person; 1 Sam. 3.11-15
The Commission: I will judge the house of Eli; 1 Sam.3.13
Positive Response: lay down and sleep over the words; 1 Sam. 3.15

The Call of the First Disciples (Luke 5.3-11
Initiative: He went into one of the boats; Luke 5.3
Sacred Place: After teaching people; Luke 5.3
Call by Name: He Called Simon to thrown into the deep; Luke 5.4
Challenge of Certainty: We had toiled all night Luke 5. 5-7
Confirmation of the Call: Simon fell on his feet; Luke 5.8
Reason for the Call: not applicable
Time for Maturity: They dragged their catch to the shore; Luke 5.9-10a
The Commission: Hence you will catch men; Luke 5.10b
Positive response: They left everything and followed him; Luke 5.11

The Call of Paul of Tarsis (ACTS 9.3-20)
Initiative: He was on a journey; Acts 9.3a
Sacred Place: A light from Heaven; Acts 9.3b

Call by Name: God called Saul, Saul; Acts 9.4
Challenge of Certainty: Who are you? Acts 9.5a
Confirmation of the call: What do you want me to do; Acts 9.6
Reason for the Call: It is hard to kick against the pricks; Acts 9.5b,
Time for Maturity: between the incidents and Brother Ananias; Acts 9. 6b,9-14
The Commission: He will be told what to Do as a Chosen vessel unto the Lord; Acts 9.6c
Positive Response: They brought him to Damascus, Acts 9.8

Call Literary Structure:

i. Initiative of the Deity: Natural State
ii. Apparition of God, An Angel of God, The word of God
iii. Sacred Location- A description of the location; Temple, Burning Bush[11]
iv. Call by name- call is given to individual/ vocation is person
v. Challenges of certainty, Doubt and Assurance
vi. Confirmation of the Call- Giving Sign
vii. The reason for the Call- Description of the situation
viii. Commission- brings about a lasting Change
ix. Time for Maturity: preparation for the mission
x. Positive Response

The Characteristics of Vocation Genre

The first consideration about the genre of Vocation is that, it is not the individual that calls himself to the service of God rather the initiative is always from God. As noted by Fretheim, "the emphasis throughout is on the divine initiative. It is God who confronts Moses and calls him to a task. Moses does not prepare for the encounter, nor does he seek it."[12] Hence, the author of the Letter to the Hebrews notes 'No one takes this honour on himself except he is called as Aaron was' (Heb. 5.4). Since the initiative is from God, the recipient of such a privilege calls, is presented in his natural state. It is not a reward for a good done or a prize won for a previous action. Hence, it is always related to a divine revelation or a vision of the divine.[13]

Such vocation is always an invitation to participate in a transformation that will have a universal implication of great importance rather than a personal glorification or a prize, or a reward, given for what one has done in the past.[14] The manner and pattern of each vocation narrative depends on the nature of the mission to be accomplished. For instance, Abraham was called to leave his father's house for a Promised Land (Gen. 12.ff). Moses was called to lead the people from slavery into the Promised Land (Ex. 3.1ff). Samuel was to help them make necessary

transition from a loose Tribal Amphitony to a United Kingdom under one leader in the Promised Land (1 Sam. 3.1ff). Hence, because the mission God is entrusting to this individual is enormous, He also prepares them for it.

One other characteristic of this literary genre is the mentioning of the recipients' personal name by God before revealing to them his purpose of calling them. This name calling shows the personal relationship with the divine who knows his messengers by name (Is. 49.1). In the case of Moses, Samuel and Paul, their names were repeated twice by God as a sign of "endearment" to authenticate their vocation.[15] Even in some other instances, God gave new names to those He called which would correspond to their mission. God calls individual for particular mission. It is therefore God's knowledge of the individual as well as a reminder to the individual's response to God's invitation (Hos. 11.1). It is from this name calling, that the literary genre as it were, bears its special character of 'Vocation'.

Another important aspect of the vocation genre is the centrality of the word of God. According to Zimmerli, "the particular significance of the account of Jeremiah's call's to be seen in the firm subordination of all its features to the Word of Yahweh."[16] This word of God is central to all the prophetic vocation. In the case of Samuel, there is an emphasis from the beginning that the word of God was not common. At the end of this narrative, God does not allow the word to fall to the ground without being fulfilled. This also puts him in the same position like that of the prophets of old because "the messages are more important than their experiences".[17]

In all of these examples of Vocation literary genre given above, the recipients, Moses, Samuel, the Apostles and Paul in a special way, were called to be involved in a transition that will have a lasting and more enduring effect. Thus, the "account of Samuel's vocation is a good example of a divine calling to perform a special mission, it shows both the attitudes that the person called should have and the demands that the divine call implies."[18] This is also reflected in the manner of their vocation to set up a special people for God through their own person charisma and formation. Moses formation was God himself through the different dialogue. Samuel had the old priest to help him, the apostles and Paul had Jesus as their teacher (Matt. 23.8; Mark. 3.13-14; Gal. 1 15-16). Furthermore, the resemblance between Moses and Samuel is telling because the circumstances of their birth and the relationship of their parents, were involved in their narratives (Ex. 2.1ff; 1Sam. 3.1ff).

Examination of the Narrative of Samuel's Vocation

Samuel is described as one who "stands at the intersection of a cephalous clan culture and the hierarchy of the nascent monarchy he inaugurates. He is charged with preserving the conservative values of the past while also plotting out the future during a period of national transition."[19] His contributions and actions are pivotal to the eventual emergence of the people both as geographical entity and in their self-religious group. Indeed, the book could be called Book of Transition of which Samuel enjoyed not only a luminal figure but also, has consistently shown him as a leading figure.

According to some authors, Samuel's vocation was necessary because of both the physical and spiritual weakening of Eli's strength and Yahweh has found himself a strong man in the young Samuel. This passage of our consideration is the centre of the story which began in Chapter one with Hannah's prayer. It is the summit and the beginning of the great Israelitic institutions of the vocation to the special priesthood, the distinctive prophetic ministry and the Yahwistic monarchical election.[20] For this reason, some scholars note that to "Samuel's is the credit for one of the greatest contributions ever made to the political thought of man."[21]

Thus, this call was necessitated by the "historical and moral limitations" that created a crisis point in Israel and needed divine intervention before it becomes catastrophic. God called Samuel to cart a new cause of direction for the leadership of the people that might eventually restore the people to the right path through the word of God.[22] However, by helping him to answer this call, the old man, Eli, shows that Yahweh has a special assignment for the boy as indeed indicated in the narrative of his infancy. Yet he must not only consult and seek the guidance of the old priest Eli, but also complete the period of his formation.

Consequently, the call of the boy Samuel begins a new personal relationship between Yahweh and his Chosen People.[23] Samuel is in the vanguard because he must instruct the new leaders including himself that leadership in "Israel were not allowed to do whatever they fancied. They were subjects to a higher power and to the rule of law and morality, upheld by the prophets."[24] Hence, "as has now been addressed directly by Yahweh, and the significance of this fact extends beyond the immediate circumstances, for the closing verses of the account make it clear that Samuel is henceforward to be the medium through which Yahweh will address his people."[25]

Therefore, this passage is a bridge between the old order as it were and the new things that Yahweh wants to do. This is the nature of God that time and again, in different circumstances, he intervened and

gets involved directly in the affairs of his Chosen People. In doing this, he calls individuals to partner with him in bringing about this radical change. Samuel will now be called a prophet. A term which in its Akkadian root means to be called or summoned by the gods "one called to duty by a god."[26]

If Samuel was courageous and successful in his ministry as a prophet and a judge (1Sam. 3.19-20), it was because he has disposed himself favourably through obedience under his master Eli. Thus, he became a model of obedience as he listened to what Eli taught him to say if he should hear the voice of God calling him again (1 Sam. 3.9).[27] He repeated the words just as Eli told him. Eli also showed by his own example of life, how to submit to the will of God, when Samuel narrated to him the message of God which he has just received. Although, challenging and difficult, Samuel told him what God had threatened to do to his two sons Hophni and Phinehas and his family. Eli responded, He is the Lord, let him do what seems good to him (1 Sam. 3.18b). Bowing to the will of God is a sign of true vocation, Mary (Luke 1.38) and Jesus (Matt. 6.10; 7.21;26.42) would later give us models by the examples of their lives.

However, the vocation of Samuel needed a special period of discernment because of the theological implication it would have for the future of the People of God. Hence, the place of Eli in this discernment was of great significance because helped the young Samuel during this formative period so to say, to learn by every call experience, the voice of God in the many deceptive voices that could be speaking to him (1 Sam. 3.5). Two caveats that are significant here in the beginning of the narrative of the vocation are: (a) the description of Samuel as a 'young boy' or a child and (b) that the 'word of God' was not common in those days (1 Sam. 3.1).

Having completed his period of formation, he was able, through the discernment of Eli, to make appropriate response that guided him throughout his life. He learnt that he was a Servant-leader between God and his Chosen People. This becomes very obvious in the words of his response to the call of God as directed by his master Eli; 'speak Lord your servant is listening' (1 Sam. 3.9). Therefore, he must listen to the rb;d" 'Word of God' and act accordingly before the people and that makes his a prophet like Moses. To underscore the importance of the Word in the life of Samuel, his mission was summarized in the following words 'Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did not let none of his words fall to the ground' and from Dan to Beersheba, he was recognized as aybiiÞn" a prophet (1 Sam. 3.19-20).[28] This was evident when he was to chide Saul for his disobedience "and Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee for you have rejected the word of God: (1 Sam. 15.16).

Implications of Samuel's Vocation for Israel as a Nation

There is no doubt that the theology of the Books of Samuel shows that the narrators/redactors re-worked the different historical traditions at their disposal to give appropriate place to God's intervention in the unfolding of events in the pre monarchical period. Mark Leuchter, notes that this was the major concern of the Deuteronomic Historian who constructed "a theoretical narrative of Israel's landed experience …for the purpose of establishing a vision of society where sacral leadership and old covenantal ideals formed the basis for evaluating righteousness, theological fidelity, and social responsibility."[29] In spite of this, the importance of a visionary and dedicated leader in a transition period cannot be over emphasized. This is where the person of a Priest leader like Samuel becomes inevitable.

In these twin books, the combine efforts of the Deuteronomic and Priestly traditions, both of which are steeped in the theological ideologies of the Chosen People are openly manifested. This theological outlook particularly reflects the "religion of a people deeply rooted in the life of a people settled on their land and leading a natural agricultural and political existence."[30] It is therefore reasonable to assume that they have placed the different characters in these books at some special junctures in the history of the Chosen People of God as a nation, to give credence to their assumptions. The character of Samuel as a dedicated man of God who received the Word that was very rare and the vision that was uncommon, yet that would eventually shape the history of the people along the traditions received, bearing in mind their relationship with Yahweh as his covenanted people, at the beginning of this journey, was inevitable.

The narrative of the vocation of Samuel presents him as the personage that bears this new theological vision on his shoulder and thus incorporates other narratives that have implication not just for the immediate moment but also for the exilic period and even beyond.

Samuel thus functions within a work that was not always a single narrative, but which was always part of a textual curriculum with an interconnected vision. His diverse roles as priest, prophet, and judge are the end result of careful hermeneutical creativity on the part of the redactors who recognized Samuel's liminality and its potential as an interface between tradition.[31]

In order to do this properly, he had to undergo tutelage and formation under an experienced priestly figure like of Eli. This period helped him not only to respond properly to God's call as he should, but also, it helped him to navigate the different contours of transitions even without an already worked-out road map, to guide him. Thus, "the narrative of 1 Samuel could be described as a narrative of transitions. It

details the transitional phase from the era of the judges to the era of the monarchy; its transitions from one failed dynasty (saulide) to one successful dynasty (Davidide)".[32]

It must be mentioned that all the primary characters in this book "stand in transitional relationship to each other so that the narrative tells of the transition from one leader to another: from Eli to Samuel, from Samuel to Saul, from Saul to David."[33] However, the character, Samuel, that concerns this work, has at least four different accounts of transitions recorded in which he played major roles. He became intuitive and creative as he responded to the exigencies of his vocation right from the beginning of his ministry to the end and endeared himself to the heart of the people. He did this very well as he made the uncommon transition from one leadership institution to another, until till Kingdom was securely established in David, the man after God's heart.

On the person of Samuel, his identification has been difficult because he has been described with various epithets: A seer, a priest, a prophet and a judge.[34] These roles singled him out as a man with special character in the development of Judaism and Jewish history. Little wonder, it was said that he had favour with God and with men (1 Sam. 2. 26). The 'Word and the Vision' he received from God continued to be the major instruments of his vocation and the guide of the Chosen People afterwards.[35] These institutions though common to the people of Ancient Near East, gave the Israelites a unique identity among their neighbors because of what Samuel did.[36] It is necessary to examine some of these transitions and how he had contributed to the establishment of the theological focus on the one hand and how such focus had helped to establish, stabilize and give an enduring identity to the people in later Judaism.

Priest

Priesthood until the time of Eli was tribal and hereditary. This was in accordance with the plan of God when He gave the nations their inheritance. God speaking through his Servant Moses says, "the Levitical priests, the whole tribe of Levi will be without share or heritage of their own in Israel… For Yahweh your God has chosen him from all your tribes to stand before Yahweh your God, to do the duties of the sacred ministry, and to bless in Yahweh's name -- him and his sons for all time" (Deut. 18. 1a, 5). According to the introductory words of the First book of Samuel, he was an Ephraimite from Ramathaim the place of his father as such he is not of the priestly linage (1 Sam. 1.1).[37] This passage presented his parents as faithful Israelites who went to perform their religious duty at Shiloh regularly.

Through his association with Eli, "he is depicted as to a point, the heir to the functions and authority of exercise by the Elide priesthood".[38] Thus, the institutions of the priesthood which hitherto belonged to the Aaronic and Levitican family, began a new order in him. Hence, Samuel grew up to occupy the priestly position in Shiloh because the sons of Eli dishonor Yahweh while He too vowed to take this privilege from their house. Samuel brought a new candor to the priestly office through the restoration of the true worship of God rather than idols of the nations (1. Sam. 7.3ff).

In him also the office of priesthood and prophecy were held together under one person that constituted another turning point in the history of God's relationship with his people. This would be followed by many other priests after him (cf Ahimelek: 1 Sam. 22.10; Abiathar 1 Sam. 23.9-12). As a priest he carried out his duty throughout their cities, blessing the people, their food and offering their sacrifices (1 Sam 9.12-13). He also anointed the first and the second kings of Israel: Saul (1 Sam. 9.14-27) and David (1 Sam 16.12-13). The narratives of Samuel's life record his various activities in carrying out his priestly duty throughout the towns and villages of Israel and the people deferred to him after the death of Eli without any constraint. Through him, a new line of priesthood was open to those who were not Aaronic or Levitical lineage which will eventually pave way for a universal priesthood in the future.

Prophet

Another area of transition that occurred under the guide of Samuel was the introduction of the prophetic institution.[39] Although the Deuteronomic historians concluded that Moses was the prototype, the model and the standard of prophetic vocation (Deut 34.10), yet, it can be said that classical prophecy began with Samuel. In fact, in Judaism, the Books of Samuel with that of Kings are parts of the corpus called Earlier Prophets. Under his guidance and direction, the institution grew to a major and pivotal one in Israel and became formalized. This is evident in the narratives of his vocation, the summary of his life even from the beginning of his ministry (1 Sam. 3.20) and through the various prophetic activities he carried out (1 Sam. 9.15).

His importance was such that the author of the book of Samuel credited him with this assertion that, "Formerly in Israel, anyone who went to inquire of God would say, "Come, let us go to the seer"; for the one who is now called a ('aybiN") prophet, was formerly called a (ha,(roh') seer" (1 Sam. 9.9). A seer (ha,(roh') known as the 'man of God' '~yhil{a/-vyai was consulted by the people like a divine and to inquire about what the Lord wants (1 Sam. 9.6). He was a precursor of the classical prophetism ('aybiN") of a sort in Israel who spoke the word of

God to the people (1 Sam. 4.1) It is noted by scholars that "it was principally as a prophet that Samuel's memory was preserved in the tradition, so much so that, as an exponent of prophetic intercession he takes his place in later literature alongside Moses."[40]
Like Moses, he combined in himself the role of offering sacrifices and intercession on behalf of the people (Jer. 15.1, Ps. 99.6). Eventually, some of the prophets after him would combine these roles; Gad (1 Sam 22.5); Nathan (1 Sam. 7.3). Hence, he was credited as the one who made the transition from the various visionary movements to the prophetic institution initiated by the so-called bands of prophets, to the eventual classical prophets of which the writing prophets represented fully (1 Sam 9.9; 19.18-20).[41]

As a prophet, he guided the leaders to make the right decisions that will help the people to remain faithful to the covenant relationship with Yahweh. He was fearless in admonishing and speaking against the evil of the leaders in order to correct and to guide them in the right part (1 Sam. 15.10ff). He made the will of God known to the people by telling them the words of God as revealed to him just as he told Eli his master (1Sam. 10.17ff; 12.1ff). All these contributed to the strong and solid foundation of the Monarchy, the United Kingdom and the prophetic ministry after him. He was acknowledged as one of the greatest prophets in Israelitic history if not on the same level with Moses but also very close. For this reason, the prophet Jeremiah sees him as a credible and powerful intercessory figure before God in company of Moses (Jer. 15.1).

Monarchy

In the opinion of some scholars, "it is with the rise of the monarchy that we can truly speak of Israel as a nation."[42] If this is true, Samuel can then be credited as the architect of the foundation of the monarchical institution in Israel because it was to him that the people turned in their quest for a king (1Sam. 8.5). His efforts to guide and administer the people after the demise of the *Charismatic* leaders of the book of Judges, whom we could classify as the Classical Judges, until they had and built the sense of a United people and instituted and enthroned their own king is remarkable and noteworthy (1 Sam. 12.1-24). Samuel appointed so to say, a transitory leader dygIn" *nagid* in Saul (1 Sam. 9. 16; 10.1b) and then appointed a king %l,m,(*melek* in David (1 Sam. 16.1).[43]

In their quest for a king, he did not appoint a leader who would lord it over the people (1 Sam 8.11ff) but the one, who would have the 'heart of God' and would try to do the will of God (Acts 13.22). He warned them about the abuses that might come from such a blind quest for a king as they wanted and so directed their yearnings lest they had

tyrants reign over them (1 Sam. 8.9-22). He approved this leader only when he had given them a constitution that defined the roles, the rights and the powers of the king (1Sam. 10. 25).[44] This transition into monarchical leadership was well instituted by the change of baton from one a priest-Judge which was himself, to a leader, *nagid i*n Saul and eventually to a king, *melek* in David.

It must be mentioned that the transitions were not as smooth as they seem, rather, they had their own attendant intrigues and challenges, yet, by discerning the will of God, he was able to manage it through. Thus, he made an uncommon transition from the *Charismatic* leadership to an organized form of leadership which found resonance in the monarchical institution. To sustain this momentum, he built a special relationship between the monarchy and the prophetic leadership that would eventually characterize successive monarchical periods till the dissolution of the United Kingdom (1 Sam 15-16; 18.8-19.24; 23.25-23).

The importance of the monarchy cannot be over-emphasized in the self consciousness of the people of Israel. This gave them identity and the unity they needed as a people. The monarchy helped them to realize how related they were as a nation under Yahweh' rule. It also helped them especially through the efforts of David in uniting the entire kingdom a territory and establishing a Capital where they all could call their own (2 Sam. 5.7-12). It gave them security from the marauding enemies who hitherto were pillaging them at will. It became their identity throughout ages (2 Sam. 5.17-25; 7.1).

Therefore, the cry for a monarch to lead and rule over them like some of the nations roundabout so that they too could be an organized state having their own military and form of government to lead them seem justified (1 Sam. 8). The monarchy gave birth to the so-called Davidic *Berith* which introduced the messianic expectation as the fulfillment of the promise made by Yahweh (2 Sam 7.14). It became a model for the kingship of Yahweh and a foundational influence to the establishment of the reign of God now termed Kingdom of God. The preparation and the constitution made by Samuel with the people at Mizpah concerning their request were integral to the stability of the monarchy in the heart of people even after the destruction and the exile (1 Sam. 10.17ff).

Judge

When they were just members of the tribal league and led by charismatic leaders such as Samson, Gideon etc. they were plagued by all sorts of invasion from the neighboring nations who were best organized than themselves. This perhaps happened because the foreign nations manipulated their disunity and unleashed terror on them. Eventually, he

became their Judge and appointed his children as Judges over the people. As a judge, he arbitrated between the people and Yahweh, among the people and between the king and the people, between the king and God. Although, he still saw the need for the person of a Judge to hold the people responsible in the ethical demands of the covenant and so he appointed his own children as judges but because they were not like him and did not follow his ways, the people rejected them (1 Sam. 8.1-5). That was the end of the institution even in his own life time as the people clamored for a king who would double as the judge (1 Sam. 8.5, 20).

Although his role as a judge was not so much highlighted, yet he was considered a reputable, incorruptible and the last of the Judges in Israel even by his own account at the farewell speech (1 Sam. 12.3-4). He assumed the office of a judge at Mizpah after the death of Eli (1 Sam 7.6). He composed law concerning the monarchy and explained them to the people (1 Sam 10.25). He judged Israel as long as he lived and even appointed his sons to judge as well (1 Sam 7.15-17; 8.1). As a judge, he counseled the people as to the appropriateness of having a king and its implication; he reminded them of their sacred duty to Yahweh and judged King Saul about his failure to carry out the order of the Lord (1 Sam 15.16-19, 28-29).

The three institutions of the Monarchy, Priesthood, and Prophetism, gave the Jews their special identity among the people of Ancient times and even till today. The uniqueness of each of these institutions to the preservation of the religion of YHWH cannot be overemphasized. Each of the institution is seen as having a special relationship with the God of Israel as such they become messianic institution. The efforts of Samuel in giving this special identity to these institutions are noteworthy and remarkable because even after the dissolution of the kingdom and the subsequent exiles, a new rejuvenated Judaism arose from the remnants. This foundation is still the force behind the many dreams of the people till today.

The Nigerian Situation Today

The socio-political, religious context of Nigeria today is similar to that of the time of Samuel in many respects. For this reason, a number of challenges are confronting our nation begging for definitive intervention to chart a way from the quagmire that beset our country, Nigeria. There is the political clamour for a leader to lead us so that we can participate in the comity of nations. This is compounded by all sorts of religious aberrations and syncretism that lay heavily on the shoulders of the people like the sons of Eli. On the social level, there are the daily threats and insecurities to lives and properties in every part of the country. Moral

decadence and anti social activities run unabated from the old to the young, no one is left behind (Is.1.6). In all of these, priests and prophets ply their trade without any clue (Jer. 14.18b). There is a grave need for a someone who can be a moral compass to our nation; one will *grow in favour with God and people* (Luke. 2. 52).

There is no doubt that the books of Samuel and in indeed the person of Samuel have a deep implication for formation today as the world gradually settled into the Third Millennium. It is more so for a country like Nigeria where its corporate identity is a mirage of a sort. There are more than three hundred ethnic nationalities and 3 major tribal groups, different in language, cultural and religious values, political and social worldviews. The country was born out of a colonial amalgamation and given a name that makes no sense to all its component parts together. Incidentally, there were some charismatic leaders as founding fathers. After their death like Israel of the Judges era, everyone does whatever the heart dictates.

From the foregoing, it is very clear that we are grappling with various transition programs ranging from cultural, tribal, clan and societal perceived forced amalgamation to a state that must participate in a globalization program. As a young fledging nation like Israel of the Samuel era, there is also the leadership struggles of transition in the political arena with the nascent democracy wrestled from the military rule being led by already militarized minds in all tiers of government. We live in a country and times where democratic principles are subverted and manipulated for person ideologies and gain. We live in the times where elections are held and the results are sometimes declared to the amazements of the electorates.

The religious atmosphere is similar to that of the Idolatrous society of pre Samuel era where everybody did what pleased him (Judg.21.25). Therefore, we live in times of perennial religious transition from Traditional religious worldview to embracing a Judeo-Christian/ Islamic religious worldview. We live in the country where any religious novelty finds a breeding ground from among the so-called Christians, where orthodoxy easily bows to various forms of aberrations and syncretism; where voodooism and paganism are gaining ascendancy. The worship of idolatry in various forms and shades are constantly in the increase with everyone bringing his own novelty to bear. Scandalously sometimes, we live in the times where Church leadership that was once seen as a sacred precinct, where the Holy Spirit chose the one he wanted, are now fraught with manipulations, acrimonies, defamation, intrigues and libels, very unfortunately.

On the social level, the society seems to be on a loose spree in all sorts of anti social behaviours without any control or qualm. There is no

sense of any moral value in the mind of many citizens in the name of civilization and development. Individual has become the measure of all things an relativism as an ideological concept is enthroned over the collective and shared values. All the traditional and religious checks and balances are eroded and lost without any replacement or hope of replacement. All of these have created crises of unimaginable proportion in the society and often created setbacks and social tensions that threatened the cooperate existence of the nation. Many have often called to question the necessity of the corporate existence all together as if it was a malediction.

The socio-political and religious situation was similar to the bankruptcy that Samuel inherited at the time of his calling. Samuel was called to save and stabilize the covenant relationship hitherto promised to Abraham and inherited by his descendants so that the kingdom promised by God for which Moses led the liberation from slavery may survive. In response to his vocation, he remained focused and faithful to the God of the covenant. He constantly visited the religious sites to hear God instruct him on how to handle particular situation. The word of God which was rare before his call became common because he listened to God spoke to him time and again. He did not manipulate or subvert the word of God to please the leaders but corrected and chided them as occasion demanded. He was frank and sincere with the people in the discharge of his duties (1 Sam. 10.17-26). For all these reason, when he gave his farewell speech, he challenged the people to his conduct and behavior among them (1 Sam.12. 23-24).

Therefore, like Samuel of old, those who are responding to God's call must prepare themselves to respond appropriately to the exigencies of their vocation for the continued establishment of the reign of God and the good of the conglomerate called Nigeria. They should not be oblivious of the reality in which they are living in rather they should confront and transform it. They should not be overwhelmed by the enormity of the challenges confronting Nigeria as a nation but study it in the light of revelation and respond appropriately its demands. This can only happen if the formation which is the foundation of the future ministry is solidly laid.

In the opening words of the *New Ratio*, it is noted that "the gift of the priestly vocation placed in the hearts of some men obliges the Church to propose to them a serious journey of formation."[45] If the New Ratio describes the formation of the future priest as journey in discipleship, Samuel then gives a concrete example of this journey in the Old Testament. His type of formation was a novelty and typology in the Old Testament of what will eventually take place in the New Testament

when Jesus will begin to call disciples to form them into a universal instrument of salvation.

Many cynics have profited themselves in various ways in the ensue imbroglio. They continue to take advantage of the confusion, ignorance, the fears, the anxieties and the vulnerability of the individual to despoil them of a qualitative life. Yet in all of these, we seem not to have our feet properly firm and steady on the ground. What can we contribute or rather how do we make impact through our vocation. In a prophetic manner, Karl Rhaner has this to say about the priest of tomorrow:

> He will be a man to whom mature people find their way even though the society does not drive children to him. He will be a man who truly endures the grievous darkness of existence together with all his brothers and sisters, knowing that its first source and its blessed fulfillment are found in the mystery of love which conquers by the incomprehensibility of the cross… will not have power drawn from the social power of the church, but will have courage to do without that power…[46]

Challenges and Implication for Formation

The Call of Samuel has offered us a new perspective in responding to the call of God in a trying and transition period. Through the examination of this pericope some salient point that can help in discernment and give focus to minister of God can be underlined. The following are some of the recommendations that may be fruitful for formation of the future priest.

1. National Identity

The problem of identity is a major one for any entity because if one does not know who one is, such cannot respond to its situation appropriately. This is one of the greatest challenges that is facing a country like Nigeria. For a country like Nigeria to move forward and develop, the citizens must cultivate and have the sense of identity that will breed patriotism in them. This is where the work of Samuel as a leader in transition period becomes more appreciable. He rallied the people around the worship of a YHWH who is morally interested in the social affairs of his people and that gave them a sense of unity. Even when the geographical unity was undermined by the division of the kingdom, an identity has been created in the hearts of the citizens. Nigeria needs a leader who will give her a united identity and a moral compass under which all members can rally.

Until this is achieved, development and the social transformation that is craved for will remain elusive.

2. Vocation is a Gift of God

The choice of who leads the people finally falls on God. If this is a correct reading then, it is not only that Yahweh is the guidance of history, but that the call of Samuel shows that it is He that chooses whom he wants and empower such for the task he wants him to accomplish because he will not let any of his words fall without being fulfilled (1 Sam. 3.19). This recalls what Jesus told his disciples, you did not choose me no, I chose you and sent you to bear fruit that will last (John 15.16). Therefore, vocation is a gift that God give for the benefit of others not a prize won for a good act. If it is a gift, it should be preserved jealously and carefully not to be misused or misplaced by carelessness on the part of the recipients.

3. Necessity of Formation and Discernment for Leaders

Although, vocation is a gift of God, yet it needs to be checked and controlled as it may be that it is really from God and for which purpose. Therefore, a period of formation is necessary for the recipients of such gifts so that it may be put to proper use. By his stay with Eli, Samuel has been properly formed and schooled in the religious tradition that will shape the theological future of the people. This is still the work of theology today in a constant changing situation of life. It is appropriate to show that in the unfolding of the daily events of a people, the place of God is not relegated to the background or allow cynics to control the interpretation of such events. Rather, it is right and fitting to show and acknowledge the guiding but unseen hands of God in directing the affairs of the universe both in the case of the individual and that of the nations within the universe. He did it in the case of Samuel through the old priest Eli, he did it even the more in the case of the disciples of Jesus, whom he called and formed for a number of years both in wrds and example of his life before he commissioned them to go and continue the same mission of making disciples f all nations (Matt. 26.1; 28.19-20). In the call of Samuel, we see the need to prepare those that have been chosen for special assignment so that they might be able to give credible and lasting witness to their vocation.

4. A Faithful Minister in the Sanctuary of God

The priest should realize always that he is called by God and not responding to a profession or a job opportunity. Therefore, he should remain faithful to God and his Church to the end in good and bad times. Samuel remained faithful to his vocation, he was visiting the sanctuaries

of God to seek the will of God as he met the challenges of his vocation (1 Sam. 8.6, 21). It was this that made him a model and hero not because he appointed kings or leaders (1 Sam. 3.20-21).

5. Lover of the Word of God.

At the beginning of the call of Samuel, it is said that the word of God was rare in those days. This word of God became common in the time of Samuel because it was the light and guide in his mission, for the book notes time and again, 'the word of God came to Samuel' (1 Sam. 15.10). In another summary about his life, the author notes "and, for all Israel, the word of Samuel was as the word of Yahweh" (1 Sam. 4.1). In his recent document *motu proprio*, on invitation to have a special Sunday marking the importance of the Word of God in pope Francis, notes that "those called to be ministers of the word must feel an urgent need to make it accessible to their community" (*Aperuit Illis* No.5). Foremost among these are the priests and especially the priests to be who are in formation, they should love to hear and read the Word of God because in it is their salvation. In his final exhortation to Joshua, Moses exhorts that this word should not depart from his mouth, meditating on it day and night so that he may succeed in all his ways (Jos. 1.8).

6. A Dispassionate Leader/Judge of the Nations

A priest is always the leader of the community not just the Christ faithful but everyone. In Samuel, we found a leader who is dispassionate in dealing with the situation at hand. When the people demanded for a king, a request he did not support, he chided them for their wrong motive (1 Sam. 8. 10-18). When Saul disobeyed the word of God, he scolded him without mincing words (1 Sam. 15. 22-23). When there was the need to change even his own children from being the leader of the people he did not hesitate. He tried to expiate for Saul when God rejected him but when God said he has fund a replacement, he worked with the new leader. In the same way, a priest should see himself as the leader of all the people especially in our generation when people are building fences and blockages to keep others away, the priest should build bridges. He can intercede for the people but he should not be seen to be partial or biased in his relationship with the rich and the poor, with the leaders and the led. Far from him to even take side in leadership tussle but should seek the will of God and accept the outcome of God.

7. A Voice of the Voiceless

A priest is the voice of the people within the community. He should not be afraid to call the leaders to account and be responsible for their actions. Samuel gave a lead in this regard when he confronted Saul about

his mission to Amalekites. He spoke and interceded on behalf of the people before God also. It is primary duty of the priest to offer sacrifices for sin and intercede for the people. Samuel was offering sacrifices for the people and available for their spiritual growth. He went round the sanctuaries to offer sacrifices. A priest should be available for the people even when it seems not convenient for him.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the examination of the call of Samuel then shows that God is always interested in the affairs of his people and he does not leave them alone in time of crisis and challenges. He tries to give them necessary guide that will help them find stability only if they listen to him and can discern his voice amidst the many conflicting voices they hear. It is true that the onus of a vocation belongs to God and he calls whom he loves (John 15.16; Heb. 5.4) just as he called Samuel and other people at some crucial moments in the life of the Jewish nation. Yet, the cooperation of those called is always necessary to realize the vision that God has for such people.

Through the dedication of Samuel, he was able to help the people to have a personal encounter with their God because he too kept a personal relationship with the God who called him. Eli helped him to shape this relationship into maturity and guide him to know the will of God and how to respond to it in obedience. Moreover, this knowledge of God helped him to give a national identity to the Chosen people and to navigate through the political, social and religious waters of his time.

This same God is still concerned with the affairs of his people today and will intervene through the vocation he gives to the individual. Nigerian is indeed in need of leaders who can help her create a unified identity where the feels belong, a leader who can help her to navigate through the political, social and religious crises she finds herself. She needs a leader with the prophetic voice and message that will heal the wounds of the past in these challenging times like that of Samuel. Our growth in priestly vocation and formation should help us to read the signs of the time and attend adequately as the prophet of old.

Formators cannot remain silent or unconcerned as charlatans take control of the people and we keep pouring out from the seminary those who cannot make the needed difference. It is the time to discern properly those who rightly hear the voice of God and help them to respond appropriately. Formators should accompany with the right disposition, be more astute and be more involved in the process of discerning and the formation of the priest to be. Like the old priest, Eli, formators should have the proper knowledge of who God is and teach

the same to those who are discerning their vocation that He is God, He does whatever he will and that obedience to him is better than sacrifice. In the words of St Gregory the Great, "a religious leader should be careful in deciding when to remain silent and be sure to say something useful when deciding to speak. In this way he will avoid saying thing that would be better not said, or leaving unsaid things that ought to be said." It is our duty as future priest to listen attentively to the voice of God and respond appropriately. However, how can you guide when you have not gathered, how can you discern when you have not listened and how can you lead when you have never followed?

Endnotes

[1] Moshe Garsiel, "The Book of Samuel: Its, Composition, Structure and Significance as a Historiograhical Source," in *Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures Vii* Ehud Ben Zvi ed. Gorgia Press, 2011, 131-173.

[2] M. Garsiel; "The Book of Samuel", p.131.

[3] "The book also deals with the transfer of government from old leaders to the new….The transfer was effected smoothly in the case of Eli and Samuel, with difficulty in the case of Samuel and Saul, and with bitter conflict in the case of Saul and David, culminating in Saul's recurring attempts to kill David." S. Bar-Efrat. "1 Samuel" in *The Jewish Study Bible*, (JPS), A. Berlin and M.C. Brettler eds, OUP, Oxford, 2004 P.559.

[4] B. C. Birch, "the First and Second Books of Samuel: Introduction, Commentary and Reflections" in the *NIB: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes; Vol.II,* Abingdon Press, Nashville ,,1998; p.991, 947-1383.

[5] The book of Judges, which actually precedes the book of Samuel in Jewish Canon; ends with these words, 'in those days when there was no king in Israel, everyone did whatever seem right in one eyes' (Jug. 21.25). The children of Eli also did not listen to the counsel of their father. Hence, Samuel was said to have found favour with God and man', as a sign of his readiness to assume this responsibility according to human reckoning.

[6] There is no doubt that with the emphasis on the Word of God and the eventual institution of the Prophetic league, Samuel was seen as a prophet, yet the narrative is different from that of the prophetic vocation because the prophets narrate their commission rather than vocation. Samuel and Moses especially narrated their calling which eventually involved their commissioning. Cfr. B. O. Long, "Prophetic Call Tradition and Reports of Visions", *ZAW* (84), 1972, 494-500; G. Robinson, *A Commentary on the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel: Let us be like the Nations,* W. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1993,22.

[7] The birth of Samuel reflects a special literary genre that some scholars classified as a 'Birth Narrative Genre. This is the 5th of such narrative in both the Old and New Testament (cf. R.H. Jarrell, "The Birth Narrative as Female Counterpart of Covenant", *JSOT*, Vol. 26 (3); 2002, pp.3-18, 5.

[8] R.W. Klein, 1 Samuel WBC, Vol. 10, Texas, Word Books, 1983, 30

[9] R. Gnuse, "A Reconsideration of the Form-Critical Structure in 1 Samuel 3; A n Ancient Near Eastern Dream Theophany" *ZAW* (94) 1982, 379-390, 388.

[10] For a more comprehensive treatment of this structure see T. Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, W. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2007, 171-184 and W. Watson, "The Structure of 1 Samuel 3" *BZ* (29), 1985, 90-93

[11] "Unusual fire or light frequently announces the presence of God", G. Ashby, *Go Out and Meet God: A Commentary on the Book of Exodus,* Eerdmans Pub., Grand Rapids, 1998 p.19

[12] T.E. Freitheim, *Exodus, Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, John Knox Press, Louisville, 1991 p.56

[13]

[14] God is not asking those he called to go all alone but they should cooperate with him to carrying out his mission, as contained in the structure of major calls. J.K. Bruckner, *Exodus*, Bakerbooks, Grand Rapids, 2018, p.41

[15] "In Semitic culture, addressing someone by saying his or her name twice was a way of expressing endearment, that is, affection and friendship." D.K. Stuart, *Exodus*, The New American Commentary, E.R Clendenen et al ed. Vol 2, B&H Publishing, 2006 p. 113

[16] W. Zimmerli, *A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 1-24;* Hermeneia, Fortres Press, Philadelphia,1979. See also, G. Robinson, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 23.

[17] T. Tsumura, The First Book of Samuel,184

[18] The Navare Bible: Joshua-Kings, Four Courts Press, Dublin, 2002, 223

[19] M. Leuchter, *Samuel and the Shaping of Tradition,* OUP, Oxford 2013. p. 6

[20] R. W. Klein, 1 Samuel, p.35.

[21] I. Epstein, *Judaism: A Historical Presentation,* Penguin Books, Middlesex, England, 1987, p.35.

[22] The narrative of Samuel's vocation look forward to a future that God's transforming initiatives will make possible for Israel in the midst of crisis." B.C. Birch, *First and Second Samuel,* p.970.

[23] "The book also deals with the transfer of government from old leaders to the new….The transfer was effected smoothly in the case of Eli and Samuel, with difficulty in the case of Samuel and Saul, and with bitter conflict in the case of Saul and David, culminating in Saul's recurring attempts to kill David." S. Bar-Efrat. "1 Samuel" in *The Jewish Study Bible*, (JPS), A. Berlin and M.C. Brettler eds, OUP, Oxford, 2004 P.559.

[24] S. Bar-Efrat, "1 Samuel" *The Jewish Study Bible*, p. 599.

[25] P.K. McCarter Jnr., *1 Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, in Anchor Bible, W. F. Albright & D.N. Freedman (eds) Vol. VIII, Double day & Co. New York 1980, p.100.

[26] Ibid. p.99.

[27] According to St. Gregory the great, the boy Samuel was an example in obedience of what a disciple should be.

[28] Samuel became "the only source of God's Word during the oncoming period of radical dislocation and transformation in Israel." B.C. Birch, 991.
[29] M. Leuchter, *Samuel and the Shaping*…, p.20.
[30] M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School*, OUP, Oxford, 1972, p.179.
[31] M. Leuchter, *Samuel and the Shaping*….p.21.
[32] Although, he is making reference to the rejection of one Yahweh's agent in favour of another who has the right heart of Yahweh, Benjamin Johnson, notes that the book of first "Samuel could be described as a narrative of transitions. It details the transitional phrase from the era of the judges to the era of the monarchy; it transitions from one failed dynasty (saulide) to one successful dynasty (Davidide). "The Heart of YHWH'S Chosen One in 1 Samuel," in *JBL* Vol. 131(3), 455-466, 465.
[33] "The Heart of YHWH'S Chosen One in 1 Samuel," in *JBL* Vol. 131(3), , 2012 p.465.
[34] Walter Brueggemann, "Samuel" in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary,* vol 5, David N Freedman *ed*., Doubleday New York, 1992, Pp.954-973, 954.
[35] All the major prophets after him begin their ministry either with Vision or the Word of God (Is.1.1; Jer.1.1, Ezk. 1.2; Hos. 1.1) and whenever they delivered the message of God to the people, they end with the prophetic formula, "thus says the Lord or Oracle of the Lord" (Amos 1.6).
[36] I. Epstein, Judaism, p.34-35.
[37] L, Grabbe, *Priest: A Socio-Historical Study of Religious Specialist, Diviners in Ancient Israel Sages*, Trinity Press International, Valley Enge, Pennsylvania, 1995, p.44.
[38] R.P. GORDON, *1 & 2 SAMUEL*, JSOT Press, 26; R. Gnuse, " A Reconsideration, *ZAW,* (94), 1982
[39] According to Blenkinsopp, "the call of Samuel at Shiloh (1 Sam.3-4.1) marked the beginning or at least a new beginning, of prophetic activity." J. Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy In Israel*, Louisville, Kentucky, Westminster John Knox press P. 47.
[40] R.P. Gordon, *1 & 2 Samuel*, p. 27.
[41] After him came other prophets such as Gad (1 Sam. 22.5; Nathan (2 Sam. 7.2), Elijah (1 kgs. 18.; Elisha, who ministered at the palace to the king or independently from the king but very close them in decision and guidance of the course of Israel.
[42] R.P. Gordon, 1 & 2 Samuel, p.40
[43] The exact meaning of the word dygIn" nagid is not ascertained because it could mean, a leader, a king, a prince, perhaps it means a military leader but the word %l,m, *melek* means a king, Cfr. *La Bibbia TOB: Nuova Traduzione CEI*, p. 507.
[44] I. Epstein, *Judaism,* p.35.
[45] The New Ratio Fundamentalis, pg. 1
[46] K. Rahner, *Servant of the Lord* ,Herder & Herder, New York, 1968, 112.

9

FAITH, FORMATION, AND VOCATION – ANY LINK?

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Abstract
There is an apparent disconnection between formation processes and the acquisition of faith today. Looking at some candidates for formation in our seminaries and formation houses, and at some young priests and consecrated persons who have passed through our seminaries and formation houses in recent history, one would wonder whether formation impacts or impacted positively on their faith respectively. After years of formation, many still suffer from bouts of crises of faith. Ordinarily, formation is expected to improve candidates' level of faith. After all, formation is majorly about faith formation. Unfortunately, however, many candidates enthusiastically embrace a feeling of vocation and go in for formation, but come out with less zest and overgrown self-doubt. This raises questions. Does formation really increase faith? Or does it merely decrease it? Are we just training in apologetic rhetoric and lifestyle, in acquisitive elitism and survival tactics? This paper seeks to enquire into the relationship between vocation, formation and faith and to explain the role of formation in the advancement of faith especially in the lives of priests and consecrated persons. Finally, it suggests what should be done to make formation lead to transformation.

Introduction – Faith and Character Formation
Human formation begins with faith formation. Faith or belief is the first character a child acquires. According to Eric Erikson, an American psychologist, basic trust is the first thing a child learns in life (Erikson, 1950, 1963, p. 247ff). Faith, as basic trust forms the foundation of all later forms of faith, defines all stages of character formation and determines the development of the entire human person.

By way of clarification, we must differentiate between *natural faith* and *supernatural faith*. As children, we begin to learn to trust and believe

our parents and other people, based on what they say and do to us. Depending on what the child experiences from the people in close contact with it, it may begin to acquire basic trust and form basic belief about the people and environment. If the child is treated fairly, it learns to trust; if not, it acquires distrust. All this happens at the level of natural faith. Then as we grow and mature, and seek to understand the meaning of reality, we begin to believe what we are being told about God, and what we experience about him. This is religious or supernatural faith – belief at a spiritual supernatural level.

Supernatural faith differs from natural faith, but both are mutually related (CCC 153ff). A sound natural faith is the stepping stone towards the acquisition of authentic religious faith. So, crisis in natural faith can lead to crisis in religious faith. Faith has thus natural and supernatural dimensions. It is to the extent somebody trusts people that he or she can trust God and develop an authentic faith in Him. While natural faith can be learnt overtime across the length and breadth of the development of the human person, supernatural faith is a gift from God, a grace that we are called upon to embrace.

Though every human being is a religious being, equipped to relate to God, not every person has the privilege to recognize God as the trustworthy author of life. Faith is a supernatural gift of God that enables us to trust Him completely. Faith in God occurs when one hears God's call (either through direct personal experience or through the historical and biblical revelations) and then responds to it with total conviction and trust. When the trust cannot be totally because of certain distractions and personal interests, crisis of faith ensues. Essentially, faith is firm confidence in God and total self-surrender to him.

Challenges to Faith in Modern Time

All through history distractions to authentic Christian faith abound, paganism, persecutions etc. But the modern time seems to have a lion share of threats to faith. In addition to wrestling with the historical enemies of faith, the modern person has secularism/relativism, materialism/consumerism and globalization to contend with. As a result, the candidate for formation is hemmed in between the negative influences from the global world and from our own local environment. The modern person is a subject of the Western Cultural Revolution, which has not only practically edged God out of the stage of reality, but has also, in His place, declared science, technology, freedom and pleasure new gods. As the Western persons try to dethrone God and strip him of his absolute authority, they position "liberty" as the god everybody must now worship. For the Western mind, God has become a relative instance, and freedom an absolute reality, a dogma which supersedes

every other value. This is pure *relativism*, which Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI, severally identified as the major crisis of faith and religion in the modern world (Ratzinger, 2006 p. 34 ff).

The problem of secularism and relativism is compounded by globalization, which now, empowered by Information Technology and all the sundry social networks, exposes the rest of the world to the negative impact of the Western Cultural Revolution. The entire world is now globalized and subsequently shrinking into a single global village with virtually no boundaries. Distances have become negligible, since the farthest part of the world can just be but a goggle search away from us. The repercussion is that good and bad ideas, tricks and fashion are pushed around across the globe influencing the rest negatively or positively. The ongoing covid-19 pandemic corroborates this point.

The tragedy of globalization is that traditional and religious values, as well as indigenous cultures lose out in the encounter with the more dominant pop culture from the Western world. Traditional morality, sacredness of creation and sense of sin are now considered archaic in the face of rampaging consumerist, individualist and materialistic culture from the Western world. As a result of the overwhelming influence of the Western pop culture on our society, our values are now in flux and our taste almost insatiable; nothing (including products) seems to have lasting values anymore. We are out seeking "the latest (*fashion, gadgets, mobile phones, and best things in the market*), and quickly discarding 'old' ones even when they can still be used" (Chima, 2010). This has much impact on the young people.

Another major threat to faith, spirituality and morality is the so called *new global ethic* (Peters, 2007), which seeks to legitimize all sorts of *consumerism* and bestiality. This new ethic equally proposes a type of gender ideology that tends to determine the right to life based on human conscience and pleasure. For the proponents of this view, it is not God, but hedonism that decides who has the right to live. The aim of such a gender ideology coming from the Western feminists is to neutralize society, make it asexual, without masculinity and femininity, and make it open to irresponsible libido propagated by homosexual and lesbian interest groups. Men now marry men, women marry women; very soon people will begin to marry their dogs and pussies cats and demand the status of marriage.

The combination of relativism and consumerism looks like a conspiracy against the spiritual dimension of the human life. Apparently, the faster technology moves, the more materialistic and consumerist we become, and the less spiritual and moral we become too. The major problem here is that the new ethic encourages technology without a sense of responsibility and sustainability (Ratzinger, 2006, p. 27). Since,

technology is naturally poised towards achieving all that man *can* do, not what man *ought* to do, it follows then that if we do all we can do, then we will destroy ourselves one day, because we possess the power and skill to kill ourselves in the most sophisticated manner. Hence, globalization, relativism and consumerism are modern threats to faith emanating from the Western world and culture.

There are also threats within our ranks, arising from our socio-cultural context, African Traditional Religion and African brand of Pentecostalism. Under the influence of our own African socio-cultural context, the average African believer ends up living in ambivalence in matters of faith – adopting a half Christian, half pagan mentality. Our *socio-cultural context* exerts much pressure on the practice of faith and especially on the formation process of young men and women who feel called to consecrate themselves to the Lord. As the Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama, once rightly observed, "the environment in which the seminarian grows plays a determining factor in what he becomes later – a good priest or a bad priest" (Kaigama, 2005, 6). The Nigerian society, from where most candidates come for formation, has lots of socio-cultural problems. Much corruption, cheating, duplicity, dishonesty and sundry crimes characterize our societal landscape. No matter the side you face in our society, dishonesty is the order of the day – in the family lives, in education, in business, in the government, and even in religion the story is the same. There is something like an erosion of values in our society, such that many people no longer know what is virtuous and what is vice. The candidates who come for formation have been under the influence of our corrupt society.

In a 1995 publication, Fr. Emmanuel Obuna paints a gloomy image of the societal background of most of the seminarians and aspirants who come to us for formation. According to him, the candidate who comes for formation today

> *"is most likely to have passed through a primary school where teachers come to school once or twice a week and spend the remaining days of the week attending private businesses at home, in the farm, or in their shops – buying and selling; where pupils in primary schools are pressurized into paying illegal levies to their teachers in order to be allowed to stay in class; where teachers who are also parents bring in outsiders to sit the final examination for their own son or daughter who is not intelligent enough to pass, etc."*
>
> *"Having passed out of this primary school (of primary corruption), our candidate then goes on to secondary school (of secondary corruption) where question papers are on sale a week or two before the final exams; where students themselves collect levies to pay off principals, teachers, invigilators and even the policemen sent to*

> *maintain law and order during the examination; where some teachers make …(almost the equivalent of their annual salary) from bribes paid by students on the spot to persuade them to solve questions in the examination hall.*
> *"From this secondary school of corruption our candidate now moves up to the University for a Bachelor's Degree in corruption. If the testimony of our undergraduates is anything to go by…the situation in our universities today is such that you can personally negotiate with the lecturer for any grade you want in any examination…depending on how much you are able to pay in cash or kind."(Obuna, 1995,58-59)*

What this suggests is that the environment from where candidates come is saturated with corruption – a corrupt environment produces corrupt candidates. Such candidates are likely to be problematic in the process of formation; they may even wriggle safe through the entire system and get ordained or professed. With such a background, it should not be surprising when a large number of formandi do not show signs of authentic faith.

Similarly, many candidates for formation come into the formation houses with a backload of many elements of the *African Traditional Religion*. Many of them have the traditionalist's values, expectations and tenets stored in their subconscious, irrespective of the fact that most of them are not new converts, but children of the first and second generation Christians. At points of deep emotions of sadness and joy, challenges and leisure, most Africans act out pagan fears and fancies. The one obvious effect is unintended *syncretism* – the subtle mixture of Christian values and the African traditional habits. A candidate with such a background may find it difficult to internalize the culture of Christ, such as total trust in God and dependence on him, sacrificial love and acceptance of one's daily cross. In that case, formation may become an impossible task.

The impact of African Traditional Religion on some candidates for formation shows up in the type of *Pentecostalism* they aspire to practice. Many candidates have gone Pentecostal and Charismatic, and are frantically in search of miracles. They have become so gullible that they suspect the devil in everything and practice a magico-religious type of spirituality. Even the materialistic tendency evident in the African Traditional Religious worldview, with all its this-worldly eschatology, is imbibed and allowed to flourish in the consciousness of a number of candidates. This certainly makes them focus attention on worldly, rather than transcendent values. Rather than encouraging a good, moral and sacrificial life, prosperity is preached as the only type of God's blessing. Moreover, some of them come into the seminary in a triumphal mood,

believing either that they have already gotten all it takes to be successful priests or that they know it better than the seminary authorities. The result is that they close themselves to formation, disregarding what is delivered in the lecture halls, but rather organizing their own private group classes on the homiletics of influential Pentecostal pastors. These candidates buy their books and listen to their videos and disregard classical Catholic spirituality and theology. By implication, candidates who had been under the influence of modern Pentecostalism before entering the formation houses are often closed to formation processes; they are very likely going to be stubborn with regard to respecting authorities, rules and regulations.

The Tasks of Formation

Simply put, formation is about subjecting candidates to training and discipline that would help them acquire the basic values of Jesus Christ, his culture, which consists essentially of the disposition for self-emptying love. Like clay in the hands of a potter, candidates are to be molded in the formation houses to become water-tight personalities, able to transmit the message of Jesus Christ without adulteration and misrepresentation. Apart from the primordial selfishness, which begins from the cradle, persons accumulate lots of harmful habits as they grow up in dysfunctional families and societies. The project of formation is to prune such personalities and purify their intentions, to make them worthy Disciples of Christ. In the post-Synodal Exhortation, *Vita Consecrata*, dedicated to the issues of religious life, the object of formation has been defined as "the preparation for total consecration of oneself to God in the footsteps of Christ, at the service of the mission" (John Paul II, 1996, 65-71) In other words, formation is all about getting ready to place one's entire self at the service of God in the style of Jesus.

The consecration of oneself to God demands complete submission of all our human faculties to him. To that effect, authentic formation is a holistic venture, which tries to engage all aspects of our being; it is not done with partial or cosmetic changes, but with a total remolding of one's entire personality. The body, the spirit, the intellect and one's commitment to service are subjected to formation. Attractions, sentiments, emotions, dreams, strength, weaknesses, feelings, needs and desires are submitted for purification, integration and transformation in the houses of formation.

The Apostolic Exhortation, Vita Consecrata, understands formation primarily as preparation and insists therefore that "Preparation has to be human, cultural, spiritual and pastoral, paying special attention to integrating the various aspects" (John Paul II, 1996, 65). Earlier, the post-Synod Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis (1992)*, outlined

four various forms of formation: *human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral*. For want of space, it may not be necessary to elaborate on each of these forms of formation here. It suffices to say, not just that all the four areas of formation are intertwined, but also that the successes of the spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formations depend on the accomplishment of the human formation. The goal of all forms of formation is to effect growth in faith, intimacy with God and Jesus Christ. Formation involves changes, but not all changes imply formation.

We can only begin to talk about effective formation, when the changes effected in our lives lead to growth in faith. Growth of authentic and informed faith, balanced in act and content, is the measure of true formation. In other words, true formation must lead to growth in virtues, in intimacy with Jesus Christ, in the understanding of divine wisdom, and in the effective application of our faith in the day to day interaction with people. Formation must be holistic, ensuring growth in the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral spheres of the candidate's life. Growth is to be understood here, not just as the unfolding of our life and personality, but primarily as the break with our negative past, and the onward consolidation and integration of the positive values we have been able to pick from our past experiences.

This is akin to what Bernard Lonergan calls *conversion*, the process that removes blockages in our life (Lonergan, 1972, 237ff, & Mueller, 1984, 13ff). Consequently, formation works on our past experiences. According to A. Cencini, it touches upon the past, the present and the future of both the person and the institution (Cencini, 1999, 9). Formation can succeed or fail, depending on what we carry along from our past experiences and environment. If the candidate comes to the house of formation with a genuine desire, openness to the truth and with some level of flexibility, suppleness and adaptability, there is the chance that he or she can experience conversion – a movement from an enthusiastic but less informed faith to a more reasoned and internalized faith. If however, the candidate is hardened and closed up, he or she remains impervious to the impact of formation. When we encounter consecrated persons or priests who do not measure up to the demands of discipleship, one begins to wonder what went wrong in the formation program, the method or the candidate.

How successful is the Formation Process in Nigeria Today?

Without intending to sound as an alarmist, the quality of life lived by many priests and consecrated persons passing out of our seminaries and formation houses today leaves much to be desired. People are beginning to wonder whether formation has any positive impact on the priests and religious of our contemporary time, whether formation increases or

decreases faith of the candidates. Those who argue that it decreases faith give instances of people who went into the seminary very pious and apparently very innocent, coming out later as priests and religious who have lost all sense of the sacred and the horror of sin.

Many of our seminaries and formation houses paint an ugly picture of the conduct of candidates in formation, who are now capable of committing worse crimes than their counterparts in the tertiary institutions. Lack of openness to formation, growing signs of deep-seated dishonesty, dubious motivations abound; a conformist attitude to the rules and the seeming focus on being seen to be doing the right thing with the sole purpose of avoiding sanctions are on the increase. The simple fact is that dishonesty, pretenses, aggression and even theft are on the increase in houses of formation today. Some go as far as forming cliques, shielding partners in crime, to subvert the authorities and regulations

The situation becomes even more worrisome, when we look at the conduct of many religious men and women trained in our seminaries and vocation houses. There have been cases where priests and even male and female religious resorted to physical violence in order to settle their differences. Some others have been caught stealing or misappropriating funds meant for projects. Some flout every regulation in their diocese or congregations and break all the vows of evangelical counsels with impunity. There is a noticeable increase in the chase for money and wealth, even among the religious who have vowed poverty. *Materialism* has become the order of the day for many priests; they use sacraments and sacramentals, prayer houses and ministries to accumulate wealth for themselves. Pentecostalism and the prosperity Gospel have special appeal for many priests and religious, who have an insatiable appetite for miracles and cross-less Christianity that denies the salvific dimension of suffering in our lives. Added to this is the sexual indiscretion that is today common among priests and religious, seminarians and other candidates in formation.

Evidently, these are all signs of grave loss of faith, rooted in selfishness – the lack of readiness for selfless service, self-renunciation and total surrender to the will of God on which radical discipleship can be built. Where radical surrender is lacking, the vow of poverty, chastity and obedience turn to empty promises – a sure sign of hypocrisy. It is evident that selfishness and self-seeking abound amongst the clergy and religious today. This raises doubts about the effectiveness of our formation programs.

Possible Reasons for Failures in the Formation Programs Today

The fact that the products of our seminaries and formation houses are not up to the standard expected suggests that something is wrong somewhere. Something is wrong, not just with the formation method, but also with the formators and formandi. Let us first consider the candidates for formation

The *Formandi*: The young men and women pursing vocation today in our formation houses are definitely different from their counterparts about seventy years ago. Then it was clear that the candidates were already groomed in faith before entering the seminary and had lesser distractions from the society. But the candidates of today are under pressure from the demands of modern time, ranging from technological and liberal cultures, materialism, secularism to Pentecostalism. Many come from a socio-cultural background saturated with corruption and consumerism, from dysfunctional families and societies prone to competitive life-style. People from such backgrounds are likely to have problem discerning their vocations and might even seek formation for a very wrong motivation.

In fact, many candidates have other motives, different from what they gave as reasons for seeking admission into the religious houses or seminaries. Some may consciously hide their real motivation and declare as reason that they wish "to serve God and humanity", when, in truth, they have come for the benefits and privileges attached to religious vocation, and would want to be served rather than serve. Some others may be unconscious of what motivates them to enter the seminary. They may honestly desire to serve God and humanity, but deep within them they are driven by some undisclosed desires about making life better for themselves. Both groups of persons may be excellent seminarians or novices in the formation houses, ready to comply to the rules and identify with the authorities in order to remain in formation, but they are rarely able to internalize their experiences in the formation houses. However, as soon as they get ordained or professed, they begin to show their true colours. It has often been humorously said that some seminarians fear God while they are in the seminary; but when they become priests God begins to fear them. This is particularly true of persons with mixed or falsified motivations, whether male or female. One would certainly need a more rigorous formation program, other than the conventional one, in order to be able to access such candidates, to unlock their pretenses and help them discern their vocation early enough.

Another obstacle to formation with regard (Akubeze, 2010,1) to candidates is the issue of number. While in the Western World there is a record of decline in religious vocations, here in Nigeria, we experience

surplus number of vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. Since about the past sixty years, there has been a steady increase in vocations and a multiplication of seminaries and religious houses. Nobody seems to know the exact number of young men and women being formed in our seminaries and houses of formation. Many of these institutes are merely coping with, what has often been termed, the "tyranny of number". As a result, many formandi live in anonymity till they pass out of the seminaries and houses of formation. If this situation is to be arrested, not only must the population of the formandi be drastically scaled down to a manageable size, but also that a more rigorous selection and discernment program must be put in place.

The *Formators*: The high failure rate of formation process in Nigeria has often been correctly attributed to the insufficiency of the number of formators in the formation houses and also to the incompetence of the available ones (Okeke, 2011, 26). There is hardly any seminary in Eastern Nigeria, for instance, that is not understaffed in terms of the number of formators on the ground. The few available ones are intelligent teachers and lecturers, but no formators, who are noted for their didactic presentation of materials, but not for mentoring. Spiritual directors are often too few and poorly empowered to take adequate care of the candidates. A good number of the so called formators have neither pastoral experience to their credit, nor good enough signs of faith in their lifestyle and utterances that would make them stand as models to the formandi. Some simply parrot off their lessons without any sign of internalization, others merely treat Church views and Roman documents with disdain in the attempt to sound academic. As a result the candidates receive lots of confusing signals (Okeke, 2011, 26; this leaves them undecided as to what to believe.

Moreover, bishops and religious superiors have a penchant for appointing young and inexperienced priests and sisters as formators and vocation directors. To compound the problem, a number of them have never had any training or formation as formators (Iperu, 1995, 58). Many have not been able to manage themselves, and as such cannot really contribute much in the formation of the candidates. Such ones are terribly ill-equipped to take into their own hands, the formation of the contemporary candidates as described above. This is contrary to the specifications of the Synod Fathers, echoed by Pope John Paul II in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*:

The Task of formation of candidates for the priesthood requires not only a certain special preparation of those to whom this work is entrusted, one that is professional, pedagogical, spiritual, human and theological… For this ministry, priests of exemplary life should be chosen, men with a

number of qualities: human and spiritual, maturity, pastoral experience, professional competence, stability in their own vocation, a capacity to work with others, serious preparation in those human sciences (psychology especially) which relate to their office, a knowledge of how to work in groups (John Paul II, 1992, 66).

Similar things are required for formators in the formation houses. To make the matter worse, despite the much talked about ongoing formation and formation of the formators (Nwabeke, sine datum), not much is being done in this regard. In the view of the challenges facing formation today, it is grossly inadequate for somebody to act as a formator without any formal training. Again due to poor funding of the seminaries and formation houses, poor remuneration of the formators, many able priests and sisters who would otherwise have liked to be absorbed into the formation apostolate, refuse to get involved.

***Formation Method*:** Most seminaries and formation houses are still using the traditional formation method, whose justification has been overtaken by the demand of contemporary modern culture. The culture of establishing seminaries and formation houses took a centre stage in the period between the 17th and 20th centuries when the primary concern of the Church was to train men and women who would be able to give an apologetic response to the threat of Reformation and Modernism. Seminaries and formation houses concentrated on apologetics, emphasizing academic ability and the capacity to study and store information. The passing of examinations and collection of certificates counted more than strength of character. Moreover, due to the emphasis on the hierarchical nature of the Church, "Unquestioning obedience and compliance with the orders of the day were the primary obligations of priests and religious. They were not expected to think and reflect much beyond this. They did not have to make many choices for themselves and develop their initiative … Discipline, not maturity, was what counted here." (Iperu, 1995, 13) The method of formation then was more of lectures and conferences, and of course ongoing supervision of the candidates to see whether they comply with the rules and regulations. As a result, students learn how to comply and identify, even when they are not convinced, all in the attempt to avoid expulsion. The internalization of the program is hardly achieved.

This traditional model paid more attention to intellectual formation, which mainly took the form of passing information about doctrines and morals. It had little or no provision for the human development. People grew dissatisfied with the traditional method, particularly because it was one-dimensional and devoid of holistic integration. The Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Training of Priests, *OptatamTotius*, specifically

called for a radical change. It emphasized Spiritual and Pastoral training (Vat II, nos 8-16,19-21). Then, in 1988, the entire Catholic world together with Pope John Paul II deliberated on new methods of formation. The result is what we find in the Apostolic Exhortation, *PastoresDaboVobis*, which not only identifies the four main forms of formation, but also pleaded for a holistic integral formation.

For some seminaries and formation houses, these recommendations remain mere theories. Their formation method is still business as usual: study, lectures or spiritual conferences, and little or no exercises in human development. Given the numerous challenges to formation today, the traditional model can hardly meet the demands of the contemporary time. Didactic approach is grossly inadequate; one must supplement it with something near "therapeutic" approach, so that the candidates can be helped to attain maturity. We dare not forget, as the Iperu Formation Team puts it, that "The general stance of the Church in its relationship to the modern world and to other religions has shifted from that of defensive vigilance and suspicion to that of openness and dialogue." (Iperu, 1995,13)

The Shift We Must Make If Formation Should Succeed

Though the Church has made a lot of recommendations with regard to changing our formation method to the better, bishops and major superiors, seminaries and formation houses continue, in practice, to pay more attention to academic qualifications rather than maturation processes; as a result intellectually bright but psychologically weak candidates and formators are chosen for the formation process. (Iperu, 1995,13) The major concern of formation houses today should be how to achieve human maturity, not just on the part of the candidate, but also on the side of the formators, because, as *PastoresDaboVobis* affirms, the success of every form of formation depends on the proper formation of the human personality.

We need to focus on human maturity, as that aspect of human beings that ensures the harmony of elements and the integration of all tendencies and values in the human person. The Sacred Congregation for the Catholic Education recognizes the role human maturity plays in a healthy spirituality and appreciates its complexity and comprehensiveness in the following words:

Maturity is a complex reality which cannot be easily or fully defined. In general, however, one can judge a man mature when he has brought to reality his vocation as a man; in other words, a person who has acquired a ready and habitual capacity to act freely; a man who has integrated his developed human potential with habits of virtue; a man who has acquired an easy and habitual emotional self-control by integrating his

emotional drives and placing them at the service of his reason; a man who enjoys community living because of his willingness to give himself to serve others; one who devotes himself to his profession steadily and calmly; one whose conduct obviously follows his conscience; a man who uses freedom to explore, investigate, and develop; who can mould events and bring them to future fruition; finally, a man who has succeeded in bringing all his specifically human possibilities and potentialities to their due development. (The Sacred Congregation, 2002,18)

If the crisis of faith is to be avoided in the lives of the candidates, the future priests and consecrated persons should be made to grow in *vocational maturity*. This means that there should be a shift from the didactic and defensive approach – which merely transmits information – to the therapeutic, dialogue and more comprehensive approach – which aims at transformation and growth in maturity. Only the latter approach can handle the complex issue of formation in the contemporary world. Ultimately, the task of formation is not just to *in-form*, but primarily to *trans-form*, so that the candidates can *per-form* better in their vocation. In other words, the project of formation, should not just aim at delivering information, but basically on effecting transformation in the candidate, so that he or she should be able to put up a nice performance in the ministry, in the discipleship.

The drive towards maturity is a motivation towards transformation and "conversion of heart" (CCC 1206). As St Paul was telling the Ephesians, it is only at a high level of human maturity that we can attain the "unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God" and form the community necessary for the body of Christ (Eph. 4:13). Similarly, only with maturity can the formators create a formation community, provide the accompaniment on the road to discipleship, so that the candidate themselves can grow in vocational maturity.

If the candidates are to acquire vocational maturity, they need training in the three areas of the psyche – the cognitive, the affective, and the volitional.

- Formation should aim at making candidates develop *cognitive maturity*, that is, the ability to grasp truth in a more dynamic way. This would entail, not just gaining knowledge of things, but also knowledge of the truth about themselves, the knowing subjects – about the development of their minds and moral conscience. Much could be learnt from the advancements in human science, especially from Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg, who have proven beyond doubt that moral reasoning is not a static possession, but something that must be acquired through a developmental procedure.
- Formation should equally lead candidates to the growth in *emotional maturity*. This should make them be aware of their feelings and how

these feelings, whether conscious or unconscious, influence their actions. The regular pious admonitions from lectures and conference would certainly not be enough. It would rather require the involvement of a competent formator and a huge investment of time and energy both on the part of the candidate and the formator, for one to grow in awareness of what type of feelings and how such feelings motivate one's actions. It should be an attempt to expose the defense mechanisms and replace them with much more mature and purposeful skills in rechanneling emotions to positive use.

- Candidates should equally learn how to grow in *volitional maturity*, i.e. the ability to delay or deny the gratification of certain desires inconsistent with the core values of one's vocation. This would entail teaching them how to engage in responsible freedom: allowing them to be free in making their choices, but at the same time take responsibility for the result of their choice or actions.

When all these are in place, candidates would be better prepared to attain competence in ministry; live a life that is an expression of authentic faith, rather than disbelief. With a mature personality, the religious or priest becomes a bridge that connects people to Jesus Christ. And when all these rigorous formation processes are in place, it will become easy for the formators to identify those candidates who do not qualify for the ministry, and redirect them elsewhere before ordination or profession.

Conclusion

In the contemporary time, secularism and atheistic culture exert a lot of influence on life. This has its root in the Western Cultural Revolution, which propagates *relativism* – the trend of thought that denies God and the Supernatural absolute authority in the interpretation of reality – and makes human right to freedom and pleasure the criteria for moral judgment. This, no doubt, introduces crises in Religion and in the life of faith, which, with the help of globalization, is tossed around in the world.

The youth, more than any other group, is exposed to the current wave of religious and faith crises, which is compounded by other negative influences from the contemporary Nigeria society saturated with materialism, corruption, superstition and sundry vices. As a result, candidates coming for formation today have a troubled background, which compromises their faith, and places much pressure on the traditional methods of formation.

Though formation should transform the candidates, it is being observed that many pass through the formation houses, and come out with lesser signs of authentic faith. The thrust of this reflection has been that if formation is to help in confronting and solving the problem of crises of faith, a more holistic and integral form of formation must be followed, not

just in principle, but in practice, aiming not just at information, but at transformation.

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10

PRIESTLY IDENTITY AND NEW EVANGELIZATION: RESOLVING DEFICITS IN PRIESTLY IDENTITY THROUGH AUTHENTIC PATROLOGY.

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Abstract
The catholic priesthood has got a character with which the priests are easily marked out, even since antiquity. No matter the historical development of the priesthood, this character remains substantially intact. The consciousness of the character is also a source of great impetus for enthusiastic evangelization. However, one of the major challenges bedeviling the catholic priesthood in Nigeria is the crisis of identity. This plays out strongly in the minimal level of zeal displayed in the pastoral ministry, witnessing to Christ. It has been a clog in the wheel of the new evangelization, which remains almost only in theory and the fruit of its practice is elusive. What explains this crisis of identity? Is it really because we are product of our society? Is it the change in outlook in the course of history? Could it be because the priesthood has had some development? Does the historical development cause essential change leading to loss of identity today? This paper sets out to reveal yet another nuance to the issue of crisis of identity among priests in Nigeria, which is the seed-bed of the problems limiting 'catholic evangelization' on the Nigerian soil. This is because; the growth of any of the Church's agenda relies to a large extent on her priests, who are the close pastors of the people. We shall submit that authentic patrological formation would help to ameliorate this menace, if not eradicating it totally. To achieve this, the method of exposition is employed.

Keywords: Patrology, Identity, Crisis, Evangelization and Formation.

Preliminary and Useful Insight

We are aware that the only antidote to the endemic poison of our society that has held people hostage and put them in fetters of ignorance is the communication of truth. That is why Jesus Christ says that you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free (Jn 8:12). The reality of the level of ignorance and deception concerning the meaning of human body resulting to the perversion of the truth of sex and sexuality, the intelligent understanding of human origin and summit of human existence and unnecessary mistaken mentality of the essentiality of human life are arbiter of the aspiration and thirst of men of this age for the teaching of the truth. No one can really know the truth unless he is taught, no one can be taught unless there is a teacher (Rom. 10:14ff). The task of announcing the gospel truth in an evangelizing manner and missionary disposition has become emergent than ever before, in the age of relativism and the desire for unguided freedom and this is a loud and laudable awakening from clerical slumber.

The congregation for the clergy puts this in a particular perspective saying: "We are aware that no missionary activity can be realistically undertaken without the enthusiastic support of priests, who are the first and most valued collaborators of the Order of Bishops."[1] And so, "All priests are called to become aware how especially urgent it is for them to receive formation at the present time: The new evangelization needs new evangelizers, and these are the priests who are serious about living their priesthood as a specific path toward holiness."[2] We can say, relying on the aforementioned documents that the Church relies so much on priests for the task of new evangelization. This is because they are evangelizers by their own right and virtue of their ordination and they are also supposed to be trainers of evangelizers and personnel for evangelization because, the word evangelization captures concisely the entire missionary activity of the followers of Christ.

Evangelization has to be understood then as the announcement and transmission of the message of Christ that is "the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Rom 1:16).

The term evangelization has a very rich meaning. In the broad sense, it sums up the Church's entire mission: her whole life consists in accomplishing the *traditio Evangelii,* the proclamation and handing on of the Gospel, which is "the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Rom 1:16) and which, in the final essence, is identified with Jesus Christ himself (cf. 1 Cor 1:24). Understood in this way, evangelization is aimed at all of humanity. In any case, to evangelize does not mean simply to teach a doctrine, but to proclaim Jesus Christ by one's words and actions, that is, to make oneself an instrument of his presence and action in the world.[3]

Paul VI says: "Evangelization means bringing the good news into all the strata of humanity and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new"[4] Ronald says: "evangelization, of course, comes from the Greek root 'to proclaim good news', and it has been particularly used by Christians in every age to speak of the missions *ad gentes,* that is, outreach to all peoples the world to bring them to Christ."[5] That is why the Pauline ambition is "to preach the good news not where Christ has already been known …but as scripture says: those not told about him will see and those who have not heard will understand." This does not only mean going to a geographical location that was not accessible for the past missionaries, but entails the inculcation, appropriation and internalization of "the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16). So, Joseph Okojie writes: "Evangelization aims at penetrating and uplifting a given culture by the word of God. It is the acceptance of Christ's call and a deep response to the invitation of the Trinity to the work of love and a commitment to continue this work in everyday life."[6]

Evangelization then, is crucial and irreplaceable. It is central to the life of the Church and all her activities since antiquity. In this recent age[7] particularly, the pontificate of Pope St. John Paul II reawakens the consciousness of evangelization in our own age when he was speaking of New Evangelization. "What was new about evangelization?"[8] The new evangelization is not the announcement of a new message, but a new way of the announcement – a new way that is characterized with a new disposition of vigorous resilience. Will this be possible without great recourse to tradition of the Church?

Those who are familiar with wine and all that concerns it have convincingly argued that the longer it stayed the better. In like terms the longer the catholic tradition, having experienced several cultures, people and time, the better for evangelization of peoples. St. Paul speaks of the credence of the sacred tradition in the context of the liturgical celebration of the Eucharist in his first letter to the Corinthians chapter 11: "this is the tradition of the Lord that I received… (I Cor. 11:23). The author of the letter to the Hebrews urges: "remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Consider the end result of their lives and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be led astray by all kinds of strange teachings." (Heb. 13:7-9). the consideration of the end result of the lives of our past leaders in faith is aided by the study of the fathers, which is technically referred to as patrology. Patrology like patristics is used to mean the study of the Fathers.[9] The word patrology was synonymous with patristics, which is used to designate the works of ancient Christian writers. In recent times, it refers to an organized manual on the patristic literature.[10] Here, we

want to use the term patrology to refer to the whole life and works of the Fathers.

The Gist of the Problem of Priestly Identity Crisis

We have said earlier that priests are supposed to be at the fore front of the Evangelization. More deeply, let us say that young priests are believed to be the protagonists of the new evangelization. The employment of the youthful hue and vigour is appropriate especially in the areas described as young Churches. However, what is experienced in some instances is perturbing, concerning the disposition of some priests. To this effect, Charles Hammawa laments:

> Some young priests are bereft of a proper sense of mission. Their concept of priestly ministry is limited to the works assigned and Masses allocated to them. They are not interested in the total well-being or the temporal good of the Church. The ecclesiology is so deformed that their comfort is the primary issue to them.[11]

The resultant effect of this is that the announcement of the gospel suffers and the people continue to be in want. That is why Ambrose Agu retorts:

> "…unfortunately, today, in many places, the Gospel is not proclaimed with due force and veracity. It is not exposed level of its radical and disturbing implications. When this is done, the pastor or minister of the Gospel is excoriated as being conservative, unnecessarily strict or not in touch with present realities. The tendency for many pastors is to shield the people from the disturbing and pungent truth of the Gospel message. They tell the people what they would want to hear and dilute the force of the message handed on to them. Sometimes, a message is avoided entirely if it is considered a contradiction of the spirit of the time.[12]

Corroborating this, Anselm Jimoh calls the prevalent menace a lack of pastoral commitment. He also offered the effect of this disposition of some young priests. He says:

> The observed lack of pastoral commitment, moral probity, inordinate materialistic tendencies, over-socialization of matters of faith and spirituality, frequent display of disobedience to Local Ordinaries/Superiors on the part of the priests, and other observable misdemeanors which coincidentally are more common among the younger generation of priests is disturbing…[13]

Today, instead of yearning to win the whole of the world for Christ, the happenings in our society appears to be overtaking us and exerting much influence on us. The spirit of avarice, which may be seen as the sin of the old, is now common among the young. This we must say beclouds the vision of evangelization and pastoral initiative that is greatly missionary. There is no other better time to shun the empty promises of the world so that we may purify it. "Yet increasing it appears that more and more young priests are taken up with buying cars the day after their ordination…"[14] and "pastors and priests are getting swallowed en mass and the virtue of comportment and decency no longer has a place in our life."[15]

It is an understatement to say that some priests do not evangelize, they even disturb the mission. John Aniagwu says: "Many priests are giving counter witness."[16] Substantiating this, Hassan Kukah writes: "given the poverty of our society, it seems that materialism on the part of many priests and religious has become the greatest threat to our mission."[17] Particularly of young priests, who should "spear head" new evangelization because of the gift of youthful strength, it is advised: "formators need to take account of what happens in parishes when young priests get there… an exalted and glamourous priest will weigh too heavily on the mission of the Church. The young priest must not be gullible to think that the one who endorses his every whim is the one who supports his ministry."[18]

Relying on the impetus created by St. Paul, Oredipe calls for new missionary drive when he wrote: "surely then, the memory of St. Paul will inspire a new missionary drive in the Church for the benefit of the whole of humanity."[19] In like manner, Ambrose Agu speaks of new pastoral courage in the following terms: "this concern must be seen in his zeal to reach out to the people outside the Church. This concern calls for the special attention of the pastors and ministers of the Church."[20] He continued: "the duty of a pastor does not end with leading the flock to pasture and protecting it. He has also the onerous task of going out in search of the straying and the lost sheep and bringing it back to where it belongs … and this requires special pastoral courage and zeal, which of course is the only way the pastor can foster faith and call to faith in the world of today."[21] And so, Aniagwu complains: "there is proclamation by written word…But many do not do it. They simply do not write. They are either too timid to do so or they do not have the time."[22]

It is true that the general theme of this conference focuses on the formation to the priesthood, let us speak commonly at this moment so that other young persons may have the issue to ponder on, since the task of evangelization per se, is of all who are "baptized and sent."[23] Dwight Longenecker underscored the fact that our disposition towards

evangelization is too minimal. He has this to say: "We Catholics skate around this one muttering catchphrases like "The New Evangelization' and we trumpet the few evangelization enterprises that are going on, and we self-righteously quote St. Francis (who never actually said it), 'Preach the gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.'"[24] He did not fail to enumerate some of the reasons for such disposition generally by catholics which include; cultural Catholicism, over-sacramentalism, ignorance, social gospel and professional catholicism.[25]

Catholics tend to be shy about evangelizing. And, it shows. The decline in Sunday Mass attendance is best described as a plummet. Seventy-five percent of Catholics went to Mass weekly in 1955 Gallup reported. That dropped to about 39 percent according to data collected between 2014 and 2017; which was down from 45 percent between 2005 and 2008. It's a disturbing trend and one that Msgr. Thomas Richter, pastor of Queen of Peace Church in Dickinson, wants Catholics to do something about. He addressed this issue as the featured speaker last month at the University of Mary's St. Hildegard Lecture series, explaining that evangelizing is primarily the job of laity.[26]

In 2013, the Barna Group did a large survey on the importance of Christians who share their faith. The group which had the lowest number of people who actively shared their faith was Catholics. Here is the truly sad part. They only polled those they designated as 'people who said they have made 'a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today' and who also indicated they believe that when they die they will go to Heaven because they had confessed their sins and had accepted Jesus Christ as their savior.' This means they polled the best and most engaged Catholics who have had an encounter with Jesus. They found that only 1 out of every 3 Catholics agreed with the statement, 'I, personally, have a responsibility to tell other people about my religious beliefs.' Additionally, only 1/3 of Catholics who have encountered Jesus and chosen to follow him agreed with the statement, 'During the past 12 months, I explained my religious beliefs to someone who had different beliefs, in the hope that they might accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.' This means we Catholics in the USA are TERRIBLE at evangelization - the core mission of the Church! We aren't Christians to merely get ourselves to heaven. We are Christians to get others.'[27]

Notwithstanding, the urgency of evangelization today cannot be overemphasized. The perversion in the world today has made those who learn not to understand and possession has constantly led to impoverishment. The announcement and the encounter with the truth are evermore demanded. Thus, the urgency of evangelization today is as prevalent as at the time of Jesus, when they were advised not to even salute anyone on the road. Cardinal Dulles made this observation

concerning the disposition for evangelization even after the Second Vatican Council: "The commentaries on Vatican II published in the first decade after the council generally overlooked the centrality of evangelization. They focused attention on collegiality, ecumenism, dialogue and social teaching."[28] But now is the acceptable time to wake up with great enthusiasm for the work of new evangelization.

Resolving Deficits in Priestly Identity through Authentic Patrology.

We speak of the apostolic foundation in the Church not just from mere human calculations or wisdom, but because the Lord built the Church on the apostle that He named Peter, the rock. Therefore, the faith of the Church is foundational and this permeates her activities. The proper understanding of the missionary mandate and evangelization requires that we get in touch concretely with those to whom the message is handed over on behalf of the generation that will come to believe Christ through their teaching (Jn 17:20). Chinua Achebe wrote: "a man who does not know where the rain began to beat him cannot say where he dried his body."[29] Here, we have to present the lasting values of patrology through which we encounter the Fathers and even learn from them in order to prepare candidates in formation for the all important task ahead. The Congregation for Catholic Education instructs:

Observation of the present condition of the Church reveals how the needs of the church's pastoral mission and the emergence of new currents of spirituality call for healthy nourishment and reliable source of inspiration. So many efforts seem sterile, but there is a fresh breath of true wisdom and Christian authenticity that flowed from the patristic works. It is a breath which contributed recently to the resolution of numerous liturgical, ecumenical, missionary and pastoral phenomena, which were noted by the Second Vatican Council and which are considered a source of encouragement and light by the church today.[30]

In a letter to Fulton Sheen, a priest wrote: "I am convinced that many of our people are searching for many of the old devotions which many of the parishes have done away with, and this is very often because we priests cannot be bordered putting ourselves out."[31] These old devotions motivate the faithful for the missionary activities. Patrology helps us to encounter the depth of these devotions, some of which are handed down by the apostles themselves and are inspired by the Lord and His Spirit. A good example of such devotions is the elongated Lenten spiritual practices of the Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults and other prayerful pedagogy that accompany the rites. This is also not common again in our Churches. Another is the adoration of the Lord in

the Blessed Sacrament, which some parishes have also done away with. But these and many others enliven our soul.

The inspiration they (the Fathers) offer in terms reflection, and contribution to the explanation of the mysteries communicated through the Scriptures is lasting. To this effect, Pope Benedict XVI in his *Verbum Domini* advised that pastoral or missionary activities be inspired by the Scriptures.[32] The understanding of the Sacred Scriptures, just as the familiarity with it, is in no little measure germane to the work of evangelization. As a matter of fact, the Scripture is the code for every missionary activity. In it we find the example of the Lord Himself being on mission to evangelize and also learn his principles and strategies which can never fail us. But without the proper understanding, we can do little or nothing humanly speaking. Thus authentic patrology helps us to have better understanding of the Scriptures, when we encounter the insight offered by the apostles and the Fathers, such that they continue to challenge and spur us for missionary actions. "The living Tradition is essential for enabling the Church to grow through time in the understanding of the truth revealed in the scriptures…"[33] The second Vatican Council Fathers offer immense insight:

> Hence there exists a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. For Sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, while sacred tradition takes the word of God entrusted by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and hands it on to their successors in its full purity, so that led by the light of the Spirit of truth, they may in proclaiming it preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known. Consequently it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore both sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of loyalty and reverence.[34]

As important as the Scriptures may be, our knowledge is equally nourished by the study of the Holy Fathers and other Doctors and monuments or Tradition. In order, moreover, that they may give apt answers to questions posed by men of this age, it is necessary for priests to know well the doctrines of the magisterium and the councils and

documents of the Roman pontiffs and to consult the best of prudent writers of theological science.[35]

Evangelization is intrinsically traditional since, evangelization entails the handing over of the faith. To hand over is traceable to the Latin word *tradere*, meaning to handover. It is therefore, historical and traditional. "The new head of a worldwide federation of traditional Catholics has stressed that if the New Evangelization is to be effective, it's vital that the faithful know and understand the Church's roots, history and tradition."[36] "In our Christian mind, the Fathers are always linked to tradition having been both its protagonist and witnesses. They are closer to its source in their purity… the Fathers are therefore witnesses and guarantor of authentic catholic tradition."[37] Just like we have written earlier, no Christian evangelizer is going to announce a new gospel as St. Paul wrote to the people of Corinth (I Cor. 3:11), the primordial message of Christ but with a new style, dedication and vigour. Patrology then helps us to understand that primordial message of Christ as we study the works and life of those who were with them from John's baptism till when the Lord was taken up (Acts 1:22).

Therefore, it is clear that (for) seminarians regular familiarity with the work of the Fathers can only strengthen their spiritual and liturgical life by shedding particular light on their vocation by rooting it in the long tradition of the Church bringing it to a direct communication with its origins in their wealth and purity.[38]

Another important reason for patrology is that the Fathers have bequeathed to us the authentic method of grafting the faith into cultures. They grappled with the heresies of the pagan cultures and were able to impress the faith in the heart of these cultures, although not without difficulty. They were successful. If inculturation that we clamour for today must be successful, we have to consider the Fathers who have done it in the past. The Fathers have helped to answer the question of how the faith can be explained in the "wisdom and philosophy of people."[39]

There is yet another pivotal point to be mentioned concerning the rich patrimony that patrology introduces us to that we may be helped in our mission of evangelization. This is the arena of Catholic Christian spirituality. "… Given this lively spiritual sense, the image of themselves that the Fathers offer us is that of men who are not only learning but above all are experiencing divine things. Most of the time, they are specialists in supernatural life who communicate what they have seen and experienced in their contemplation of divine things, what they have known through the path of love."[40] Any evangelizer who does not learn from the spirituality of the Fathers may not be faithful and successful. The Fathers are to be our spiritual models after the mind of Christ. St. Paul says; imitate me as I imitate Christ. Due to the intellectual poverty

that some young persons have concerning the lives and works of the Fathers, they have come to choose other spiritual models of this age. It shows in the liturgical assembly that they lead. Yet, the Fathers have more to offer in spirituality than the Pentecostal pastors of this age. Authentic patrology will help in resolving this lacuna.

Conclusion

This paper calls for an urgent appreciation of spiritual mentorship, father figure and role modeling. This paper is also a clarion call for renewal towards enthusiastic evangelization. As Paul VI says: "to make the Church of the twentieth century ever better fitted for proclaiming the Gospel to the people of the twentieth century"[41], this paper aims at making the Church in the twenty-first century better active for the proclamation of the gospel to the people of the twenty-first century. "As in early times, today too Christ needs apostles ready to sacrifice themselves. He needs witnesses and martyrs like St. Paul."[42] To actualize this desire of Christ we need to be constantly be inspired by the Fathers, who were the first recipient of the message of Christ and served it in its purity. Thus, in the training of a candidate to the priesthood, authentic patrology should be an epicenter of their formation. This will continue to reinvigorate these young evangelizers, buoyed their spirituality and boost their evangelical morale through pastoral outreach. We wish to submit therefore, that with authentic patrology, the misplacement of priority that has led to a kind of identity crisis, being a clog in the wheel of new evangelization, will be reduced to bearable decimal, if not totally eradicated.

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11

HARNESSING OUR RESOURCES FOR THE FORMATION OF SEMINARIANS TO THE PRIESTHOOD IN THE POST-MODERN AGE

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Abstract
Formation is a divine assignment and those involved in it must be conscious of the gravity of its demands. No one forms another whosale and no one forms himself all alone. Education is a systematic effort between a superior and an inferior, between a mentor and a mentored. Education environment is an academy of individuals with at least a vision. It is a mission to give birth to another through the process of intellectual midwifery to use the words of Plato. Its content is a heritage based on set values that humanise and imbued the individual with the character adequate and noble for a set goal. It is harnessing available resources to realise a personality immersed in a world that is experiencing exponential growth in technology, but with less capacity of an authentic integration of the true and needed values.
The human person is entangled in the drive to know and improve the self, even unconsciously so as to be able to rule one's life and possibly dominate others. But since culture regulates this drive and direct human affairs; information becomes both a possession and a heritage. It is about character building and a journey of an entire life of a person in society in diverse engagements.
This project seeks to draw attention to the fact that the present circumstance requires a re-evaluation of the system of formation; not just in the seminary but a far-reaching endeavour in the light of a world that is redefining anthropology. It calls for a more rigorous incarnation of the ever-relevant resources of the church and especially the recent document on the formation of candidates to the catholic priesthood.

Keywords: Formation, Seminarian, Priesthood, Education, Information, Seminary.

Introduction

I am constrained to say that no one forms another whosale and no one forms himself all alone. Education is a systematic effort between a superior and an inferior, between a mentor and a mentored. Education environment is an academy of individuals with at least a vision. It is a mission to give birth to another through the process of intellectual "midwifery" to use the word of Plato. In the words of Edith Stein, "*Education* is not an external possession of learning but rather *the gestalt which the human personality assumes under the influence of manifold external forces,…*"[1] In relation to this claim she further opined that:

The first fundamental formation happens in the soul. Just as *an inner form resides* in the seed of plants, an invisible force making the fir tree shoot up here and beech there, there is in this way an inner mold set in human beings which urges the evolution into a certain direction and works towards a certain *gestalt* in blind singleness of purpose, that of personality which is mature, fully developed, and uniquely individual.[2]

The drive to know and improve oneself is one that the human person is entangled with and even unconsciously so as to be able to rule one's life and possibly dominate others. But since culture regulates this drive and direct human affairs, information becomes both a possession and a heritage. It is about character building and a journey of an entire life of a person in society in diverse engagements.

The Theoretical Foundation of the Choice of Topic

The theoretical background to this presentation is the latest official document released by the Vatican for the formation of candidates to the celibate Catholic priesthood. In the mind of the Church; "The intellectual formation of candidates for the priesthood finds its specific justification in the very nature of the ordained ministry, and the challenge of the 'new evangelization' to which our lord is calling the Church …"[3] Added to this is the overall formation activities ranging from academic and cultural dimensions.

Moreover, it should be emphasised that the intellectual dimension, with the prescribed study of philosophy and theology, is not the only factor to be considered when evaluating the journey completed by the seminarian in each stage, and the progress that has been made. Rather the overall discernment by the formators regarding all aspects of formation will allow only those seminarians to pass on to the next stage who, in addition to having passed the necessary exams, have reached the level of the human and vocational maturity required for each stage.[4]

The above citations summarize the aim of this paper as the human, spiritual, intellectual and cultural formation of seminarian in the Western region and elsewhere in Nigeria. I will try as much as possible to pay attention to the new document on formation and harness the possibility of a daring audacity for credible reasons. I wish to, in particular, emphasise the integral link between our various disciplines and then ask for a concerted effort among all to pursue a synthetic formation. This will demand a lot of sacrifice from all of us formators, to create a harmony of knowledge in view of a wholistic education that makes gentlemen and men of the church.

The simple rationale for this approach can be stated thus: "To ensure adequate intellectual formation of future priests, all disciplines must be taught in such a way as to make their intimate connection stand out clearly, avoiding fragmentation."[5] This poses a challenge to all formators who should see their duty as a sacred function and humanitarian service to the world in the church. Humans learn by fragments, but care must be taken not to yield to the modern tendency to fragmentation. "Philosophy [and indeed all disciplines] can reflect the fragment nature of the human ability to acquire knowledge; but when it leads to fragmentation of knowledge it becomes inimical to its well-being…"[6], and might not augur well for evangelization.

The last two quotes are not just good for the envisaged purpose of priestly formation of seminarians to the Catholic Celibate priesthood; it is also recommended in my opinion as the quintessential requirement for training in any well-founded society of human dignity. It is also crucial to the success and failure of any future endeavour that merits integrity not only in a religious institution in the 21st century. Is it possible to attain such a system in our world today? The answer is no and yes. No because, if things continue the way they are now, this will be a mirage. Yes because, the only thing it takes is a conscious and honest decision by all stake-holders to make a difference.

The State of Things at the Moment:

Everything that is known about order, prognosis and prognostications is giving way to chaos, irascibility, uncertainty, rashness and populism. There is a new world order that is emerging in the history of humanity. The world is at a crossroad. Capitalism in my opinion has not satisfied the yearnings created at its advent. So, it is becoming more compelling to agree with those who claim that capitalism has failed and there is no certainty of what comes next. The western world is labouring under the yoke of self-imposed scourge that is inflicted by liberalism, unrestrained licentiousness and over-ambitious hedonism. The East block is surging and a new partitioning of the world is crystallizing. Here Africa is

experiencing a metamorphosis that is not clear-cut (this is an issue for another research). A region that has been and represented as a figure of endless battle ground for new and potential powers. All known symptoms of a revolution are whimsically present and what emerges from this new interregnum is the problematic that researchers have to deal with and all well-meaning institutions have to follow with keen interest. The world is hungry and confused, but there is no political foresight to the direction that will lead to a more cohesive globe and a safer life.

Mechanical development is taking a Dionysian trend in technological and digital advancements, but the sophistication needed by the human mind to handle the teleological complexity that it requires is not equipageous. There is a lop-sidedness that calls for attention. "At…times we have our talks and end up not implementing anything to the disappointment of millions and millions of people around the world who look up to this body to provide leadership in a world that is constantly oscillating between advancement and doom."[7] This statement reveals a hypocrisy that is discernible in global politics and its complication in an already exacerbated world.

Stating the Problem of the Present

Why is this paper a product of curiosity and concern about the reality of the moment? Your guesses can be as good as and even sometimes better than my own. The reason this is true is that there is a subtle but obvious fact of mediocrity and indolence in the world today. The human capacity to know has been broadened in all ramifications. There are great achievements in infrastructural development in terms of technologies for industrial and food productions, but the quality of integral life has not been attained comparatively in its welfare and safety.

We live in a time of extraordinary opportunity. Breakthrough in science, technology, and medicine are curing illnesses and solving problems that prior generations thought impossible to solve. But each day also brings news of growing dangers that threaten everything we cherish and value. Terrorists and extremists have gathered strength and spread to every region of the planet. Rogue regimes represented in this body not only support terrorists but threaten other nations and their own people with the most destructive weapons known to humanity.[8]

There are so many meanings one can draw from such statement above and many other presentations during the same assembly. But the question is, if every leader is aware of the difficulty and threat of the time and knows how inimical it is to human progress and the crucial peace that has become more of illusion than a mirage; what is missing? One

can imagine that there is need for honest dialogue among leaders and leaders among their people.

The Seminary and Seminarians

To state this problem and its extension one needs to look at the problematic from various points of reference. Since our focus is the formation of young men for the purpose of ministerial priestly life; it will be right to be specific. The problems highlighted above are not just reverberating only in the political arena, but they are widely diffused in all facets of human life. The seminary is not exempt in this beleaguering and odious world order paradoxically orchestrated by science.

Science provides the foundation and marks the development of hierarchic power. Science is but one of the forms of knowledge, yet it exists today in a manner that makes all other forms of knowledge look insignificant, of little value or even harmful. One of the features of today's science is the possibility to obtain high-level knowledge in universities. What you can't learn at the university is not scientific; at best – it can be made scientific.[9]

Today, there is so much information that no one bothers about retention of information. There is hardly any need for profundity. This is a scourge of Secularism aided by pragmatism which has made depth and rigour of inquiry anachronistic and abhorrent to the vast majority. The seminary and seminarians are not insulated against such pretexts.

The word "seminary" is from the Latin word *Seminarium*, which means plots where plants are raised from seeds. A garden where seeds are nurtured and nourished to grow, become strong and bear fruits. It means breeding ground. When this is used in reference to the priesthood, it means breeding ground for priests. It means in my opinion an academy as in the most ancient available record of the Socratic peripatetic school and the rabbinic school of discipleship. A seminarian is usually a male member of the faithful (who ought to be baptized and confirmed), who feels called and presents himself or is presented for training as priest. He is then accompanied by those with requisite competence.

And so pastoral formation certainly cannot be reduced to a mere apprenticeship, aiming to make the candidate familiar with some pastoral techniques. The seminary which educates must seek really and truly to initiate the candidate into the sensitivity of being a shepherd, in the conscious and mature assumption of his responsibilities, in the interior habit of evaluating problems and establishing priorities and looking for solutions on the basis of honest motivations of faith and according to the theological demands inherent in pastoral work. Thanks to an initial and gradual experience of ministry, future priests will be able to be inserted into the living pastoral tradition of their particular church. They will

learn to open the horizon of their mind and heart to the missionary dimension of the Church's life. They will get practice in some initial forms of cooperation with one another and with the priests alongside whom they will be sent to work. These priests have a considerably important role, in union with the seminary program, in showing the candidates how they should go about pastoral work.[10]

The critical nature of the programme of formation is outlined in the above citation and one can only call the attention of all concerned to reflect sincerely on them so as to be able to truly fulfil the task of formation.

One major issue that constitute and could continue to be a problem in formation is the apathy of Seminarians. The apathy of Seminarians here means a general attitude prevalent among seminarians towards the various levels of formation. In retrospect, I am forced most of the time to question myself about motive when I see the rate of shallowness among young men who present themselves for formation to the priesthood. One is further concerned by a disposition of dismissiveness. Here seminarians rather than pay attention to the critical parts of formation; that is aspiration to heroism, they settle for mediocrity and materialism. What is more? In many cases, rather than take instructions and obey them by executing them, there is a general attitude of negotiation of what seminarians choose to do rather than obey and carry out instructions. To cap it all, what seminarians in the major part engage in nowadays is to resort to what they refer to as "psyching" the formators and priests in their Dioceses to make their way to the priesthood. Many have succeeded in this and they are in the field of ministry. These are disturbing trends.

Concerns from the Above/Tendency

One of the gravest concerns of today is the fact that for the majority of those trained in the seminary probably believe that the priesthood is the point of arrival. In the ordinary sense, the seminary is the nursery where the seed of the vocation is nurtured and come to maturity. The actual application of the self to the work only begins at ordination. In the major part, from parish experience and the opportunity of having to teach in two seminaries, it is a strong opinion of this paper that many seminarians get retired as soon as they are ordained. From personal experience and from pastors of souls, one can only conclude that personal entertainment in seeking pleasure most of the time take the energy or attention of many young priests. This is because for such people, the priesthood is the point of arrival instead of the beginning of the call to service. For the seminarian, the seminary ought to be a place of dreams and aspiration to self-immersion in the work of saving souls. Instead, the seminarian sees

the ordination as the end of suffering and sacrifice and the beginning of enjoyment having conquered. Here ordination becomes an achievement rather than an opportunity. At the end of the day, there is a suspicion that the aim of the church is contrived from the beginning.

Each seminarian is the protagonist of his own formation...and is called to a journey of ongoing growth in the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral areas, taking into account of his own personal and family background. Seminarians are likewise responsible for establishing and maintaining a climate of formation that is consistent with the values of the Gospels[11]

Very often the problems that arise can be numerous: in common experience, we have candidates who seem to respond and present themselves for formation who do not really wholeheartedly submit to formation. Some also come into the seminary with a disposition that make it impossible for the process of the formation to be authentic and fruitful. Cases abound in parishes and dioceses where seminarians who were highly esteemed in the seminary for discipline and maturity turn to have pretended all through their formation process only to reveal their true colours after ordination. Some seminarians are also caught in the web of the confusion between the principles of their life in the seminary and the remarkable difference it comes to experience in the parish setting. What could be done to bridge the gaps between the authentic life that the call of the gospel demands on the individual and the reality of the personal experience and his environmental influences? The answer is a structural one. All stake holders are to be diligent in the discharge of their duties from the family to the parish community and the seminary. It will be the responsibility of the individual seminarian to be honest in the search for God and the direction of such a hunger for God in the right direction

Educational System

Another problematic that I wish to highlight here is the educational systems world-over. Technology with all its beautiful results ought to be at the service of the human person. This is visible in many instances of our world events. But it is also true that technological advancement has led to a laziness that makes rigorous engagement of the human mind a waste of time and obsolete practice as we now have technological elements that can live our lives for us. At the same time and ironically too, we witness how different groups are organizing different programmes of natural brain engagement in complex calculus and rewards awarded to those who distinguish themselves. These, point to serious issues of confusion as a result of a misguided use of human

capacity in technological investigations. Do we have to make people lazy by relying on robots even when they are not needed to lives?

The Nigerian experience?

In the ordinary sense the above problem is true, but as if it were not enough; the decadence of such technological obscurity is further compounded by the inept tradition of penury in the Nigerian society. The statement of the Catholic Bishop's Conference of Nigeria after their second plenary session in a Communiqué, has the following: "The inability of Government to address the inequitable situation in the country has provided breeding ground for violent reactions, protest and agitations, which exploit the grievances of different segments of the country."[12] As member of the comity of nations and actors in a world that is becoming more and more a village, we are left with the refuse of technological advancement at the 'admiration' of those who reap the dividends of the victory of the human spirit over the natural world. The major part of ills like the one highlighted here is the lack of targeted educational programme, be it in the theoretical background and in its practical implementation.

There is a challenge here and it is again global. In the theoretical world today, science and its method tend to redirect "technology" in a way that the aim of every human endeavour rather than seek the Supreme Good which is the hallmark of every particular goal now descends to seeking exclusive individual fragments. The negligence of a broader inquiry either by way of induction or deduction becomes the bane of illusive contentment and empty happiness. Utility and immediate satisfaction and the empty pragmatic dogmatism have driven the taste of the majority of people. This in itself is transgression of science that has led to the yarning gap between the Dionysian progress in mechanical science and the poverty of the fruitfulness of human satisfaction in the midst of the blessings of the earth. "The headlong development of the world and a keener awareness of existing inequalities make for the creation and aggravation of differences and imbalances."[13] This imbalance is the result of an increasing fragmenting bifurcation of reality into scientific and metaphysical. This is a condition that arises from the deep-seated crisis in the human person. "The dichotomy affecting the modern world is, in fact, a symptom of the deeper dichotomy that is in the human person himself. He is the meeting point of many conflicting forces."[14]

Consequences

The symptoms of the above depravity of the human spirit are obvious to a reasonable mind. Today more than ever before, human hunger for

peace and fulfilment is plenty and the helplessness of institutions as a result of this failure is aplenty. All these point to the fact of failure in the society. One basic fact that plagues the globe today is instability.

The next point about the problems the world face is the failure of Capitalism. This is linked with the political exigencies of our time. The political terrain is volatile and chaotic. The result of all these encumbrances and the role they play in human psychology is clear. There is a high degree of fear and vulnerability which has given rise to pseudo-populism. What can one hold? We can conveniently assert that the utopic promise of inexistent paradise appeals easily to the malnourished and disgruntled populace. The level of unpredictability of the world politics that our world has known is a clear case of the rot in the human mind that manifests itself in the various ways of our present predicament.

The above analysis is simply a red signal in our society today. The least consequence of indifference is only a compound of accumulated disaster. Among them are some of the current world affairs. In the world today, terrorism is a part of every household preoccupation and the scourge of civil society. Since human wants are "insatiable" as the economic principle states, to use Adams Smith resources. The world is only at an elementary stage of wickedness and eventually nihilism. What substantiates this position is the fact that because man is naturally proud and power driven, he can descend low to bestiality to prove his capacity. Today we are grappling with a nuclearized North Korea. We have the power and exotic ego-driven president in the oval office in the United States of America. Europe is going through a new metamorphosis with Brexit. The middle East is only becoming more and more unreachable and the hope of a solution of a better region with Arab-spring is only so far, a mirage. What about communist China? With its new infiltration and ubiquity in the globe. Where will Africa be left at the end of the current new order?

What can be done?

These are worrisome indices and to the fickle mind a sign of hopelessness. But the choice we have to make is inescapable. If we refuse to take the necessary though radical decision, we will be worse of. The decision we need to take is to be well equipped to face a new world order and become active players in a post-modern world. The Church has and continues to make available opportunities and resources to her members to be well-equipped to engage the world for the good of the human person and the good of the universe.

The Church as a mother is under an obligation, therefore, to provide for its children an education by virtue of which their whole lives

may be inspired by the spirit of Christ. At the same time it will offer its assistance to all people for the promotion of a well-balanced perfection of the human personality, for the good of society in this world and for the development of a world more worthy of man.[15]

To stress this further, the Pope in his Encyclical *Laudato Si,* emphasises that:

> We are always capable of going out of ourselves towards the other. Unless we do this, other creature will not be recognized for their true worth; we are unconcerned about caring for things for the sake of others; we fail to set limits on ourselves in order to avoid the suffering of others or the deterioration of our surroundings. Disinterested concern for others, and the rejection of every form of self-centredness and self-absorption, are essential if we truly wish to care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment…[16]

The problem most of the time is that it is one thing to have the opportunity and another to know and make responsible use of it. Here the words of Etienne Gilson become crucial.

As knowing being, man is able to distinguish between things, to be acquainted with their specific natures, and consequently to determine his own attitude toward things after his own knowledge of what they are. Now to be not determined by things but regulated by one's own knowledge of things is precisely what we call to be free."[17]

This is not a task that seminarians by themselves can achieve alone. The need then arises for commitment that promotes a robust response from those who are undergoing formation and the willingness on the part of the formators to be selfless in responding to the demands of the human mind to be equipped for mission. It is the view of the new ration that;

> The task of the agents of formation can be defined as interior openness, rooted in an intense spiritual experience. It is aimed at constant discernment, which allows one to learn from life and from different circumstances, and to discover in them the providential actions of God in his Christian or priestly journey. The quality of the service rendered to seminarians can be measured from the depth of this openness, and, at the same time, a calm formative atmosphere in the Seminary depends on it[18]

The extent to which the formator is open to this task will go a long way to enrich his own life and lead to proficiency in his task as formator. This is so because:

> While carrying out that mission, the formator has an opportunity for growth, and can discover the specific charism of vocational accompaniment and of priestly life as a call that belongs to him personally. In this way, the Seminary can become a school that prepares those who will be responsible for ongoing formation. That is to say, he who has been a Seminary formator acquires a particular sensitivity and a rich experience to be able, later, to assist in the ongoing formation of the Clergy.[19]

There are many ways in which this programme can nurture the present for a future turn-around that helps to avert the impending crisis that the current situation of the direction of world event is moving. There are few things that this paper will elaborate as suggestions to help improve the present situation. Those in training must seek ways to apply themselves to the current curriculum of their formation to the extent that the desired 'personal-centred' formation (auto-formation) can be realized. If Seminarians can open up to the programme as it is at the moment; a lot can be achieved in the interim. But even at that there will still be a lot to be done. The new manual that the congregation responsible for the formation to the priesthood recently reviewed and distributed to houses of formation signal a need to overhaul formation outfit to respond to the present moment. "Whenever it may prove necessary to make changes to the previously approved *Ratio Nationalis*, due to new or unexpected developments, the text may be amended by seeking the further approval of the Congregation for the Clergy."[20] We have to, in the spirit of this new terrain of world events; prepare ourselves to play our noble roles in rescuing the world that is beleaguered by avoidable crisis. The crisis in the world is only a reflection of the potential of the deep-seated depravity and corruption of the human person. To be able to address the problem is to renew the vigour to heroism and turn around the present disposition of self-enslavement to technology and make science serve the need of man and not make man a puppet to the work of his hands.

Review of the Present Programme

Since it is the conviction of this paper that the present programme needs a review and in consonance with the requirement of the Congregation for the formation of Clergy; there is so much to be done. Besides the need to respond to the universal Church, there is also another need as a Local Church. "Each *Ratio Nationalis* must also specify the stages of formation and the programme of studies, the objectives and their length, respecting the norms of universal law."[21] That means that Nigerian Church must quickly realise and respond now to this dual perspective:

her immediate local needs as well as her effort at missionary activities. In one of my recent vacations besides the Conference that took me out of the Seminary before closing down for the 2017/2018 Session, I participated in two other conferences: one was organized by Association of Black Catholics in America from 6th to 9th of July. The other was organized by African Conference of Priests and Religious working in United States (ACCRUS). It was obvious that the Nigerian Church is ahead in the population of priests and religious among other African countries who are missionaries. What fascinated me is the fact that the American Bishops had prepared a document of integration for such priests and religious when they come into their country.

Recommendations

The Need to Emphasise our Values

The world under our watch has gone more individualistic and populistic. Whatever interest such promote, one imagines that the dynamics of the present cannot be served by populism. But there is something that is crucial that needs to be emphasised; that is the fact of value. Value is an accent to the commonality of a people and the heritage they make to the gamut of global civilization. Although it is peculiar, it does not disintegrate the coalition of global alliance when it has to do with human solidarity. The task that humanity faces is to be conscious of and realise the importance of heritage and the endurance of a common experience even when they have to be looked at from different perspectives. This is a position that even some of the most fervent critics of objectivity in values will confirm.

The issue is clearer now than of old, because we now have a more explicit standard whereby to decide what ontology a given theory or form of discourse is committed to: a theory is committed to those and only those entities to which the bound variables of the theory must be capable of referring in order that the affirmation made in the theory be true. … But utility need not imply significance, in any literal linguistic sense.[22]

We have a common experience in which everyone is immersed. But our relation with the objective becomes a matter of our own exclusive lived-experience that colour our worldview.[23]

1. The Value of Family and Social Ties

One can still claim today that in Nigeria and I believe in most part of Africa that notwithstanding the consequence of globalization and western isolationism, there still exists a reasonable social bond. This is not just a family value, but it extends to the society. The importance of this point is to be able to harness this social opportunity in the selection

of candidates to the Seminary for training as priest. The dioceses, Parishes and vocations directors are to emphasise ties with people and employ such as instrument in the process of recruitment for seminary training. The knowledge of the family background for instance can go a long way to assist the diocese in making a well-informed decision on who to admit or otherwise. This is a method that some congregations have used and it has proven to be very helpful. The tendency is to say those values are disappearing in our time and no one really bothers. We can activate such values and let the civil society learn from us. It will not be a novel idea, but a return to the role of the church to the society. In the traditional system, the formator and the formed live out a very intensely close relationship. Can we boast of such commitment from our system today?

2. Document prepared or received by Local Church for Formation

I am aware that there has been a document on formation in the category of *Ratio Fundamentalis* by the Nigerian Bishops' Conference. But as I stand here, I have not set my eyes on such document despite all my efforts to acquire it. This is not the way we should go about our formation. What I am proposing is that, the Nigerian Church should prepare a document or update what is there to reflect the cruciality of present circumstances in the universal church and its relevance to local needs.

The one and only Catholic Church subsists in the particular Churches. Even if formation for priesthood will normally take place in the context of a Diocese, or in the institutions to which the candidates belongs, the priestly ministry is open to the universality of the Church and, thus, carries within it an openness to the more pressing needs of other Dioceses[24]

In the wake of the engagements of the Nigerian church in providing missionary activities to the rest, efforts should be made to make allowance in the formation of Seminarians who will eventually go for mission. This will from onset prepare everyone for the task ahead.

3. Review of Academic Programme towards Master's Degree

Another proposal that I am putting forward here is that our students be allowed to do professional courses in the relevant areas while they journey within these nine years only to earn first degrees. For instance, the University of Benin which All Saints and St. Albert are affiliated to has and granted opportunity to Ph.D programme in the last accreditation, should be a welcomed news to the Church of this region. The robustness of the relationship between the Seminary of All Saints

and now St. Albert contributed to the credit-worthiness that made the request pass for the University. Our students can receive Masters in relevant areas within their time in the seminary. In fact, the former HOD of the Department of Philosophy in Uniben has also discussed this possibility with me as he guaranteed that our materials are sufficient with a bit of adjustment at different levels. Let us be audacious here and make history for the progress of the Church of our region. For instance, in Europe and North America candidates for the priesthood spend less time but graduate with a master's degree. An upgrade of the academic programme will certainly be a great step forward. Besides, the new world order makes it mandatory even to have such a review in the programme.

4. Preparation of Seminarians towards Mission outside Nigerian shores

Just as I talk about the documents above, I believe our seminaries need some more professional touch to the training we give to Seminarians who become priests in our time and most of the time without any other training they go for missions outside the country. This will also help prospective formators who will come back to the seminary to teach others. I feel it is better to harvest when the grains are still very healthy and viable than to wait for them to lose all their sap. The principle of human formation will be enhanced if we pay more attention to particular area of interest and expose our seminarians to them while still in the seminary. The thinking might be 'do not give them too much' before they are ordained. It could even be that some might elope with such opportunity and the church is the looser. I think the time has come when we do not allow the fear of taking risk determine our decision that will lead to a vicious circle. We should take courageous risks and who knows the fruits that may come could be the solution to our problems.

How to Achieve these Goals

All these proposals need so much groundwork to be done and it will call for heavy financial commitment. Here, there are at least three groups that must be battle-ready: The people of God– lay-faithful, the formators and the Bishops who are proprietors of the seminary. The people of God are already doing a lot. But it is not possible to reach the state of equilibrium when it comes to commitment to the training of seminarians to the priesthood. It is also my conviction that if there were laudable project by the Nigerian church, the likelihood is there that our people will be up to the task of rising to the occasion.[25]

On the part of the formators, we must be ready to step-up our effort to give more so as to be able to meet the need of the requirement that this new programme as proposed will be successful. In the same

vein, I address myself to those who collaborate with us in this task to help us with suggestions and resources needed to make this a reality and a pride to them. I am pleased that our Mother Institution on the academic part of formation is here represented. Furthermore, all our lecturers from the different institutions including the University of Benin also will agree with me that our students put in so much that our proposal is not overambitious.

The next is the proprietors; our Bishops need to constantly keep in view and respond consequently to the new world order. Seminarians today must be well prepared to face the challenges of the new evangelization which the pope refers to and required the bishops to do something urgently to address the issue. "While safeguarding the authority of the Diocesan Bishop, the *Ratio Nationalis* seeks to harmonise the priestly formation across the country, in this way facilitating dialogue between bishops and formators, to the benefit of both seminarians and seminaries."[26] This is the rationale behind the Joint Seminaries Commission meetings and the various Governing Councils. These are veritable organs, but there is need to give them more lease of life in the wake of present circumstances. The Pope further stresses this point.

Seminarians should receive a more extensive interdisciplinary, and not merely doctrinal, formation in the areas of engagement and marriage. Their training does not always allow them to explore their own psychological and affective background and experiences. Some come from troubled families, with absent parents and a lack of emotional stability. There is a need to ensure that the formation process can enable them to attain the maturity and psychological balance needed for their future ministry. Family bonds are essential for reinforcing healthy self-esteem. It is important for families to be part of the seminary process and priestly life, since they help to reaffirm these and to keep them well grounded in reality. It is helpful for seminarians to combine time in the seminary with time spent in parishes. There they can have greater contact with the concrete realities of family life, since in their future ministry they will largely be dealing with families. "The presence of lay people, families and especially the presence of women in priestly formation, promotes an appreciation of the diversity and complementarity of the different vocations in the Church[27]

There is also need for a National body to coordinate the activities of the seminaries on a regular and active basis.

Prospects

Nigerians are already making the nation and church proud abroad. My visit to US and participation in the conferences referred to above give me a first-hand experience to testify to the wealth of our Nation.

Maximizing the gains of what we have and adding a bit of flavour to our present system will only put us at a comfortable position. This I believe because, as good and interesting the stories I heard during my sojourn in America, it was clear too that there are cases of casualties as a result of adjustment problems. A review of what is there and a conscious creation of a column for such programmes in the Seminary will go a long way to bettering the chances of good adjustment experience for our seminarians and their readiness to face the work of evangelization at home and abroad as missionaries. There is already a programme of re-entering after a period of missionary activities by Nigerian priests and religious. It will be appropriate to also have a programme of exit for such prospective missionaries. What might be useful is teaching the candidates for the priesthood the need to understand the various cultures of people in different continents and cultural experiences.

Conclusion

Permit me take a clue from the words of *Pastores Dabo* Vobis once again.

… that in the face of crisis of priestly vocations 'the first answer which the Church gives lies in a total act of faith in the Holy Spirit. We are deeply convinced that this trusting abandonment will not disappoint if we remain faithful to the graces we have received.' To remain faithful to the grace received! This gift of God does not cancel human freedom; instead it gives rise to freedom, develops freedom and demands freedom.[28]

Besides, therefore, all of us need to open our hearts to decision that will help build on the progress the Church has made in the training of her candidates to the priesthood

Endnotes

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12

THE PRINCIPLES OF FORMATION OF CANDIDATES FOR THE CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD IN *OPTATAM TOTIUS*, *PASTORES DABO VOBIS* AND *RATIO FUNDAMENTALIS INSTITUTIONIS SACERDOTALIS* AS PARADIGMATIC OF HUMAN FORMATION

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Abstract
The Catholic Church has always considered the formation of candidates for the priesthood and the ongoing formation of her clergy among its greatest priorities and concerns, knowing that her overall good and the success of her mission are contingent on a well-formed clergy. Consequently, the Church has invested time and efforts to fashion out time tested principles that guide the formation of her candidates. The position of this paper is that these principles, stated in conciliar and post-conciliar documents, because of the breadth and reach of their formulations, are paradigmatic of and applicable to the formation of the Christian person. These principles, summarized as human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral, when faithfully domesticated and applied, could also be validly utilized for the formation of any Christian person for the mission of the Church and the good of the society.

Keywords: Church, Human Formation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, *Ratio Fundamentalis*

Introduction

The crisis in the Christian life and in the society today is occasioned by the crisis in the formation of the human person for the important roles that are to be assumed in life. In terms of the priesthood, such crisis can

be traced to the absence of sound formation or the presence of a faulty formation. The priest is fundamentally a man of sacrifice; a man for sacrifice; a man by sacrifice. The sacrifice motif is fundamental to his essence and nature. Priesthood is therefore without soul if sacrifice is removed from it. Sacrifice is the heart of worship and cult. It is the heart of liturgy. If sacrifice is the heart of the priesthood because to talk of the priesthood without it is to completely misunderstand the fundamental essence of what the priesthood is all about, then it stands to reason that the fundament of all formation to the priesthood is to form the human person to become a man of cult or worship. Formation of a Catholic priest is therefore formation for sacrifice. Sacrifice here intended is the sacrifice that found its fullest accomplishment by Christ Jesus in his Paschal Mystery – that is, the Passion, death, resurrection and ascension into glory of Jesus Christ.

The crisis of the priesthood is therefore the crisis of authentic human formation for the roles that are meant to be assumed as priests. The most effective counter measure to this crisis therefore lies in quality of formation of the candidates for the priesthood. The structure of such formation, with some contextualizations and adaptations, are also valid propositions for the authentic formation of the human person in every age, time, season, generation, language, culture. This is because fundamentally, the priest is first of all called to be fully human before he can be fully priestly. The human substratum of his personhood is therefore of fundamental significance, import and relevance to the entire edifice of his formation. If this human edifice is faulty, corrupt, vitiated, corrupted at its fundament, the construction of any formative structure upon this sub-structure cannot therefore but be faulty.

The insights and content of formation of candidates for the priesthood can also be seen to be paradigmatic[1] of human formation because the Church has experience in the formation of the human person. The Church can lay claim to the experience of two millenia in which she has consistently and courageously been in the forefront of the formation and promotion of the good of the human person. On the basis of this experience, the Church can rightly arrogate to herself the competence of not just formulating the fundamental principles of human formation, that is, the basis on which the formation of the human person should rest, but even more importantly, on the strength of her collective experience, the Church is in a position to propose veritable enduring principles that can constitute into the kernel of a program of action for the wholistic formation of the human person in every age, generation, culture, time.

The formation must be human, that is, it must proceed from the fundamentals of what constitutes into our humanity, be based on our

being as persons created in the image and likeness of God, with all our compositions and essence and what makes us who we are as persons. Formation must also have a Christian character, that is, be based on Christian principles and values, ethos, norms. Formation must have didactic or instructional character. The didactic aspect of human formation does not and is not circumscribed to the formal classroom environment or situation. It is the experience that a greater and more efficient aspect of the instructional character of human formation takes place in the non-formal sector, especially in the home. Within the context of formation for the priesthood, a large aspect of the human formation of the candidates for the priesthood takes place in the substratum: that is, in the non-formal sector, among the candidates themselves. This is especially the locus for auto or self-formation, which is fundamental and indispensable to the overall realization of authentic priestly formation. The didactic nature of human formation makes especial use of the experience of the Church in this regard. That experience is founded on the catechetical principles that are foundational to instruction in the faith.

What is Human Formation?

Formation is from the latin word, *formo-formare*, which means "form, shape, fashion, model"[2] formation, from the Latin noun *formatio*, mean "something possessing structure or form"; "the act of assembling a group or structure."[3] "an act of giving form or shape to something or of taking form: development."[4] In a general sense, human formation refers to the beginnings of man as homo sapiens, that is, when man came to be made or fashioned or evolve. Formation is the entire process in which the human person is moulded, shaped, configured. Human formation has to do with all the entire process, procedures, motivations, that are put to bear in the grooming of a human person. It is concerned with a part of human development that takes the entire human person, body, soul, affective self as the point of departure and point of arrival, with a view to promoting the emergence of right character, vision, attitudes, view on life.

Human formation has to do with the configuration of the human person to a way of life, an ideal, a standard, and well tested patterns; a growth that is gradual, consistent, insistent, practical, effective, based on nature and founded on grace. Human formation is therefore a consistent development and cultivation of authentic human values.

Christian human formation assumes the basics of human formation. Taking these basics as its point of departure, Christian human formation is the configuration of the human person to the Person and life of Christ. Christian human formation therefore has Christ as the

fundamental referent, and therefore does not proceed ab nihilo, that is, from nothing. Human formation makes use of objective referents that, over time, and with constant and consistent positive usage, have attained universal significance and import and have crystallized into objective norms, ethos and practices. Christian human formation is therefore the conformation of the life of each individual Christian to that of Christ.

The Importance of Formation of Priests

The priesthood, in the words of *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 8, [henceforth PDV] [5] is best viewed as a "special witness to the primacy of "being" over "having," and as a recognition that the significance of life consists in a free and responsible giving of oneself to others, a willingness to place oneself entirely at the Service of the Gospel and the kingdom of God…."[6] Furthermore, "the priestly ministry in the life of the Church and in the world knows no substitute."[7] The importance and necessity of priests are also stressed, since "Without priests the Church would not be able to live that fundamental obedience which is at the very heart of her existence and her mission in history, an obedience in response to the command of Christ: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (*Mt*. 28:19) and "Do this in remembrance of me" (*Lk*. 22:19; cf. 1 *Cor*. 11.24), i.e:, an obedience to the command to announce the Gospel and to renew daily the sacrifice of the giving of his body and the shedding of his blood for the life of the world."[8] PDV emphasized that "The priest is a living and transparent image of Christ the priest. The priesthood of Christ, the expression of his absolute "newness" in salvation history, constitutes the one source and essential model of the priesthood shared by all Christians and the priest in particular. Reference to Christ is thus the absolutely necessary key for understanding the reality of priesthood."[9]

The documents we shall examine individuate four areas that are fundamental to formation of the candidates for the priesthood. These four areas are: Human, Intellectual, Spiritual and Pastoral. When any of these is lacking in the formation of any human person, that person becomes defective in his formative character.

The Content of Formation in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*

The overall aim of *Pastores Dabo Vobis* is pastoral: the commitment to the realization of the promise of Christ not to leave His Church without shepherds. It is dedicated to the formulation of principles that would guide the formation of pastoral persons for the mission of Christ and His Church in the world. Formation in the Church and Christian formation is imitation of Christ: Christ formed those He called and gathered around Himself. Christian Formation is therefore nothing but a

continuation of the work of Christ and in imitation of Christ who gathered disciples around Himself, taught them and sent them out to preach and cast out demons (Mk3,13-15)[10]

The context, environment and basis of every human formation is the human society. This is because every person who is called to formation comes from the womb of a human society or community and from particular contexts and circumstances.[11] Formation must have the capacity to confront and provide solutions to the problems, contradictions and potentialities of the society. The situation and condition of man in the world, especially with regards to rationalism, individualism, materialism, secularism, human sexuality and the family, inhuman capitalism, subjectivism, multi-racialism and multi-culturalism, demand that there be a robust and well-articulated formation of the priest for today's world. Formation must lead to the confrontation of values that are detrimental to the gospel and to Christian life. For instance, it should confront modern problems identified as wrong interpretation of human existence; consumerism; subjectivism of the faith; a rejection of sacrifice and religious and spiritual values; a distorted sense of freedom that leads to a rejection of God and religious indifference; a debased and degraded interpretation of sexuality, in which sexuality becomes a turning inward to oneself of this precious gift, which results in exploitation and the reduction of this gift to "a consumer good" and is a caricature of a balanced view of sexuality that should lead to affective maturity and "growth in personality".[12]

Every form of formation of the human Christian person must have the ideals of the Christian life as its goal and aspiration. These ideals are enumerated as true and genuine freedom; the value of the human person; love for authenticity and sincerity; a new understanding of the reciprocal rapport between men and women; a move towards a just and sympathetic world; openness and dialogue; commitment to peace; the resurgence of ideals voluntary service can help youth and young men to follow the path of complete consecration to God as a priest.[13]

The Fundamental Characters and Foundation of Formation of the Christian Person

The formation of the human person, for it to be Christian, must have three indispensable and fundamental characters and foundations: Christocentric and Christological, Trinitarian and Ecclesiological. In terms of its Christocentric and Christological foundation, it must be based on the contemplation of Christ, the high priest, in whose priesthood the ministerial priesthood is a participation. The entire ministerial priesthood is a participation in the life of Christ Himself.[14]

Christian formation of the human person must have a Trinitarian foundation, origin and source. This is more so for the life of the priest: "the priest, by virtue of the consecration which he receives in the sacrament of orders, is sent forth by the Father through the mediatorship of Jesus Christ, to whom he is configured in a special way as head and shepherd of his people, in order to live and work by the power of the Holy Spirit in service of the Church and for the salvation of the world."[15] The missionary and relational dimensions of priestly formation[16], ministry and life are brought out through and in this Trinitarian foundation

Lastly, the Christian formation of the human person must have an Ecclesiological foundation. The church is mystery, communion and mission. [17] The human person is a mystery based on the connection with God who is mystery in Himself. The human person is called to relational communion relationship with others, that is, the communion and sharing of life. The human persons who discover themselves in mystery and communion are the same persons called to express these dimensions in mission, that is, taking the good news out and witnessing to the world.

Human Formation

In its discussion of human formation, the *Ratio Fundamentalis* (henceforth RF) concentrates on four principal and indispensable dimensions: psychological formation which "focuses on the constitution of a stable personality, characterized by emotional balance, self control and a well integrated sexuality";[18] moral formation which entails the formation of a good conscience, that is, the formation of "responsible persons able to make the right decisions, gifted with right judgement and able to have an objective perception of person and events"[19]; aesthetic formation which indicates capacity to relate with the environment and appreciation of beauty and goodness; historical formation which involves the personal history of the persons for formation, their socializations prior to entrance into formation and how this has affected the growth of their personality. Formation is to help them to guard against attachment or preferences of certain persons over and above others; to be inclusive rather than exclusive in their social and relational preferences and choices. Human formation also exposes them to the dynamics of self-formation, that is, a formation of the self that is guided and accompanied by trained formators and experts. In this regard, there must be openness to the formative contributions of women "who, by their witness of their lives, give an example of prayer and pastoral service, a spirit of sacrifice and self-denial, of care and tender closeness to their neighbours"[20]

Human formation is fundamental to and is the first of the dimensions of formation. Everything a human person wants to be is built

upon the human *substratum* or the humanity of that person. Holiness perfects humanity, and does not replace or diminish it. "The whole work of priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation if it lacked a suitable human formation"[21]. The foundation of all human Christian formation is configuration to Christ. Human formation determines Christian and priestly identity. The qualities acquired in human formation are important for candidates to the priesthood if they are to be balanced, strong, free, with the capacity to bear the weight pastoral responsibilities.[22]

Human formation is therefore to be understood as ontological configuration to Christ. The priest is called by God. He is chosen by God for a special mission. His human formation therefore has to be Christic and Christo-centric. His vocation is a gift, and not merited. He therefore has to cooperate with the Giver of the gift for the gift to blossom and arrive at its fullest maturity and realization. As a person called to serve the people, the priest needs to "sharpen his human sensitivity so as to understand more clearly their needs, respond to their demands, perceive their unvoiced questions and share the hopes and expectations, the joys and burdens which are part of life: thus he will be able to meet and enter into dialogue with all people."[23]

The human aspect of formation has to do with the ability of the person in formation to be at home with his humanity, personal history and limitations and rise above all of these limiting and militating situations. The person to be formed has a fundamental role to play in his formation. Consequently, "each seminarian is the protagonist of his own formation … and is called to a journey of ongoing growth in the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral areas, taking into count his own personal and family background. Seminarians are likewise responsible for establishing and maintaining a climate of formation that is consistent with the values of the Gospel"[24].

Formation helps candidates preparing for the priesthood to be "balanced people, strong and free, capable of bearing the weight of pastoral responsibilities, to be educated to love truth, to be loyal, to respect every person, to have a sense of justice, to be true to their word, to have genuine compassion, to be men of integrity and especially to be balanced in judgement and behavior."[25] Human formation is formation in essential good attributes: courage, magnanimity, humility, common sense, discretion, transparency, right judgement, honesty, love of truth[26] Both PDV and RF are agreed that the foundation of formation would be faulty if the human dimension of it is not properly taken care of.[27] Human formation is formation of the humanity of the person, the radical transformation of the core of a human person.

The person to be formed is taken from a human community, has a human personality. In terms of the formation of a priest, the humanity of the priest should be a bridge and not an obstacle.[28]
Consequently, human formation should lead to personal maturity, in their spiritual, emotional, physical, sexual, intellectual, psychological and social dimensions. Human formation must lead to the perfection of the image of Christ in the person being formed and reflect the perfection found in the humanity of Christ, the perfect man. A solid human formation makes the relational, relatedness and interactive dimensions of the human person possible. It leads to the development of solid human qualities.

Human formation should lead to affective maturity, the ability to love and to receive love. This love takes the whole person as its point of departure and forms the candidates in responsible love and the authentic meaning of sexuality, which will also include education to true meaning of friendship and "fraternal affection". Human formation, that leads to human maturity, must also concentrate its creative energy and attention on formation to the responsible use of freedom. This responsible freedom will help the candidates to overcome the problematics of selfishness and individualism and advance the education of the moral conscience.[29]

Human formation should lead to commitment to the truth, respect for others, justice, truth telling, compassion, integrity, balance in judgement, self-control, strength of character, development of a high sense of responsibility.[30] It should also focus on self-determination and responsibility for one's actions, which translates into a balance in relationships. Consequently, the entire life history, the ability of the person to be reconciled to and integrate that personal history, family influences, awareness of personal weakness, are very important for human formation. Human formation of the candidates for the priesthood should also take into cognizance the importance of interpersonal relationship and relationship with the environment[31]; relationship with women; the ability to take responsibility; self-determination; awareness of personal weakness; the care for physical well-being; cultivation of good habits; emotional stability; development of leadership skills; cultivation of interactive skills; capacity for dialogue; openness; respect; affective maturity; understanding of self and others and sympathy; compassion; patience; tolerance; love of the truth; honesty; moral excellence; transparency.

Spiritual Formation

The second important dimension of formation which human formation leads to and in which it finds its completion is spiritual formation. There

is in every human person the religious "character" or dimension: the openness to transcendence and the absolute.[32] Spiritual formation has to do with communion with God, with Christ, submission of life to the Spirit, "in a filial attitude toward the Father and a trustful attachment to the Church. Spiritual formation has its roots in the experience of the cross, which in deep communion leads to the totality of the paschal mystery."[33] Spiritual formation is the core "which gives life" to the being of the priest and to his activities in the world. It should lead to union with the Trinity, drawing close to and living in intimate union and communion with Christ, living out the paschal mystery, seeking Christ through meditation on God's word, participating in the divine mysteries of worship, in filial obedience to the Bishop and in veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary.[34]

Spiritual formation opens candidates to the mystery that the Christian religion is: "the gift, of a personal covenant of love and life between God and human beings."[35] It is communion with Christ, that is expressed in the deepest act of love and friendship with Him. It is search for Jesus which if assiduously carried out, will lead to finding Him, following Him and being in communion with Him.[36] This seeking or search for Jesus would be achieved if three important steps or paths are covered: "a faithful meditation on the word of God, active participation in the Church's holy mysteries and the service of charity to the "little ones.""[37] The fundamental and primal way of responding to the word of God is prayer,[38] which is nothing but that deep intimacy with God, which expresses itself in a total gift of self "to Christ and through Christ to the Father."[39] Formation for prayer will include formation for the appreciation of silence. Formation for Christian commitment to prayer finds its highest expression in the Eucharist, the "'summit and source' of the sacraments and the Liturgy of the Hours."[40] Spiritual formation will also include formation for the liturgy of the Church, the expression and continuation of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. It will include formation and appreciation for the other sacraments, especially penance, the cultivation of the practices of asceticism and self-sacrifice; the understanding of the meaning and centrality of the cross, the heart of the paschal mystery, in the life of every believer and identification with Christ crucified.[41] Spiritual formation will also teach the candidate to seek Christ in people, to offer himself as a gift to others, to be a man of charity and to teach others what the commandment of love truly entails,[42] and to understand the core spiritual values inherent in the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience as the free expression of the total gift of self in imitation of the charity of Christ.[43]

Intellectual Formation

This aspect of formation of the human person has to do with the formation of the mind, and the scientific acquisition of knowledge, which is not intended to be a mere acquisition of knowledge but a knowledge that is directed towards knowing and adhering to God. Intellectual formation is important because of the nature of the ministry to which the candidates will be called to share in, the need for evangelization and the necessity to defend the faith.[44] Being called to collaborate with Christ in the salvation of their brothers and sisters, they have the responsibility "to seek an ever deeper knowledge of the divine mysteries." Owing to the challenges of modernity and post modernity, the formation of candidates must equip them intellectually to have the capacity to proclaim "the changeless Gospel of Christ."[45] This formation needs a stable institution and a formal atmosphere for it to take place. In the formal environment in which the formation of candidates to the priesthood takes place, there is need for a corp of persons who by virtue of their preparation and training, are equipped to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the intellectual formation of the candidates for the priesthood. Intellectual formation must take place in a suitable environment.

Formation candidates must demonstrate commitment to intellectual formation, [46] which must have focus and content. This intellectual formation is carried out through the study of Philosophy and Theology, two disciplines that must be coordinated effectively "so that they supplement one another in revealing to the minds of students with ever increasing clarity the Mystery of Christ, which affects the whole course of human history."[47] This dimension formation must not be simple expression of rarified truths but equally pastoral application of same and concern for the challenges and preoccupations of the times. With a firm intellectual formation, formation candidates are equipped to thoroughly assess the negative teachings and philosophies that are bandied about in the modern world and proffer solution to counteract them, based on the truths of the gospel. Intellectual formation must also focus on the "unity of the educational process in its diverse aspects."[48] Consequently, the "commitment to study, which takes up no small part of the time of those preparing for the priesthood, is not in fact an external and secondary dimension of their human, Christian, spiritual and vocational growth. In reality, through study, especially the study of theology, the future priest assents to the word of God, grows in his spiritual life and prepares himself to fulfill his pastoral ministry."[49] What this implies is that intellectual formation must not be carried out as if it is an end in itself, as pure abstract knowledge that has no bearing with real life, but must be "integrated with a spirituality marked by a personal

experience of God. In this way a purely abstract approach to knowledge is overcome in favor of that intelligence of heart which knows how 'to look beyond,' and then is in a position to communicate the mystery of God to the people."[50]

The study of Philosophy will lead to a "deeper understanding and interpretation of the person, and of the person's freedom and relationship with the world and with God."[51] It will also lead "the students gradually to a solid and consistent knowledge of man, the world and God."[52] It is also vital because of the links that exist between the great themes studied in Philosophy that find expression in theology. Philosophical studies will also help to dethrone "subjectivism as a criterion and measure of truth…"[53] and lead candidates to appreciate the truth that can never be given by man but is a gift from God Himself. The second part of intellectual formation of the candidates is theology, the discourse on God. Theological studies must have the true faith as its point of departure and point of arrival.[54] This faith is one about which questions are asked and answers are given, on the basis of divine revelation, tradition and the living magisterium of the Church, in order to arrive at its deeper understanding. This faith is faith in Jesus Christ, which is expressed and exercised in the Church. Thus, the faith has Christological, Ecclesiological and Ecclesial foundation, implication and dimension. These dimensions should help the candidate to develop a deep love for Christ and His Body, the Church. Intellectual formation must be integrated with spiritual formation and the prayer life, otherwise it regresses into pure abstraction and theological gymnastics and sophistry. The aim of theological formation should be the arrival at "a complete and unified vision of the truths which God has revealed in Jesus Christ and of the Church's experience of faith."[55] It should integrate the scientific study of theology with its pastoral aim and seek the inculturation of revealed truths within the cultural expressions that the Church is called upon to preach the message of salvation.[56]

Pastoral Formation

The last aspect of formation of the human person for the priesthood is Pastoral Formation. Pastoral formation has to do with the configuration of the candidate to become shepherds after the image of Christ, the Good Shepherd. This is stated so well in Optatam Totius that recommends that candidates should be trained for the ministry of the word, of worship and sanctification, of the shepherd. The other three dimensions of formation: human, spiritual, intellectual should be directed to "a specific pastoral end."[57] Pastoral formation should consist of "mature reflection and practical application"[58] and taking cue from Pastoral Theology, must not be seen just as an art, but as "a scientific

reflection on the Church as she is built up daily, by the power of the Spirit, in history; on the Church as the "universal sacrament of salvation, as a living sign and instrument of the salvation wrought by Christ through the word, the sacraments and the service of charity."[59] It must concern itself with the practical application of the principles encountered and acquired during the scientific intellectual formation that the candidate has to undergo. These principles are to be put into practice in the various pastoral trainings, experiences and services that are to be carried out during the formative years. Pastoral formation should lead the candidates to "deeper communion with the pastoral charity of Jesus Christ"[60]

Pastoral formation is therefore "a type of formation meant not only to ensure scientific, pastoral competence and practical skill, but also and especially a way of being in communion with the very sentiments and behavior of Christ the good shepherd: "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5)."[61] Pastoral formation, which is not mere apprenticeship, should "seek really and truly to initiate the candidate into the sensitivity of being a shepherd, in the conscious and mature assumption of his responsibilities, in the interior habit of evaluating problems and establishing priorities and looking for solutions on the basis of honest motivations of faith and according to the theological demands inherent in pastoral work."[62] It should expose the candidates to living out the charity of Christ in terms of the care for the less fortunate, the poor, the sick, the marginalized, the normads, and to various forms of social works, all with the intention of expressing the closeness and the love of Christ to those who are most in need of it. It should teach the candidate to defend the rights and dignity of man, created in the image and likeness of God, wherever such appear to be jeopardized, and inculcate in the candidate the capacity to live out his mission as a service in the community.[63] It should help the candidate to understand and see the Church as mystery (work and presence of the Trinity), communion (community, collaboration, cooperation) and mission (the missionary dimension of the life of the Church).[64]

The Formation for the Priesthood as Paradigmatic of Formation of the Human Person

The four principal areas that are foundational and fundamental to the formation of candidates for the priesthood could also be validly contextualized and utilized as paradigms and directional principles for the formation of any human person in order to arrive at fullest Christian maturity and attain the deployment of their latent potentials and the realization of their possibilities.

Human Formation

The insights gained in the documents studied can be validly proposed for the formation of any human person, and especially of a Christian, in any circumstance. The documents proposed that human formation is the bedrock of all formation. The formation of any person is fundamentally based on human formation. Human formation is the formation of the humanity of the person, the radical transformation of who a person is. This human formation has the ontological configuration to Christ as its principal point of departure and arrival. It involves sensitivity to the needs of others, ability to be at home with one's humanity and rise above personal history and limitations. Human formation has to do with formation to be balanced persons, to love truth, justice, be loyal, respectful, compassionate, to be persons of integrity and be balanced in judgment and behaviour. Human formation will therefore include formation in affective maturity, self-responsibility, self-determination, development of leadership skills, cultivation of interactive skills, moral excellence and transparency. These are foundational principles that should form the bedrock of the formation of human persons for the good of society and humanity in general. Consequently, the insights of the documents are very valid in this regard for the authentic formation of persons.

Spiritual Formation in the Formation of the Human Person

The important insights and guiding principles used in the spiritual formation of candidates for the priesthood are equally of valid importance in the formation of the human person. The documents describe spiritual formation as predisposition to transcendence and the absolute, communion with God and with Jesus Christ, the good shepherd and submission of life to the Holy Spirit,[65] and that it is central to the life of the faithful and "unifies their being and living as Christians, that is, as new creatures in Christ who walk in the Spirit..."[66] It consists in living the life of Christ, living in union and communion with Christ, communion with Christ, search for Jesus, meditation on God's word, participation in the mysteries of worship, and dedication to the service of charity. These ideals of the spiritual formation of candidates for the priesthood are also important in the overall formation of the human person in terms of cultivation of the ideals of self-sacrificial love, love of the cross, dedication and commitment to the paschal mystery, participation in the liturgy of the Church, living out ascetical practices that help in the promotion of the life of man in the world. The insights in these documents clarify the fact that man's push towards transcendence can be validly assisted through authentic formation in spiritual values that are cognate to his nature.

Intellectual formation

The documents studied emphasized the formation of the mind and the indispensability of the scientific acquisition of knowledge, which should, however, not be for the sake of mere acquisition but a knowledge that is God-centred and directed towards knowledge of God and the good of others. The formation of the mind is important in today's world. This need is especially seen in the propagation of the culture of death, moral relativism, flight from commitments; consumerism; hedonism and pleasure seeking. Intellectual formation will equip the human person to make differential judgment and determine in a personal, informed way, the course of action to take. We are aware and are living witnesses today to the power and influence of the modern means of communication in the shaping of behaviour and conduct. A well-integrated, well informed, balanced and systematic presentation of truths within the programme of intellectual formation, will help every human person to make the right decisions about the course of actions to pursue.

Pastoral Formation

Every human person, to arrive at full maturity, needs the important insights on the formation of the pastoral person as enunciated in the documents and teachings of the Church. The person and character of the Church through history, the lessons the Church has learnt, will be of invaluable aid in the pursuit of such a pastoral endeavour. Pastoral formation principles could be used in the development of certain values in the human person: the charity of Christ in the care for others; commitment to social work; work for the promotion of human dignity with Christian principles; living out one's Christian mission as a form of service that benefits other people; recognition of one's identity and that of others; capacity for communion, collaboration, cooperation, co-responsibility; understanding; trust and love for the Church. The principles of pastoral formation could also be validly deployed in the search and actualization of the different vocations, for instance, "marriage, social services, apostolate, ministries and other responsibilities in pastoral activity, the consecrated life, involvement in political and social leadership, scientific research, teaching."[67] The fruits of Pastoral formation will be valuable in teaching the lay faithful "in their vocation to be present in and to transform the world with the light of the Gospel, by recognizing this task of their and showing respect for it."[68] The principles of pastoral formation of the candidates for the priesthood are equally important in the area of the missionary content of the life of every baptized and of every human person. Every human person should live with the self-recognition that life has a mission. In the context of the Christian person, that mission is Christ Himself, the way and the truth

and the life. That mission of Christ is prolonged and carried on in the activities of the Church, called upon to continue and carry on the mission of the Saviour until the end of time. That mission includes living out and proclaiming the gospel of Christ in the events of life and even sometimes as lay missionaries, witnessing to the truths of the gospel, in cooperation and collaboration with the ministerial priests.

Conclusion

The four formative principles, pillars or dimensions: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral, formulated and stated in conciliar and post-conciliar documents on the formation of the candidates for the sacred priesthood, especially *Optatam Totius, Pastores Dabo Vobis and the New Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* and used for the training of candidates in preparation for the assumption of responsibilities as Catholic priests, are valid instruments that could also be used for the formation of any human person. The underlying strength of these time-tested formative principles lies in the fact that they would ensure, in a wholistic way, the configuration of the human person, to the Person of Christ, the perfect Model of formation. The reasonability of these principles reveals the Church as that great teacher that strives to make disciples for Christ, since everyone who encounters the Church, cannot but be formed after the image of Christ, the Bridegroom of the Church. However, as consistently maintained in this paper, the wholistic formation of the human person gives absolute premium to the humanity of the human person who is called to witness to Jesus Christ. The humanity of every individual sets the fulcrum or pivot around which the other dimensions turn. Thus, a faulty human formation cannot produce a formed individual in the wholistic sense. The dependability of the other dimensions of formation on human formation is clearly cut. The point of divergence between the dimensions of the formative processes under the jurisdictions of human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral indicates the various cardinal aspects of the human person; the point of convergence is largely the integration of these aspects of the human person, to be formed in the image of Christ, thus, becoming another Christ in the society. These formative principles, though insufficient in themselves, when taken together, become sufficient in building up the candidates for the sacred priesthood and the human person called to live out their mission in the society. Hence, there must a successful synergizing of the results of the various dimensions of formation to attain holistic formation of the human person.

Endnotes

[1] The word *paradigma* is originally a Greek (and later Latin) word. Etymologically, the word paradigma is from two Greek words, 'para' meaning 'beside' and 'deiknynai' meaning 'to display or show'" and these two words "were combined to form 'paradeiknyai', which possessed the literal meaning 'to display side by side'". The word "was used to refer to 'a model or pattern'," ["Paradigm" in https://www.macmillandictionaryblog.com/paradigm, accessed 08.03.21, 08.45 am]. It could also mean a method, a well-tested and proven to be reliable form that could be replicated. Paradigm is thus "a standard, perspective, or set of ideas" ["Paradigm" in https://www.google.com/search?client=opera&q=paradigma&sourceid=opera&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8, accessed 08.03.21, 09.16 am.] Paradigmatic is the adjectival form of *paradigma* and it means "serving as a typical example of something" and "of or denoting the relationship between a set of linguistic items that form mutually exclusive choices in particular syntactic roles." It is also "a fancy word for describing something that is an ideal or standard. ... You'll come across it if you study the subject of linguistics, where "paradigmatic analysis" is one way of analyzing a text, by examining patterns within it." "Paradigmatic" in https://www.google.com/search?client=opera&hs=V8Y&ei=a9pFYLWOLbHO1fAPklmnyA8&q=paradigmatic+meaning&oq=paradigmatic&gs_lcp=Cgdnd3Mtd2l6EAEYATIKCAAQkQIQRhD5ATIFCAAQkQIyAggAMgIIADICCAAyAggAMgIIADICCAAyAggAMgIIADoHCAAQRxCwA1DmhQNYqooDYJDVA2gBcAJ4AYABwwOIAdMIkgEJMC4xLjIuMC4xmAEAoAEBqgEHZ3dzLXdpesgBCMABAQ&sclient=gws-wiz, accessed 08.03.21, 9.34 a.m

[2] "Latin definition for: *formo*, *formare*, *formavi*, *formatus*" in https://latindictionary.net/definition/20903/formo-formare-formavi-formatus, accessed 20.02.2020, 18.31 p.m

[3] "Formation", in https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/formation, accessed 20.02.2020, 18.39

[4]"Definition of formation", in https://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/formation, accessed 20.02.2020, 18.15pm

[5] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* is the post synodal Apostolic Exhortation written by Pope John Paul II at the conclusion of the Eighth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, from 30 September to 28 October, 1990, dedicated to "The Formation of Priests in Circumstances of the Present Day. This post synodal apostolic exhortation has as its focus the formation of priests for the modern age and time. Formation must know the present situation of the world full of ambivalence and contradictions, difficulties and potentialities, and have genuine courage to discern, interpret and find solutions to it [Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 10] Formation of persons for the priesthood must therefore have gospel discernment at its heart: the ability to discern and interpret the situation of the world in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that is, in the light of Christ Himself [cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 10]

[6] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 8

[7] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 10

[8] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 1
[9] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 12
[10] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 2
[11] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 5
[12] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 8
[13] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 9
[14] Cf. Pastores Dabo Vobis 11H
[15] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 12
[16] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 12
[17] "As a mystery, the Church is essentially related to Jesus Christ. She is his fullness, his body, his spouse. She is the "sign" and living "memorial" of his permanent presence and activity in our midst and on our behalf. The priest finds the full truth of his identity in being a derivation, a specific participation in and continuation of Christ himself, the one high priest of the new and eternal covenant." Pastores Dabo Vobis 12
[18]Congregation for the Clergy, *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation- Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis,* Liberia Editrice Vaticana, Vatican (2016), n. 94
[19] Ibid. n. 94
[20] Ibid. n. 95
[21] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 43
[22] *Optatam Totius* 11
[23] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* n. 72
[24] *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis,* 130
[25] *OptatamTotius* 11
[26] *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis,* no: 93.
[27] *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* no: 43.
[28] *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* no: 43.
[29] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 44
[30] Cf. *Optatam Totius,* no: 11.
[31] Cf. *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis,* no: 94.
[32] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 45
[33] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 45
[34] Cf. *Optatam Totius* 8
[35] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 46
[36] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 46
[37] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 46
[38] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 47
[39] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 47
[40] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 48
[41] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 48
[42] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 49
[43] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 50
[44] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 51
[45] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 51

[46] Congregation for the Clergy, *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, n.141
[47] The Second Vatican Council, *Optatam Totius* 14.
[48] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 51
[49] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 51
[50] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 51
[51] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 52
[52] *Optatam Totius* 15
[53] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 52
[54] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 53
[55] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 54
[56] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 55
[57] *Optatam Totius* 4; Cf. *Pastores Dabo* Vobis 57
[58] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 57
[59] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 57
[60] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 57
[61] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 57
[62] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 58
[63] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 58
[64] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 59
[65] Cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 45
[66] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 45
[67] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 59
[68] *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 59

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THE DIALECTICS OF "AUTO-GUIDED" FORMATION: THE SEMINARIAN AS AN AGENT OF FORMATION

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Abstract
Formation is an intricate phenomenon involving the interaction of the different agents of formation. At the centre of this interaction is the formandi/seminarian who is, himself, an agent of his own formation. The input of the formandi is fundamental to the overall output of the formative process since the output of the formative process is a synthesis of the inputs of all the different agents of formation. Understood in this sense, formation is a dialectics. The formandi, being the central focus of formation, and at the same time an agent of his own formation, his response and/or disposition to formation either compliments or negates the inputs of the other agents of formation. Therefore, the formandi can single-handedly make or mar the formative process. The dialectical dynamics of formation is not just between the other agents of formation and the formandi (external), it also internal, as the formandi struggles to resolve his personal ideas with the quadruple requirements of priestly formation. This paper adopts the method of critical analysis to evaluate the dialectics of auto-guided formation, it investigates how the formandi interacts with the agents of formation towards achieving the character of another Christ, and concludes that the extent to which the formandi is properly formed depends on the extent to which he positively disposes himself to formation. The aim of the paper is to encourage the formandi to dispose himself appropriately towards formation and get the maximum output from his programme of formation.

Keywords: Agent of formation, Auto-guided, Dialectics, Formandi, Formation.

Introduction

Priestly formation is meant to equip a candidate aspiring towards the Catholic priesthood through a continuing conversion of heart, mind and soul that would enable him carry on an effective ministry in serving God and the people. It is a demanding and intensive programme of human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation that requires the interaction of different agents of formation, viz: the formators, the fomandi, the environment and the curriculum of formation. These agents interact continually to shape the fomandi into the character of a priest as an *Alter Christus*; one who acts *in persona Christi capitis* and *in nomine ecclesia*. The central focus in the formation process is the candidate who is undergoing formation – the seminarian or formandi. His disposition towards formation, which involves his docility or indocility, is key to how he is formed because formation is a "give and take" phenomenon. When the given is not taken, there would be no formation and the way and manner the given is taken determines the extent to which the formandi is formed. Herein lies the dialectics of auto-guided formation.

The present paper relies on existing literature on the subject and adopts the critical analytic, conceptual and hermeneutic approach to examine the dialectics of auto-guided formation. That is, how the formandi interacts with the agents and factors of formation, which includes himself, towards achieving the character of another Christ. The paper elucidates the idea of priestly formation as a basis to examine the concept of auto-guided formation. It carefully but critically interrogates the role of the formandi in his self-formation. Based on the analysis herein, it concludes that whether a formandi is appropriately formed or not depends on how his docility. The primary aim of the paper is to encourage the seminarian to positively dispose himself towards formation and get the optimal from his programme of formation.

Priestly Formation

Even though priestly formation is not the primary focus of this paper, it is nonetheless, important to expound the concept of priestly formation because the concept of auto-guided formation, which is the primary focus of this paper, takes its meaning and *modus operandi* within that of priestly formation. Priestly formation is a very important and demanding task aimed at developing the priestly character. It is a holistic, integral, and inclusive process that involves the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral development of the candidate in formation.[1] It requires the seminarian to open up for a personal encounter with the Lord and be

transformed by the Lord.[2] The new *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacedotalis* (*RFIS*) n. 35 describes it as a process that implies the configuration of the seminarian to Christ, who is the head, the shepherd, the servant and the spouse; bringing the seminarian into a mystical identification with the person of Christ as described in the gospels. According to Carlos Wong, Archbishop Emeritus of Papantla and Secretary for Seminaries, Congregation for the Clergy, it is "the process of internalisation, in the proper sense, a priestly lifestyle, which aims to ingrain the values that are proper to life and to priestly ministry in the personality of the candidates for the priesthood."[3] Paraphrasing *Evangelica Testificatio* n. 32, Bishop Donatus Ogun of the Diocese of Uromi, describes formation as "the honest confrontation with the self of the way of life of Jesus Christ, His teaching and example. It is about building up of the inner man, it is the care you have for the inner man which will help you to recognise, in the midst of so many different and attractive possibilities, the most suitable way to live your vocation."[4]

The Second Vatican Council's (VC II) Decree on Priestly Formation: *Optatam Totius* (OT), clearly identified the basic principles of priestly formation, and the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (PDV) by Pope St. John Paul II provides a blue print for priestly formation in the circumstances of a fast-paced digital world.[5] A simple summary of PDV, in the words of John Anaigwu would be: priests need to be "balanced people, strong and free, capable of bearing the weight of pastoral responsibilities."[6] Specifically, PDV n. 43 states that,

They [seminarians] need to be educated to love the truth, to be loyal, to respect every person, to have a sense of justice, to be true to their word, to be genuinely compassionate, to be men of integrity and, especially, to be balanced in judgement and behaviour.

PDV nos. 43 – 45 identify the human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral aspects as the four basic components of priestly formation. And further emphasised that the human formation is the basis of all priestly formation because it is the human person that becomes the priest. The spiritual formation is the centre that holds and provides life to the being of the priest and his function as a priest. Intellectual formation, which is apparently the most visible, transcends the acquisition of degrees in Philosophy and Theology to include educating the priest to be "knowledgeable in all human sciences and even the history and culture of the nations within which they are expected to minister."[7] Such a holistic education recognises the positive development of the IQ and aptitude of the seminarian and equip him to respond appropriately to enquiries from the faithful who seek guidance and counsel to resolve their faith and moral crisis in the face of new scientific and technological

discoveries that tend always to remove God from the picture.[8] According to OT n. 4, the trifold of human, spiritual, and intellectual formation aims at making the priest a pastor. One who is a true shepherd of souls after the example of Jesus Christ; trained in the ministries of the word, worship and sanctification, and shepherding just like Christ who did not come to be served but to serve (Mt. 10:45 and Jn. 13: 12-17) and win souls by becoming servants of all (1 Cor. 9:19). The pastoral formation has both the theoretical and practical aspects. The former is acquired in the classroom in the seminary, and the latter is acquired on the field (dioceses) during apostolic work and pastoral year. The apostolic work and pastoral year periods provide the opportunity for seminarians to learn the praxis of the ministry through exposure to parish life and setting. Needless to say, as Anaigwu impressively analysed, that the practical aspect of pastoral formation seems to be riddled with abuses these days judging from the way it is handled by priests in the dioceses. It has been misconstrued as a time for probing the seminarian, getting a wage-free houseboy, and at times, considered an unnecessary burden on the priest or parish.[9]

Priestly formation takes place essentially in a seminary, therefore, it can also be described as seminary formation. It differs from the regular secular education, schooling or job training, hence it is not called seminary education but seminary formation. "It is an activity of cooperation with the grace of God where by God Himself works in the man to form him into Christian man and sharer in the Priesthood of Jesus Christ."[10] In the seminary, the formation of the seminarian is integrated with the wider ecclesia understanding of the Church. Thus, Bishop Ogun says, "it is in the discovery of who the church says He [Christ] is you [the seminarian] are then able to meet him and say 'here I am, send me.' This is the purpose of Catholic formation in our seminaries."[11] Based on the foregoing, it behoves on the seminarian to open-up and entrust himself to the Church in his formation while he recognises the fact that he is primarily responsible for his own formation.[12] This last point introduces the core of this paper; the seminarian as an agent of formation, which is to be properly understood within the notion of auto-guided formation.

Auto-Guided Formation

The concept of "auto-guided" is compounded from the dual concepts of "auto" with the prefix (auto-) and "guide." The former (auto-), from its Greek root translates as "self" and often used in the formation of compound words like autograph, autobiography, automatic, etc. The latter (guide), as a verb means to indicate the way, and as a noun, it describes someone who shows the way to others. Literarily therefore,

"auto-guided" would be self-guidance or to guide oneself, which implies that the seminarian guides himself in his formation. The way it has been applied in seminary formation since its evolution a little over two decades ago, implies more than just self-guidance or to guide oneself. It means that the seminarian forms himself following the guidance of others. These others are his formators and the other agents of formation.

The Holy Spirit is principally the agent of formation and all other agents of formation are mediators through whom the Holy Spirit forms the seminarian. The other agents of formation include the following: (i) The Bishop, who is ultimately responsible for the entire formative process. (ii) The diocesan community and the presbyterate, which constitute the privileged environment for the transmission of priestly values. (iii) The educational community of the seminary, which consists of the formators, lecturers and employees. (iv) Diocesan priests who play a vital role in the interactions with the seminarians during the latter's apostolic work and pastoral year experience. Even though it is not usually stressed, the laity and women play special roles in the seminarian's discernment of his priestly vocation, so they are also agents of formation. These human agents of formation should help the seminarian to open himself up personally and profoundly to the sanctifying action of the Spirit by helping the seminarian to take his formation seriously and assist in sustaining him to make his 'Yes' response to the Lord every day.[13]

The role of the formators and lecturers in the seminary as agents of formation within the context of auto-guided formation is ineliminable. Therefore, it is important to emphasise it, even if just briefly. They constitute the "guidance" aspect in the process of formation, for by their way of life, instructions, and lectures, they guide the seminarian. In this wise, the seminary must be adequately staffed. To be adequately staffed does not just mean quantity in terms of the number of priests on the formation team or lecturers in the various departments. Neither does it just mean academically intelligent formators and lecturers. It means having qualitative formators and lecturers. Qualitative here describes priests who in the honest judgement of their Bishops are tested and trusted; "priests whom their Bishops can vouch for in terms of commitment to responsibilities, sound doctrine, spiritual, moral and social maturity, priestly decorum, intellectual soundness, economic and financial discipline, with ecclesiastical personality."[14] The same applies at its own degree to the lecturers employed to teach the seminarians. They must be of good moral standing and ideas, matured and disciplined in their choice of expressions, dress code, and should have respect for the Church's teachings and hierarchy, as well as be able to keep their

personal opinions to themselves when they deliver their lectures. Inappropriate guidance would lead the seminarian to malformation.

All said, the seminarian is the first person responsible for his own formation. PDV n. 69 asserts that, "we must not forget that the candidate himself is a necessary and irreplaceable agent in his own formation: All formation, priestly formation included, is ultimately a self-formation. No one can replace us in the responsible freedom we have as individual persons." In the same wise, the new RFIS n. 130 emphasises that:
Each seminarian is the protagonist of his own formation, …and is called to a journey of ongoing growth in the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral areas, taking into account his own personal and family background. Seminarians are likewise responsible for establishing and maintaining a climate of formation that is consistent with the values of the gospels.

In the above statement, the new RFIS directs attention to the formative attitude of the seminarian, which is the personal input or self-guidance inclusive in the notion of auto-guided formation. The personal input of the seminarian requires that he must be "available and docile to learn from the various circumstances of his life, in all the dimensions of his personality."[15] The concepts of "availability" and "docility" are imperative here. A seminarian who lacks availability just goes to the chapel, the class, the play field, the refectory and the library because he should be there according to the horarium but does not personally and actively participate in what goes on at these places. Consequently, he just goes through the activities without the activities going though him. In other words, even though the seminarian is guided, he refuses to apply himself to guidance – he has been given formation by the design of the horarium but he has not taken formation. It is one thing to be guided and another thing to apply oneself to guidance. A seminarian's unavailability implies his lack of formation because he refuses, *ipso facto*, to be formed.

Availability and docility are complementary. To be docile is to open oneself to learn. A seminarian who goes to class with his mind already closed to whatever the lecturer would say cannot learn. Such a seminarian sits in positions where he cannot be noticed, stares at the lecturer all through the lecture with the grimace that may be translated into "finish and leave joor," he takes no notes in class, asks no questions and avoids been noticed to be asked a question. Sometimes, he is reading through some other materials of interest to him that have no relevance to the lecture going on. Such a seminarian is not docile and he is lacking in the aspect of self-formation. Even when the aspect of the guidance is there, the seminarian would be malformed.

The availability and docility of the seminarian enables him to achieve the fundamental openness required to advance the necessary freedom to allow oneself to be accompanied and to receive positively the help of his formators. Seminarians that are selective of the formator they want to listen to are doing harm to their self-formation. In the same vein, formators that play to the gallery with seminarians; who would overlook formative issues because they do not want to disturb the seminarians or make them think they (formators) are "wicked" (to use the common term of seminarians), are not only obstructing the self-formation of the seminarians but also neglecting their role in the dialectics of auto-guided formation.

Dialectics of Auto-Guided Formation

Dialectics refers to "a method of philosophical argument that involves some sort of contradictory process between opposing sides."[16] It is a form of reasoning that involves a dialogue of arguments and counter-arguments that results in a synthesis of advocating propositions and counter-propositions. It is an inquiry into the truth of opinions with the aim of seeking a resolution or reconciliation. As a philosophical method, it is a discourse between two or more discussants who hold different opinions, but aim at establishing the truth of their positions through reasoned arguments. Within Hegelianism – Georg W. F. Hegel's system of thought, with which dialectics is mostly associated – dialectics has a specialised connotation; it describes the contradiction between ideas that ultimately determines the relationship between the ideas. It consists of three stages of development. The first stage is the thesis or statement of an idea, it gives rise to the second stage, which is a reaction or antithesis. The antithesis negates the thesis. To resolve the negation of the thesis by the antithesis, the third stage, which is the synthesis is produced, thus, the synthesis resolves the differences between the thesis and the antitheses. It is in this sense that dialectics is understood as "the tendency of a notion to pass over into its own negation as the result of conflict between its inherent contradictory aspects."[17] This is exactly the sense in which Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels popularised it in their social and economic analysis referred to as dialectical materialism. It is characterised by the interaction between the thesis and antithesis in the production of the synthesis.

By the dialectics of auto-guided formation therefore, I mean the interaction between the formation-given, which constitute the thesis of the dialectics, and the formation-received, which is the antithesis, in the production of the formed – that is, the output of the resolution between the thesis and antithesis – is the synthesis. The formation-given is the input of all the agents of formation, moderated by the formators, in the

formation of the formandi. The formation-received is the way and manner the formandi receives the inputs of all the other agents of formation. In particular, it describes the formandi's positive or negative disposition (availability and docility) towards formation. The formed is what the formandi turns out to be at the end of his formation. The thesis alone (formation given) cannot constitute the synthesis; the way and manner it is received, which is either favourably or nonchalantly or rejected (antithesis) determines the end-product of the formed, which would be either properly formed, malformed or not formed at all (synthesis).

In the dialectics of auto-guided formation, the seminarian's role as an agent of his own formation is crucial to how he is formed. If the seminarian is positively disposed, he will be open to the inputs of the other agents of formation and he would allow himself be guided by such inputs. He would mould himself; intellectually, spiritually, pastorally and humanly, into the character and person of Christ, following the template of the formation-given. With determination and commitment to be properly formed, he would courageously confront the negativities that constitute antithesis to the formation-given. These negativities include: not wanting to be told what to do, wanting to be like other young men outside the seminary, wanting to sleep a little longer in the early hours of the morning rather than having to get up for morning prayers, questioning the rationale for manual work and the necessities for the mandatory lectures, dress code, etc. On the hand, the seminarian that is not positively disposed, would not only lack the determination and commitment required to confront these negativities, but would rationalise and justify them. Consequently, he would react, in one way or another, against the inputs of the other agents of formation. Even though formation is given, the seminarian would be malformed because of his negative disposition and lack of openness to accept the inputs of the other agents of formation. Because he disagrees within himself with the manner of formation, he would not be properly formed.

It is germane at this point to consider some of the possible attitudes towards formation by seminarians. There are, at least, four easily discernible possible attitudes that a seminarian can have towards formation.

i. Lack of interest towards formation.
ii. Pretentious interest towards formation.
iii. Uncommitted interest towards formation.
iv. Genuine interest towards formation.

For those in group one, there is nothing about the seminary that interests them; they grudgingly do everything, from going to the chapel for prayers to going out for games. They are interested in such things

that give them pleasure or make them free, for example, outing and lecture free days. Whatever the formators say does not make sense to them, they just stare at the formators and say "Thank you Fr" when the formator is done talking to them. Deep in their heart, they mean "Leave me alone." Their minds are made on what they want to do and how they want to be priests, they are in the seminary to count the years as they roll by and get out there for ordination. From the day they finish their oral B.Th. exams, chapel is a no-no for them. They go around with an air of freedom thereafter. Seminarians like these cannot be properly formed because they lack the basic fundamental disposition of availability and docility.

For group two, they are of the same category in terms of disposition as those in group one but sneaky and more dangerous. They are very good seminarians in the presence of their formators and anyone who matters as far as their seminary formation is concerned. When no one is looking they do everything they should not do but which is actually what they desire to do. They can have a very strong negative influence on their fellow seminarians, which makes them dangerous. They are like the biblical wolves in sheep's clothing.

The third group have the genuine interest in being formed, but on their own terms. They listen and participate in formation activities and programmes as it is convenient for them. When it is not convenient for them, they participate all the same but without any attention at all just to be counted as present. Seminarians in this category have a fair idea what the priesthood should be, but more often than not, their idea is orientated towards their "ideal priest" who is usually not Jesus Christ as it should be but one priest somewhere that they admire so much, for whatever reasons. If their ideal priest is one of those striving to do the right thing, those in this category have chances of being well formed, but if he is one of those doing his own thing in the priesthood, they are not likely to be well formed.

The fourth group involves seminarians who are wholeheartedly positively disposed towards formation. They actively participate in formation activities and programmes with the genuine intention of getting the maximum results in terms of acquiring knowledge and the priestly character after the mind of Christ and the Church. They are attentive in class and eager to learn. They do not hide in the crowd because they have no intention to break the rules and regulations of formation. They feel free with their formators and share their worries with the hope of being assisted to overcome their difficulties. Those in this category are, unfortunately not many.

Those in groups one to three would hardly ever see themselves to be wrong, they always consider themselves victimised and would

always justify themselves. If they are accused of any wrong doing, especially those in groups one and two, they are quick to tender and apology – "I am sorry Fr", what they are sorry for, you do not even know because they have not accepted that they were wrong. It is usually an indication of seminarians who are not ready to learn or improve. If for any reason, they are expelled from the seminary, they consider themselves as victims of injustice. Those in group four are, at times unfortunate to be expelled but even then, they never hold grudges against the seminary or any of their formators.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper is to analyse the dialectics of auto-guided formation and emphasise the fundamental role of the formandi/seminarian as an agent in his own formation. No matter the formation given and the wholesome role of all other agents of formation, the seminarian is only formed to what extent he makes himself available for formation. Where he lacks the requisite docility towards learning and polishing his character to conform or configure himself to the person of Christ, the activities of the other agents of formation will have no positive impact in his formation. Aniagwu avers that we should always note the contradistinction between "formation given" and "formation received." He asserts that it is not always the case that the formation received corresponds to the formation given and the reason for this lies in the quality of the response of the seminarian to formation.[18] I am not unaware of the claim by some liberalists that we are in an age where youths have a high tendency towards unrestrained freedom and would want to do what they want, when they want and how they want. Based on the excessively permissive nature of today's society, they argue that seminarians should be allowed some latitude. I am not taking a position on this in this paper, however, I insist that allowing seminarians latitude or not is not a primary issue, what is primary is the disposition of the seminarian towards formation. Irrespective of societal and environmental influences, a seminarian that does not make himself available with the required docility for formation would not be properly formed. Therefore, the seminarian should evaluate how he forms himself under the guidance of the other agents of formation. The measure a seminarian puts into his own formation determines the effectiveness of the measure his formators and other agents of formation put into his (seminarian) formation. *PDV* n. 69 affirms this with the words, "the actions of the different teachers become truly and fully effective only if the future priest offers his own convinced and heartfelt cooperation to this work of formation."

Endnotes

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FORMATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD: FORMING THE FORMATORS

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Abstract
There have rightly been so much emphasis on formation to the priesthood Whenever a priest performs his pastoral duties properly, the formators in the seminary are applauded. But when a priest fails in his pastoral ministry, formators in the seminary are queried for why they did not identify the flaw in the process of formation. Formators of candidates to the priesthood are very instrumental to healthiness of the faith of the people. How is it possible that a seminarian who was always faithful to the Church's teaching in the seminary suddenly becomes a priest who is almost like a "soothsayer" in the name of prophecy? How is it possible that this priest no longer sees the needs to observe the liturgical rubrics? From 'alter Christus' to an ecclesiastical entertainer. How is it possible that the priest trained to form others in the faith is almost becoming an instrument of deformation of the faith others. This is precisely why our paper wants to examine the formation of those responsible for the formation of these candidates. If the formators must discern and help in the conscience formation of the candidates to the priesthood, the formators also must be engaged in on-going formation to keep abreast with the new challenges facing priests in pastoral ministry. What are some of the areas of on-going formation that may be helpful to formators to enhance their efficiency? This research will draw insights from magisterial documents and psychological findings on the need to form the formators. Failure to form the formators leads to deformation of the candidates for the priesthood.

Keywords: Formation, Formator, Priesthood

Introduction

Every profession requires ongoing formation in order to acquire knowledge and expertise that will make the persons more efficient in their various disciplines. It is even more important in the disciplines that have to do with human formation. The vocation to the Sacred Priesthood in the Catholic Church requires lengthen years of human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral formation. In all these areas of formation, the human formation is considered the bedrock upon which all other aspects of formations are to be built upon.

The Church holds that she has the exclusive right and duty to form those who are designated for the sacred ministries.[1] Every diocese is to have a Major Seminary and where it is not possible an inter-diocesan seminary is to be established. The establishment of inter-diocesan seminary requires the approval of the Episcopal Conference and the approval of the Holy See.[2] Since the formation of priests is intrinsically connected to the proclamation of the Gospel of the Lord, the Church claims the innate right to establish program for the formation of the candidates for the priesthood. Each nation is expected to established its own program of formation but it must follow the template provided in the *RATIO FUNDAMENTALIS* of the Holy See.[3]

Anyone involved in the formation of candidates to the priesthood must be familiar with all four areas of formation. The person must have the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to assist the students to develop the necessary virtues and to drop the unhealthy incompatible vices with the ministerial priesthood.[4] The changes in the method of the proclamation of the Gospel, the introduction of revised rituals for the sacraments and sacramentals, the evolution of the pastoral needs of the people of God, and the contemporary doctrinal challenges are just some of the few areas that require ongoing formation for the formators. Formators who are not familiar with the sociological changes and the "new mindsets" of the people of God towards reception of the proclamation of the Gospel will not be very effective in the art of formation.

Objective of the Paper

This paper will therefore, attempt to show that it is as important to train the formators as much as it is important to train the candidates for the sacred priesthood. The possible areas of ongoing formation of formators will be examined. The entire presupposition of this research is anchored on the fact that there is no fullness of knowledge in any human creature. Growth in knowledge is continuous until death. The Gospel of Luke 2.52 says Jesus grew in wisdom and stature. If Christ who is divine can because of his human nature be subjected to growth in wisdom, all those

who are incorporated into Christ by baptism also have the obligation to seek ways to grow in wisdom and knowledge. For those who train candidates for the sacred priesthood, the ways to grow in wisdom and knowledge is through formation of the formator. Let us now briefly examine some possible obstacles to ongoing formation of formators.

Forming the Formator

It is important to always keep in mind that every human being requires ongoing formation. This ongoing formation comes in two ways. First, it comes through practical knowledge acquired from years of experience. The second way is through a formal or an organised program for the formator. The two should normally co-exist. The law established that all Christ faithful do have the obligation to ensure that the message of salvation is spread to every part of the world.[5] The direct implication of this is the fact that the Church must provide the means and the opportunity for the message of salvation to reach the entire world. Priests do have important functions in the fulfilment of this obligation of Christ entrusted to the Church. This is the context in which we must understand the great importance of the process of forming those who provide the leadership in the field of evangelization. Those responsible for the formation of priests take up a very important tasks that is at the heart of the mission of the Church. Making provision for the ongoing formation of seminary formators should therefore be rightly seen as ecclesiastical obligation that flows from the mandate of Christ to the Church to go into the world and make disciples.

In a recent Symposium on the Gift of Priestly Vocation for Formators in English speaking Canadian Seminaries, The Archbishop Secretary of Seminaries for the Congregation for Clergy underscored the need for formators to be engaged in ongoing formation.[6] He noted that formation involves gradual and progressive stages as outlined in the *Ratio Fundamentalis*. This gradual and progressive formation requires formators to be well prepared to assist the candidates.[7] In the same Symposium, Carlos presented a paper on how formators are to accompany and help seminarians discern their vocation.[8] In this paper, Carlos writes: "**The high quality formation of formators** (with ongoing formation and of all priests, makes possible the integral formation of seminarians). (Initial formation) who are in the initial stages of their journey and gives it a sure footing."[9] The integral formation of seminarians will depend upon the quality of the formators. The quality of the formators improves based on-going formation. Carlos explained thus: "The degree of growth achieved by the formator is what allows him to help the young seminarians in their own growth process."[10] Any seminary that has no program for on-going formation of the formators is doing a great

disservice to the Church because of the quality of priests that will come out of the seminary.

Two specific areas that formators must focus ongoing formation are accompaniment and discernment. In the area of accompaniment, the formator must improve on establishing a true bond with God by listening to his Word. The formator must also have a systematic bond with the one who accompanies us in God's name.[11] Engaging in programs that enhances the listening capacity of the formator will help to make the formator more efficient in his work.

Priestly Formation

There have been several magisterial documents on priestly formation.[12] Our research will only deal with a few that we consider relevant to the area of our study. Priestly formation in this research refers to the preparation of candidates for the priesthood. Although, such preparation requires multiple intervention from the family to the parish, to the lay apostolate group the person may belong to, to the diocesan program of formation through pastoral work or other forms of formation, our research will however, be primarily based upon the seminary aspects of formation. It will be concerned about the four areas of priestly formation and how specifically formators are trained to be competent to help candidates in these areas of formation. Therefore, in dealing with priestly formation our attention will not such much be on the candidates for formation but on forming the formators.

The Second Vatican Council

On 28 October 1965 Pope Paul VI published the Decree *Optatam Totius,* on Priestly Formation. The Decree stated that program of priestly training should be set up by Episcopal Conferences but always keeping in mind the Universal Law on priestly training.[13] The Major Seminaries are the places where candidates to the priesthood are trained to be shepherds of souls after the model of Christ the Chief Shepherd. All the forms of the training in the seminary are to be ordered towards the pastoral end.[14] The intellectual and spiritual training are for pastoral effectiveness. In order to be successful in the formation of candidates, seminary formators are to be obedient to their bishops.[15]

Given the high primum place on the formation of candidates to the sacred priesthood, the Fathers of the Council stated:

> Since the training of students depends both on wise laws and, most of all, on qualified educators, the administrators and teachers of seminaries are to be selected from the best men, and are to be carefully prepared in sound doctrine, suitable pastoral experience

> and special spiritual and pedagogical training. Institutes, therefore, should be set up to attain this end. Or at least courses are to be arranged with a proper program, and the meetings of seminary directors are to take place at specified times.

Administrators, however, and teachers must be keenly aware of how much the success of the students' formation depends on their manner of thinking and acting. Under the rector's leadership they are to form a very closely knit community both in spirit and in activity and they are to constitute among themselves and with the students that kind of family that will answer to the Lord's prayer "That they be one" (cf. John 17:11) and that will develop in the students a deep joy in their own vocation. The bishop, on the other hand, should, with a constant and loving solicitude, encourage those who labor in the seminary and prove himself a true father in Christ to the students themselves. Finally, all priests are to look on the seminary as the heart of the diocese and are to offer willingly their own helpful service.[16]

The Fathers of the Council took ongoing formation of formators seriously enough to decree that Institutes for forming formators be set up. Such Institutes will help to keep formators abreast in the new pedagogical ways of discerning and accompanying a candidate towards the priesthood. The regular meetings of Rectors and other formators are to be focused on improving ways of on-going formation of the formators.

The Decree makes an important point by stating the strong connection between the success of the priests in the ministry and the nature of formation received in the seminary. It will also mean that to some extent, the failure of the priest in the ministry can be traced to the nature of the formation and discernment received at the seminary. This further underpin the argument for ensuring proper on-going formation of the formators.

Another essential element expressed by the Council Fathers is the community in which the seminarians are formed. Formators are to establish a closely-knit community in which they work in solidarity under the leadership of the Rector. Formators must keep in mind that the seminary environment is a community. One of the distinguishing factors of a community is a shared goal and a shared means of achieving it. The Rector is expected to help guide the formators to use a common means to achieve the common goal of forming candidates for the priesthood in the Church. Programs that will enhance community living should be provided from time to time for formators to access. This is one way of forming the formators to enable them provide and sustain conducive atmosphere for the formation of candidates for the

priesthood. A formator who is manifestly unable to live in a closely-knit community should be assisted to develop the capacity to live in a community with shared goals. In the unfortunate situation where the formator is still unable to abide by community life, a pastoral solution that will strongly include the possibility of exiting the seminary formation system should be explored.

Pastores Dabo Vobis on Forming the Formators

John Paul II in this famous Apostolic Exhortation stated that without priests the Church will not be able to fulfil the fundamental obligation Christ entrusted to the Church, which is to go out and preach the Gospel to the entire world:

> Without priests the Church would not be able to live that fundamental obedience which is at the very heart of her existence and her mission in history, an obedience in response to the command of Christ: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (*Mt*. 28:19) and "Do this in remembrance of me" (*Lk*. 22:19; cf. 1 *Cor*. 11.24), i.e, an obedience to the command to announce the Gospel and to renew daily the sacrifice of the giving of his body and the shedding of his blood for the life of the world.[17]

The Church must therefore place great importance on those who form candidates to the priesthood because they are participating in the core of the mission of the Church. The formation of the formators is therefore part of the essential mandate of Christ to the Church. PDV describes the work of the formators as follows:

> The Church's work of formation is a continuation in time of Christ's own work, which the evangelist Mark illustrates in these words: "And he went up on the mountain, and called to him those whom he desired; and they came to him. And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons" (*Mk*. 3:13-15).[18]

The seminary community constitutes a sort of mountain place. It is a place of prayer and discernment. The process of identifying those who are suitable for the priestly ministry is one that should be done with all the seriousness it deserves. The formators in the seminary must have the necessary knowledge and skills to assist in the four areas of formation mentioned in PDV. The Document stated that the entire work of priestly formation rests on a solid human formation:

> "The whole work of priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation if it lacked a suitable human formation. […]. Future priests should therefore

> cultivate a series of human qualities, not only out of proper and due growth and realization of self, but also with a view to the ministry. These qualities are needed for them to be balanced people, strong and free, capable of bearing the weight of pastoral responsibilities. **They need to be educated to love the truth, to be loyal, to respect every person, to have a sense of justice, to be true to their word, to be genuinely compassionate, to be men of integrity and, especially, to be balanced in judgment and behaviour.**[19]

Formators must first of all possess these qualities in themselves in order to be able to discern them in the candidates for priesthood. On-going formation of formators should consider helping in the area of developing personal self-respect for the truth and respect for dignity of the human person and the diversities of opinions. A rigid approach to every aspect of human life is unhealthy. To have balance judgment, a formator will have to be capable of making assessment that are not influenced by their ethnicity. On-going formation of formators should also focus on how to work in a multi-ethnic diverse society.

The candidates for the priesthood are expected to display a great sense of affective maturity and sound human sexuality. This will enable the person to be able to minister as a celibate priest to everyone in the pastoral field. The life style of formators most times constitute the model upon which seminarians build their future upon. Formators should be role models in the area of affective maturity. The formation of the conscience of the candidates should be sound.[20]

Spiritual formation requires that the candidates have a deeper communion with Christ who is inviting them to work in his vineyard. "Spiritual formation has its roots in the experience of the cross, which in deep communion leads to the totality of the paschal mystery."[21] Formators are to be concerned with the spiritual life of the candidates for the priesthood. A spirituality that is devoid of communion with the suffering Christ must not be promoted. The current trend of seeking miraculous healings in almost every case of illness point to an unhealthy spirituality especially by priests who promote such beliefs. Although, Spiritual Directors are primarily responsible for the spiritual formation of the seminarian, all other formators must have some rudimentary knowledge on spiritual formation. The provisions of *Optatam Totius* should be observed in the area of spiritual formation:

Spiritual formation should be conducted in such a way that the students may learn to live in intimate and unceasing union with God the Father through his Son Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit. Those who are

to take on the likeness of Christ the priest by sacred ordination should form the habit of drawing close to him as friends in every detail of their lives. They should live his paschal mystery in such a way that they will know how to initiate into it the people committed to their charge. They should be taught to seek Christ in faithful meditation on the word of God and in active participation in the sacred mysteries of the Church, especially the Eucharist and the Divine Office, to seek him in the bishop by whom they are sent and in the people to whom they are sent, especially the poor, little children, the weak, sinners and unbelievers. With the confidence of sons they should love and reverence the most blessed Virgin Mary, who was given as a mother to the disciple by Jesus Christ as he was dying on the cross."[22]

The intellectual formation of candidates to the priesthood is rooted in the fact that human beings are called to participate in the Light of God's mind.[23] Through this way, the human being is able to confront the new challenges that comes up in evangelization. The educational formation of the formators is essential in the area of intellectual formation. It is expected that formators continue to engage in further researches in their respective area of discipline. Attending conferences, seminars, symposiums etc are some of the ways of ensuring on-going formation of the formator as it relates to intellectual formation. There should be reasonable financial budget to encourage formators to seek on-going formation in their respective disciplines. In this way, they will be able to proffer new solutions to contemporary pastoral challenges in an intellectual manner to the students.

In the area of intellectual formation, formators should be able to help with a balanced sense of inculturation of the faith. Christianity should not be presented as foreign to any culture.[24] The resurgence of many superstitious beliefs within the Christian community is a sign of lack of proper intellectual formation. The growing trend of exorcising none possessed persons, the preaching of prosperity gospel in order to raise fund to complete some projects that in some cases are not even essential to the life of the Church, and the personalization of sacramental celebrations are just a few indicators that the intellectual formation is deficient in these priests. Formators must engage rigorously the culture of the people and identify unhealthy elements and promote healthy elements as tools of evangelization.

Pastoral Formation is the goal of the entire formation. The formators must seek ways to truly prepare the candidate to be able to work effectively in the pastoral field:

pastoral formation certainly cannot be reduced to a mere apprenticeship, aiming to make the candidate familiar with some pastoral techniques. The seminary which educates must seek really and truly to initiate the

candidate into the sensitivity of being a shepherd, in the conscious and mature assumption of his responsibilities, in the interior habit of evaluating problems and establishing priorities and looking for solutions on the basis of honest motivations of faith and according to the theological demands inherent in pastoral work[25]

Whenever there is a disconnect with pastoral theology and practical experience, the faithful are confused. Whenever there is a disconnect between magisterial teaching and the practices promoted by priests the faithful are confused. The parish life presents the faithful with various challenges regarding the faith. There are so many contradictory doctrines promoted outside the Church and unfortunately now even within the Church. The Churches moral teaching rooted in *Humanae Vitae*, the observance of well-formed conscience and spirituality that are in line with the traditional teachings of the Church are often being tactically discarded and replaced by new trends in doctrine. These new trends preach a life that is empty of the cross and one filled with abundant material blessings with a robust health. The new trend promotes spiritual destruction of ones' human enemies, with selective scriptural citations from the Old Testament.

Giving the constant fluctuation of life styles in behaviour, in taste, in fashion, and modes of living, the question has always been raised as to whether the formators should also change some essentials in the area of formations. The Nigerian society today is greatly saturated with prosperity gospel, proliferation of healing ministries and diverse style of programs. Wide publicity through the various social media and banners where the pictures of the ministers dots every nukes and crannies of the city. The opinion of some Catholics have been; will the Church not change the method of training priests so that they can at least acquire the skills of these Pentecostal preachers. For such persons this is an existential question for the Church. They often argue that there is a constant migration of Catholics to the new ecclesial communities or churches because they provide them with the kind of spirituality that they like. Although, there is hardly any convincing statistics to back up such claims, the fact that they are constantly being made, demands attention of every well-meaning Catholic.

Formators in the Seminary must be conversant with on-going pastoral dimension. The seminary should not be so cloistered that the formators are completely unaware of the new development in parish life. The goal of the formation process is to prepare candidates to becoming priests and who will work in the ministry. It will therefore be necessary that strict observance of the policy that require formators to spend some time in parish ministry during the long period of seminary vacation be adhered to. It is perhaps relevant to note the emphasis Pope Francis

places on pastoral experience of members of the Vatican Diplomatic Corp. Pope Francis recently directed that those who are to become Papal Nuncio are to undergo at least one year of pastoral ministry. In this way, they will have personal experience of pastoral life. The same principle should be applied to formators in the seminary. At least a period of one-year pastoral work as a priest should be required before a formator assumes office in the seminary.

Obstacles to Forming the Formators

This research to a great extent assume that seminary formators are priests. Although, this assumption is not absolutely true, because there are very good religious sisters involved in formation as well as well-educated lay faithful. But our research will be primarily concerned about formators who are priests. Let us briefly highlight some of the challenges or obstacles to ongoing formation of formators.

The "Final Goal" Syndrome

Many professions that have long years of training do have ongoing education fatigue. When there is no financial remuneration for embarking on further education in the area of specialty, the person is further less motivated. Priests who are formators in the seminary have all gone through close to ten years of seminary formation and pastoral work. Many of them have also completed several post-graduate studies. Although, there are no well-known publications of the numbers of seminary formators with Doctorate Degree, but a cursory look at the number of formators in most of the seminaries in Nigeria will indicate that close to 90 percent of these formators do have doctorate degrees. Those without it are in most cases in the process of obtaining the degree. This is expected in every academic community and the seminary should not be an exception.

However, the need for ongoing formation still remains even after obtaining a doctorate degree in the various relevant disciplines. There is a general believe born out of perception that once a person is ordained a priest, the person has "arrived." This arrival mindset can impede openness to further education and formation. For any priest to consider the priesthood as end in itself can become a challenge towards growing in wisdom and knowledge as it was reported by the Gospel of Luke 2:52 regarding Christ human nature. The anti-dote to the final goal syndrome is to imitate Christ who grew in wisdom. There is no final goal for any human being on this earth.

Lack of Mandatory Ongoing Formation of Formators

There is hardly any well-articulated demand for ongoing formation of formators. The knowledge of the formators in their respective disciplines such as Scripture, Systematic Study or Dogma, Moral Theology, Pastoral Theology, Liturgy, Philosophy, Psychology, Spirituality, Canon Law and other relevant secular disciplines is not sufficient to be effective formators. These disciplines do not in themselves provide the priests formators with all the necessary skills to accompany and discern the vocation of the seminarian. There should be mandatory ongoing formation in the area of discernment and accompanying of the candidate towards the priesthood. We had earlier pointed this out when we discoursed the presentation of Jorge Carlos Patrong Wong.

Lack of Proper Enforcement of Promotion Based on Publication and Research

In the academic community, the people are concerned about researches and publications. Promotion is based upon publication of well researched papers on reputable Journal that enjoy blind rigorous peer review. Participation at international Conferences and regular ongoing research are all taken seriously. In fact, it is sometimes put in sayings like: "publish or perish." This goes to underscore the value placed upon ongoing formation of lecturers. However, with a somewhat equal priestly status that the sacramental order establishes, there is less motivation to publish. The perception of a priest with several publications and one who has no publication is not different in the eyes of many faithful. It may be time to review establishing merit-based promotion following the NUC regulation. Formators with more publication should have their papers assessed and the Appointment and Promotion Board of the Seminary should help to ensure that there is reward for such efforts of formators. The proper academic hierarchy should be well entrenched. The template provided by the Institutions that the seminary is affiliated to will help in this area. In other words, a formator who has enough publications to move from Lecturer II to Lecturer I, to Senior Lecturer to Associate Professor (Reader) and to full professor should be observed with corresponding financial remuneration. Although, priests are expected to live out the promise of poverty, it is nonetheless desirable to enhance their capacity to do charity to others from their legitimately earned income.

Performance Review

Most establishments do have performance review system. Performance indicators or indices are established to be used in the evaluation of persons. Some establishments will have indices such as productivity,

punctuality, impact on the live of the people, compatibility with fellow workers, health condition, mental fitness etc. It is true that all these indices may not be applicable to formators in the seminary, but it will be of great service towards helping to form formators if a general template that could be adopted is established. Performance indices such as openness to pastoral availability, accessibility of a formator by students, readiness to comply with seminary statutes, moral uprightness of the formator, the psychological mindset, the physical health etc. It may also be of help if students are allowed to make objective impute in the process of this assessment.

Conclusion

The pastoral ministry of the priest is very essential to the fulfilment of the mission of Christ to the Church. Therefore, the formation of candidates to the priesthood is of great importance to the vitality of the Church. The quality of formators in the seminary greatly influences the quality of candidates for the priesthood that the seminary trains. The ongoing formation of formators becomes essential to the faith formation of the faithful. If the formators impact knowledge that are relevant to the pastoral challenges the seminarians will face in the priestly ministry, the latter will be able to render effective pastoral services to the faithful. Forming the formator is part of the call to go out and make disciples of all nations. Part of the response of the Church to the mission of Christ therefore includes making provisions for ongoing formation of formators.

Endnotes

[1] Canon 232. All citations from the 1983 Code of Canon Law are taken from, Codex iuris canonici, auctoritate Ioannis Pauli II promulgatus, fontium asnnotatione et indice analyticoalphabetico auctus, Libreria editrice Vaticana, 1989, English translation Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition, prepared under the auspices of the CANON LAW SOCIETY OF AMERICA, Washington, Canon Law Society of America, 1999.

[2] Canon 237.

[3] See canon 247.

[4] For a comprehensive reading on formation of virtues during seminary formation, see, Mercitta Kannampuzha, "The Role of Virtues in Formation Programmes: Seminaries and Religious Houses," in *The Living Word,* 124/3 (2018), pp. 123-142.

[5] Canon 211.

[6] See Carlos Patron Wong, "The Gift of Priestly Vocation," Symposium for Formation Teams English-Speaking Seminaries of Canada 4-7 April 2019.

[7] Ibid.

[8] [8] See Carlos Patron Wong, "Accompaniment and Discernment of Priestly Vocation," Symposium for Formation Teams English-Speaking Seminaries of Canada 4-7 April 2019
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] See Ibid.
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[13] OP, no. 1. All citation of *Optatam Totius* Decree on the Training of Priests are taken from www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_optatam-totius_en.html.
[14] OP, no.4.
[15] OP, no. 4.
[16] OP, no. 5.
[17] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, no. 1, from www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_25031992_pastores-dabo-vobis.html (=PDV)
[18] PDV, no. 2.
[19] PDV, no. 43.
[20] PDV, no. 44.
[21] PDV, no. 45.
[22] Op, no. 8.
[23] PDV, no. 51
[24] PDV, no. 55.
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15

PROMOTING A SEMINARY FORMATION THAT IS CONTINUOUS WITH THE PRIESTLY MINISTRY

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Abstract
Pope John Paul II's encyclical, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, is most renowned for the four areas of priestly formation it proposes. But one who picks up this document and intends to immediately read about these areas might by disappointed. The document first examines the current situation of the priest today and the nature of the priesthood. Only in the fifth of the six chapter work did the work discuss the areas of formation of candidates for the priesthood. The loud message of the structure of this document is that formation of future priests must be attentive to the nature of the priestly ministry and the context where it is to be exercised. Considering the challenges facing the priestly ministry in Nigeria today, especially a religious context characterised by an aggressive pentecostalism and a militant Islam, this paper wishes to show that a sound theological formation, a spirituality that is informed by the great masters of the Catholic tradition motivated by a strong pastoral zeal, marked by sincerity and openness and imbibed in a way that is continuous and not discontinuous with Seminary formation is indispensable for a sound priestly formation today.

Keywords: Seminary, Formation, Ministry, Priesthood, Pentecostalism

Introduction

Pope John Paul II's *Pastores dabo vobis* is well known for the four areas of priestly formation it outlines. With this vision, the post-synodal apostolic exhortation wishes to state that the seminary formation of the future priest should be anchored on human formation, spiritual formation,

intellectual formation, and pastoral formation. But one who picks up the document and hopes to immediately read these four areas of formation might be disappointed. It is only in the fifth of the six-chapter work that these areas of priestly formation are enumerated and discussed. The earlier chapters of the text are focused on the contemporary context where the priest would work today, and on the nature and mission of the priestly vocation. The clear message of the structure of the document is that the meaning of the priesthood and the contemporary context of the priestly ministry must inform the formation of candidates for the priesthood.[1]

This message also implies that the candidate for the priesthood should be trained in a way that seminary formation flows into priestly ministry. But the pontiff writes with an awareness of certain hindrances that might militate against this continuity when he states about the on-going formation of priests: "With priests who have just come out of the seminary, a certain sense of "having had enough is quite understandable when faced with new times of study and meeting. But the idea that priestly formation ends on the day one leaves the seminary is false and dangerous and needs to be totally rejected."[2] What the pope identifies here is not a passing problem confronting the priestly ministry. In our own Nigerian context, this problem resonates in the mentality of 'I have arrived' that often characterises how some view their priestly ordination. This mentality frequently promotes a certain rupture with seminary formation. We therefore often have the exhibition of certain characters in the priesthood whose modes of priestly ministry and service are alien to the formative program of the seminary. An example of this is the mad rush of many newly ordained priests to take up healing and deliverance ministries and to exhibit styles and patterns of preaching and the celebration of the liturgy that are inconsistent with their seminary formation. Religious figures far from the practice and tradition of the Catholic Church are easily taken up by these priests as models. It is not books on the lives of saints and their teachings, Church documents, classical Catholic books, sound theological texts that dot their shelves; rather, the books and religious materials they consume are works of popular pentecostal pastors.

While stating that the discontinuity between the way some priests exercise their ministry and their seminary formation expresses the heart of our problem, it however does not tell it all. It should be asked: what is responsible for this discontinuity between the way some exercise their priestly ministry and their seminary formation? If the seminary formation ought to have had the necessary formative ingredients that should help the priest exercise his ministry with integrity, then why has it failed to follow the priest into his ministry? Or more concretely, one

may ask, is there something lacking in the seminary formation that facilitates its easy discontinuity with the priestly ministry? Might we also ask if there are other causes beyond the seminary formation that contribute to this discontinuity?

This paper wishes to respond to these problems by first examining the current style of priestly formation with special attention to the Nigerian context. After a discussion of the problems inherent in the formation of priests, we shall proceed to propose a way forward on how this discontinuity can be overcome in order to have a credible seminary formation that is continuous with the priestly ministry.

Seminary Formation of Future Priests

The institutionalisation of priestly formation began in the Middle Ages, specifically, with the Council of Trent. It was precipitated by the problems that plagued the priesthood at that time, especially as it concerned the moral life of the clergy. There was, therefore, a certain vision of forming the future priest in a way that protects him from the dangers of the world. The idea of the seminary was thus envisaged with the model of a monastery. But with the pastoral renewal that Vatican II called for, while retaining the classical model of formation, there was a shift to a more pastoral style of formation. What this means is that while the enclosed system of seminary formation remains, there is also the need to form the candidate in a way that would make him equipped for the challenges of the priestly ministry in today's world.[3]

Pastores dabo vobis' (PVD) outline of the four areas of priestly formation shows this post-conciliar emphasis that significantly builds upon the conciliar document on the training of priests, *Optatam totius* (OT). It should be noted that in the decades before the council, as Katarina Schuth recalls from most published articles of seminary formators, the formation of seminarians was perceived to be too isolated and they were, therefore, not equipped to face the world and its challenges. One of such authors, Stafford Poole, a Vincentian, recommended that "if the seminary is to keep abreast of the modern world, it is going to have to be reunited organically with lay education."[4]

It was therefore not surprising that OT saw pastoral formation as the framework for all other aspects of formation.[5] Spiritual formation "should be closely connected with the doctrinal and pastoral."[6] The study of philosophy and theology should be taught in a way that their connection with the mysteries of Christ and the faith and life should be evident.[7] There is, however, no specific mention of human formation in OT. Nevertheless, elements of human formation are present when it asks for the need to ascertain the freedom of the candidate, his ability to

bear the burden of the priesthood and also the maturity needed to undertake the obligation of celibacy.[8]

It is instructive to note that human formation, which was not clearly explicit in OT, was taken as the basis for all other areas of formation: spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral in PVD. While OT presents pastoral formation as the framework for all other aspects of formation, in PVD, human formation is taken as the foundation of all other aspects of formation. In fact, citing the synod fathers, PVD notes that "[t]he whole work of priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation if it lacked a suitable human formation."[9] PVD believes that a thorough human formation that is open to the truth comes to completion in spiritual formation.[10] It shows how human formation is at the foundation of intellectual formation when it notes that the latter is a fundamental demand of the human intelligence by which one participates in the light of God's mind.[11] Here one could read the intimate link between philosophy and theology. After affirming how human formation leads to spiritual and intellectual formation, PVD then shows how these form the content of pastoral formation, which "cannot be reduced to mere apprenticeship aiming to make the candidates familiar with pastoral techniques."[12]

One can say that OT and PVD sought to harmonise the classical seminary training of monastic model with helping the future priests face the challenges of the contemporary world. OT shows how this is to be achieved by proposing that pastoral formation should be the framework of all other areas of formation. PVD seems to shift this framework to human formation, while at the same time giving more substance to pastoral formation. This did not however, concretely remove the tension between the monastic model and facing the challenge of the world that was already present in the introductory pages of OT.[13] Perhaps it is for this reason, that despite its clear vision of how priestly formation should go, OT asks that each bishop or episcopal conference should domesticate or inculturate its proposal on priestly formation.[14]

Some countries and dioceses have attempted this domestication of the vision of the council by the periodic publication of a program for priestly formation.[15] In Nigeria, what is mainly obtainable in this regard are the handbooks/rules and regulations of the seminaries.[16] They are usually anchored around the seminary horarium, content of courses, social behaviour of seminarians, and a brief philosophy of formation. The presentation of the four areas of priestly formation usually defines the seminary's philosophy of formation. This presentation also tends to be elaborate in showing the formative principle behind each rule. Here, one could find the tension between the monastic model of formation and training the candidate for the world. For example, one of the rules

and regulations published by SS. Peter and Paul Major Seminary, Bodija, Ibadan, states: "To avoid a diminution of their fervour for the interior life, and the distraction of their attention from sacred studies, Seminarians shall not go out except at set times for outings, and in exceptional cases for a grave reason and with the approval of the Dean of Students. However, after Christmas break, the Year VII Students have a general permission daily after lectures."[17] The seeming opposition that this rule reflects between the residency of the seminarian in the seminary and his outings is revealing. When this is put bluntly, it can be said that the seminarian who goes out often risks losing the fervour of his interior life and distracting himself from his seminary studies. Anyone who has been to the seminary or is familiar with seminary formation would know that there is some truth in this rule. The ordinary horarium of the seminary is quite tight. So, if a seminarian goes out often or indiscriminately, then he may not properly apply himself to the seminary program. While this is a given fact, the way the rule is worded presumes some inability of the seminarian to make use of his discretion in going out, hence he is advised to only go out on outing days or with permission for a grave reason. Only those seminarians in the final year, and after the Christmas break, when they must have been promoted as deacons or deemed fit to be ordained deacons, can enjoy some general permission in going out.

However, one could argue that since only adults are admitted to the seminary, that is, students presumed to be qualified for a university education, should they not be given more discretion in deciding when to go out, and thereby facilitate growth in training in freedom that OT and PVD speak about? Here, one who is familiar with how some seminarians perceive the seminary as a prison yard would see how this impression resonates in the tension between the monastic model of formation and openness to the world. It can be said that this impression, justified or not, is what gradually grows to facilitate the discontinuity that manifests itself between seminary formation and priestly life.

Just as the tension between outing and residence in the seminary resonates the difficulty in harmonising the monastic model of formation and openness to the world, another area that reflects this challenge is the ban on the possession and use of private mobile phones by seminarians. Like the presupposition on the rule on outings above, it is reasoned that the possession of a personal cell phone would greatly distract students from applying themselves to their program of formation. One thing clear about the ban on personal cell phones is that despite the strict punishments that go with possessing one, such as a probation or expulsion, some seminarians still keep their personal phones. There seems to be a deep lack of inner conviction about why they should not

have a personal cell phone. The consequence of this is that it could promote a subculture where the seminarian hides certain aspects of himself so that the whole self is not brought out for formation. Such subculture could promote a general lack of sincerity towards formation. At this point, beyond the ban or permission of private cell phones, we could anchor a major reason why there is often a discontinuity between seminary formation and priestly life in the existence of a subculture in the seminarian that does not make the candidate fully open to formation. The lack of realization of the harmony that should exist between the monastic model of formation and openness to the world is the context for the growth of this subculture.

Generally, one could describe a subculture as the presence of some beliefs and practices that are at variance with the belief of the larger group. In this case, it means the existence of certain beliefs and practices in the seminarian that are at variance with the practices and expectations of elements of his priestly formation and priestly ministry. It could be credibly said that it is this subculture that comes into the open at ordination and manifests itself as a rupture between priestly life and seminary training. For example, what is also at stake in a seminarian possessing cell phones against a clearly stated ban by the seminary's rules and regulations is the grooming of a subculture of disobedience. If the candidate is to be formed in learning how to obey for supernatural reasons, he should be ready to obey a law that is not sinful, even though he is not personally convinced about the reasonableness or validity of that law. No one can practice ecclesiastical obedience if he only wants to obey what he is convinced about.

But it is one thing to state a problem and its consequences, while it remains a task to confront the root cause of a problem and work towards a solution. Let us now move towards more effective ways to find a continuity between seminary formation and priestly life.

Continuity between Seminary Formation & Priestly Life

The major cause of the discontinuity between seminary formation and priestly ministry that we have identified is the tension between the monastic model and facing the challenges of the world. This can also be described as the context of the problem. But it is not a context that is detached from the substance of the problem. There is need to harmonise the strength of the monastic model and the relevance of openness to the world. This is indispensable for domesticating a credible formative program that would be well assimilated and lasting. A significant point of departure here is that the monastic model or the isolated seminary environment should not be considered as existing against the world, the way the aforementioned rule of SS. Peter and Paul on outing seem to

have been phrased. One central message that the future priest would have to teach the people is how lay persons in the middle of the world can have an interior life. The interior life is not something that should exist outside the world, but it must form how we live the world. This fact can be explained by the way Joseph Ratzinger understands the model of an open Church. He first notes that there should not be opposition between the Church and the world, because the Church is not world-less (*Weltlos*). The world is not a place that exists besides the Church, just as it does not exist for itself because its history and development is closely tied to the history of humanity. The biblical picture, however, shows that the history of human relationships exists in ambiguity because of the goodness and the evil present in human history. For this reason, Ratzinger notes that the dialogue between the Church and the world should reject a one-sided demonisation of the world, and a one-sided glorification of science and technology. The crucial element of this dialogue is not a matter of the degree of the Church's openness to the world, but how the Church is open to the world.[18]

In the same vein, the enclosed set up of seminary formation should not be conceived as a place designed in opposition to the world. Rather, it should be viewed as a place to prepare the future priests for the world they will live and exercise their priestly ministry in. When this is concretely understood, it would be easy to see that for example, it is more profitable that the seminary environment teaches the seminarian how to use and keep a personal cell phone than to have a ban on keeping one because of perceived abuses. In this way, a vital aspect of the self, that is, the use and possession of a personal handset, is made open to formation. Such efforts at formation would be directed to drawing out formative ethics on the use and ownership of cell phones rather than disciplinary measures to ban them. In this way, one would be able to avoid the growth of a subculture that is at odds with the formative culture of the seminarian.

What this example of the cell phone points to is that the more seminarians are made to be open, the better they can be formed. The affirmation of PVD that human formation is the basis of all other areas of formation can be interpreted along this line: only when the seminarian is open or the enabling environment is created for him to be open, can he be formed in all areas of priestly formation. When PVD states that human formation entails the capacity to relate with others, it implies that only one that can relate with others can also relate with God. If God is personal, without a capacity to form personal relationships the candidate will not be able to deal with God as a person. It is for this reason that the *Ratio Fundamentalis* says that a well-structured humanity is indispensable for a true spirituality.[19] When a true openness leads to the development

of a sound spiritual life, the seminarians' intellectual formation will be driven by love for the truth. It is a love for the truth that is founded on a genuine human inquiry and faith. In this case, fidelity to the Church's teachings or orthodoxy will not be viewed as a mere adherence to some prescriptions. Rather, they will be a motivation of the human inquiry for the truth. Just as being critical does not turn one to being sceptical, so being faithful to the Church's teachings does not make one uncritical or unable to ask Mary's question to Archangel Gabriel's message: "How shall this be done, since I do not know man." (Lk. 1:34).

In this respect, the seminarian will not see the expectations of his state and the priestly ministry as mere rules and regulations to keep. Rather, they will be seen as truths to live out. He will not see himself as doing something extraordinary in taking up the obligation of celibacy. Rather, when celibacy is understood and accepted with formation in the four areas, it will first be seen as a specific way to live out the virtue of chastity. The well-formed seminarian knows that every Christian, including married persons are called to live that chastity. It is in this respect that celibacy will be understood as a joyful renunciation of what one considers great and beautiful. This frame of mind makes its easy to exercise vigilance and avoid any occasion of sin or compromising situations out of a firm conviction, and not simply to put up some external appearance.

It is precisely for this reason that PVD identifies the formation of conscience and maturity as indispensable for human formation. This formation is the best guarantee for exercising authentic freedom and responsibility. The emphasis on formation must seek to address the conscience of seminarians, make them always recognise their freedom to be priests, and how that freedom could also make them to properly discern a choice for a different state of life. With such a mindset, just as the seminarian could in freedom decide not to continue in the seminary, so does the seminarian that looks towards the priesthood prepare himself beyond priestly ordination. The seminary horarium would be seen as a means for that formation, an aid to developing a plan of life. One significant fact of the horarium is the daily recitation of the divine office, which only clerics and religious are obliged to recite. Seminarians recite it daily as a way of helping them to form the habit that would enable them to take up this future obligation. But on certain days in the week, like their free days and outing days where the regular horarium does not apply, seminarians are asked to say these prayers privately. This, I believe, is one of the best ways to gauge whether seminarians are imbibing a prayer life that will lead them into the priestly ministry. There are slim chances that the seminarian who does not say his prayers on those free days will do so in the priestly ministry.

Such days that seminarians are asked to do their prayers privately cannot be assessed by external disciplinary measures. This is where a good culture of spiritual direction is indispensable in the seminary. Here, many seminaries in Nigeria would need to do better. Some don't have sufficient number of spiritual directors compared to the number of their seminarians, and quite often, most spiritual directors do not have the training that is comparable to that of their other colleagues. It is not so common to find spiritual directors who have studied up to doctoral level as we have in those who teach other courses in philosophy and theology. There is need for more time, personnel, and resources to be invested in spiritual direction in our seminaries. A good culture of spiritual direction will help the seminarian assimilate the elements of his formation in greater depth. A seminarian who does not go for spiritual direction often, or who lacks a good culture of spiritual direction, will also not be able to give spiritual direction to others. Little wonder that there are frequent complaints that most priests are not disposed for spiritual direction. What we often have are problem centered counseling sessions. A systematic culture of spiritual direction, where the Christian is led to live a balanced interior life with the goal of holiness of life is frequently lacking for many lay persons. The root cause of this problem might be traceable to how seminarians have been formed in the culture of spiritual direction.

This point on spiritual direction already draws our attention to how a good human and spiritual formation also leads to a good pastoral formation. This pastoral formation will be supported with clear ideas that are informed by a sound intellectual formation. Philosophical studies must prepare the mind to think clearly; to appreciate the foundation of objective truth and knowledge and the subjective dimensions in which these have been expressed throughout history. Such an opening creates the enabling environment for a theological formation that is orthodox and at the same time critical. With the guidance of Scripture and the Church's teachings, in critical dialogue with other human disciplines, the seminarian will be equipped with the content of his pastoral ministry. Such content cannot be a mere acquisition of knowledge to be dispensed, but it must always have depth in the candidate's personal conviction and way of life.

It is for this reason that the seminarian's intellectual and spiritual formation must be sufficiently exposed to Catholic tradition in a way that every seminarian would adopt models from the great spiritual masters and saints. This exposure, which should already begin in the spiritual year program, would help the seminarian to have tested guides and their rich experiences to draw from. When this is lacking, as people always look for models, in their craze for relevance, the seminarian or priest easily picks up models that are at variance with his formation as we see in

the corrupt pentecostalism that is afflicting the priestly ministry of some today. This lack of having true models is not helped by the fact that many of these practices that are contrary to a sound priestly ministry as we find in the preponderance of healing and deliverance ministries, seem to be tolerated in the dioceses. The seminarian could therefore grow with a mentality that certain practices not in tandem with his seminary formation could be practiced as priests. Little wonder that one often hears that seminary formation is not practical for the pastoral ministry. But the fact is that it is a seminary formation that has not been well imbibed and the existence of a certain subculture groomed within and outside the seminary that is ultimately responsible for the rupture between seminary formation and priestly ministry.

Finally, one cannot rule out the role of formators in helping seminarians inculcate the seminary formation. It is a time-honoured recommendation of the Church that only the best of priests or those who exercise their priestly ministry with integrity should be sent to be seminary formators.[20] This must be followed religiously. While on-going formation of formators is important, the seminary system should have an internal system of accountability where formators can always have personal and communal review of their participation in the formation program. For example, at the end of every course, there should be a way of evaluating or getting feedbacks about how the course has been taught by the formator or lecturer. This helps to maintain a certain standard among formators.

Conclusion

In this paper we have shown that the discontinuity that exists between seminary formation and the priestly ministry can be traced to the tension between the monastic or enclosed seminary set up and openness to the world. Both dimensions have strengths that can be harmonised when they are not seen in opposition: the enclosed seminary set up is to prepare the seminarian for the world he is going to serve. Therefore, rather than seeing the world as something to protect the seminarian from, he should be prepared to live in the world. As advised by PVD, human formation should be taken as the basis of this formation. Here the emphasis on formation in conscience and openness would allow the seminarian grow in a maturity that would enable him to exercise his freedom responsibly. This would avoid the growth of any subculture, within and outside the seminary, that leads to hiding aspects of the self that become manifest after ordination to create a rupture between seminary formation and priestly ministry. With such a strong human formation, the candidate is disposed to having a personal relationship with God which makes him imbibe his prayer life beyond the mere

observance of routine or seminary horarium. The prayer life should be founded on an interior life that is open to the truth and founded on an intellectual formation that is orthodox and critical. This helps to shape a pastoral formation which flows from a deep interior life. The role of spiritual direction in helping the seminarian grow in this interior life cannot be overemphasized. The seminary must always be equipped with well formed spiritual directors, just as it should be for other formators who must have a systematic program of on-going formation. It is hoped that when the right environment is created for the seminarian to open up himself for formation with an exposure to the tested models of Catholic spiritual and intellectual traditions, the seminary formation will find a continuity in the priestly ministry.

Endnotes

[1] John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis* [Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Formation of Priests], Vatican Website, March 25, 1992, accessed February 23, 2020.
[2] Ibid, 76. (sic)
[3] Cf. Katarina Schuth, *Seminary Formation: Recent History— Current Circumstances— New Directions* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2016), 11, John W. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 201
[4] Poole, Seminary in Crisis, 14, 28–29; also as quoted in White, The Diocesan Seminary in the United States, 413. All cited in Katarina Schuth, *Seminary Formation: Recent History,* 23
[5] Vatican II, *Optatam totius,* 1
[6] Ibid, 8
[7] Ibid, 16-18
[8] Ibid, 4
[9] John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis,* 43; Synod Proposition, 21
[10] Ibid, 45
[11] Ibid, 51
[12] Ibid, 58
[13] Katarina Schuth notes how this tension was expressed: "From the first paragraph onward considerable disagreement is evidenced between the traditional and the progressive council fathers about the direction OT should take. In the introduction, the document first acknowledges the "supreme importance of priestly formation" and in the same sentence goes on to assure the more traditional bishops that it would strengthen the regulations that had long been in use and shown to be sound. At the same time, it promises those who see the need for a new kind of seminary that it has added new elements that "correspond with the constitutions and decrees of this council and with the changed conditions of our time" (OT Introduction). The prescriptions of the decree directly concerned the training of

diocesan clergy but were to be appropriately adapted to all clerical training, including religious and monastic priests." Katarina Schuth, *Seminary Formation: Recent History,* 14

[14] Vatican II, *Optatam totius,* 2.

[15] For an example of such programs in the United States, for example, see Katarina Schuth, *Seminary Formation: Recent History,* 19-32.

[16] See for example, Catholic Major Seminary of All Saints, *Handbook of the Seminary of All Saints* (Benin City: Floreat Systems, 2014); Seminary of SS. Peter & Paul, *Rules & Regulations* (Bodija, Ibadan: Claverium Press, 1987); Seminary of SS. Peter & Paul and Seminary of All Saints, *Handbook on the Social Behaviour of Seminarians* (Benin City: Floreats Systems, 2015)

[17] Seminary of SS. Peter & Paul, *Rules & Regulations,* 44

[18] Joseph Ratzinger, "Der Christ und die Welt von Heute." In *Dogma und Verkündigung,* (Donauwörth: Eroch Wewel Verlag, 1973, Reprint 2005), 179-189

[19] Congregation for the Clergy, *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation: Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis,* Vatican Website, December 8, 2016, accessed February 28, 2020, 93

[20] John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis,* 67

16

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING ON IMMIGRATION AND THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLES

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Abstract
This paper interrogates the Catholic social teaching on immigration and the movements of peoples. The discourse does this, by first of all stating that, the rights of migrants (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, migrant workers, and internally displaced persons-IDPs) begin with the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching, namely, the dignity and sanctity of the human person. The paper submits that right to life and the conditions worthy of life, when threatened by poverty, injustice, religious intolerance, armed conflict, and other root causes, give rise to the right to migrate. It argues that *unity in diversity* is firmly grounded in the Church's social teaching and understanding and appreciating this helps us to put our faith into action. This paper, further evaluates the principles of Catholic social teaching using specific quotes from Church documents that address the most common misperceptions about Church teachings. The purpose of this discussion therefore, is to provide a brief,

concise, and useful compilation of information on authentic Roman Catholic teaching regarding the areas of immigration and the movements of peoples that currently concern most Christians. The body of this work consists of quotes from documents and statements originating only from those men who are authorized to speak for the Catholic Church, namely, the Popes and those Bishops and theologians in union with them. Thus, following this methodology, these quotes are extracted from encyclicals, pastoral letters, and addresses by these representatives of the Magisterium (teaching authority) of the Catholic Church.

Keywords: Migration, Catholic Social Teaching, Magisterium, Church Documents

Introduction

In advocating on behalf of migrants, immigrants, and refugees, it is important to understand that the Catholic position is based on Catholic social teaching, which is derived from the Gospels and the words of Christ; statements and encyclicals of the Popes; and statements and pastoral letters of bishops around the world. The rights of migrants (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, migrant workers, and internally displaced persons-IDPs) begin with the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching, namely, the dignity and sanctity of the human person. The right to life and the conditions worthy of life, when threatened by poverty, injustice, religious intolerance, armed conflict, and other root causes, give rise to the right to migrate.[1] As Pope John XXIII explained:

> Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of his own country; and, when there are just reasons for it, the right to emigrate to other countries and take up residence there. The fact that one is a citizen of a particular state does not detract in any way from his membership in the human family as a whole, nor from his citizenship in the world community.[2]

This is a right to both emigrate from one's own country and immigrate into another country. In 2003 for example, the Catholic bishops of the United States and Mexico named five principles[3] that have emerged from the "rich tradition of church teachings with regard to migration":

First Principle: Persons have a right to find opportunities in their own homeland

This principle reflects the responsibilities of all citizens and governments for the common good, creating the political, economic, and social

conditions for persons to live in dignity, raise their families, use their God-given gifts, and find employment that provides a living family wage - a fundamental principle of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) dating back to the 19th century. Wealthy and powerful nations are obliged to assist less developed nations in creating the conditions for people to live dignified lives.

Second Principle: Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families

Pope Pius XII declared in 1952 that both natural law and devotion to humanity required that international migration be opened to people forced from their countries by revolutions, unemployment, or hunger. He explained: "For the Creator of the universe made all good things primarily for the good of all."[4] When people cannot find adequate work, they have a natural right to work elsewhere to attain the means of survival for themselves and their families.

Third Principle: Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders

Our tradition recognizes the right of nations to control their territories, a right arising from their responsibility for the common good. However, as Pope Pius indicated, this right is not absolute. State sovereignty "cannot be exaggerated to the point that access to this land is, for inadequate or unjustified reasons, denied to needy and decent people from other nations…." Balancing rights then becomes critical. In fact, according to the bishops, individual rights and state responsibility for the common good are complementary.

While the sovereign state may impose reasonable limits on immigration, the common good is not served when the basic human rights of the individual are violated. In the current condition of the world, in which global poverty and persecution are rampant, the presumption is that persons must migrate in order to support and protect themselves and that nations who are able to receive them should do so whenever possible.[5]

In 2000, the bishops, reflecting on the tension between border control and the individual right to fundamental dignity, declared the latter to "give rise to a more compelling claim to the conditions worthy of human life."[6]

Fourth Principle: Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection

Those who flee wars and persecution have a greater claim for protection from the global community. As the fathers of the church would urge:

"This requires, at a minimum, that migrants have a right to claim refugee status without incarceration and to have their claims fully considered by a competent authority."[7]

Fifth Principle: The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected

According to the bishops, it is noteworthy that: "Regardless of their legal status, migrants, like all persons, possess inherent dignity that should be respected."[8] This applies to punitive laws, enforcement practices, detention conditions, abuse and neglect, and policies that tear families apart. Even undocumented workers, often subject to inadequate wages and demeaning conditions in a shadow economy, are entitled to basic human rights in terms of wages and working conditions. Immigrant workers, even ones without documents, do not lose their status as human persons made in God's image. Demeaning wages, inhuman conditions, and the denial of workers' natural rights assault the dignity and sanctity of the human person.

Biblical Vision of Love for Strangers

Both the Old and New Testaments tell compelling stories of refugees forced to flee because of oppression. Exodus tells the story of the Chosen People, Israel, who were victims of bitter slavery in Egypt. They were utterly helpless by themselves, but with God's powerful intervention they were able to escape and take refuge in the desert. For forty years they lived as wanderers with no homeland of their own. Finally, God fulfilled his ancient promise and settled them on the land that they could finally call home. The Israelites' experience of living as homeless aliens was so painful and frightening that God ordered his people for all time to have special care for the alien: "You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt" (Lv. 19:33-34).

The New Testament begins with Matthew's story of Joseph and Mary's escape to Egypt with their newborn son, Jesus, because the paranoid and jealous King Herod wanted to kill the infant. Our Savior himself lived as a refugee because his own land was not safe. Jesus reiterates the Old Testament command to love and care for the stranger, a criterion by which we shall be judged: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me" (Mt. 25:35).

The Apostle Paul asserts the absolute equality of all people before God: "There is neither Jew nor Greek . . . for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28). In Christ, the human race is one before God, equal in

dignity and rights. In addition to the five principles articulated by the Catholic bishops of the United States and Mexico in 2003 as mentioned above, three other basic principles of Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration is given due attention here. Although Catholic theology has always promoted human rights rooted in natural law and God's revelation, it was the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (On the Condition of Labor) in 1891 that developed a systematic presentation of principles of the rights and responsibilities of people.[9] *Rerum Novarum* commented on the situation of immigrants; in later documents, popes and bishops' conferences have synthesized the Catholic theological tradition to articulate three basic principles on immigration.

First Principle: People have the right to migrate to sustain their lives and the lives of their families. At the end of World War II, with the fall of the Nazi empire and the subsequent creation of the Soviet "Iron Curtain," Europe faced an unprecedented migration of millions of people seeking safety, food, and freedom. At that time, Pope Pius XII wrote *Exsul Familia (The Emigre Family)*, placing the Church squarely on the side of those seeking a better life by fleeing their homes. When there is a massive movement of people such as during a war, natural disaster, or famine, the lands that receive these displaced people may be threatened. The influx may make it impossible for the native population to live securely, as the land may not have enough resources to support both. Even in more orderly migrations, such as in the United States, citizens and residents of the land may fear that newcomers will take jobs, land, and resources, impoverishing the people already present.[10] Because of the belief that newcomers compete for scarce resources, immigrants and refugees are at times driven away, resented, or despised. Nevertheless, the first principle of Catholic social teaching regarding immigrants is that people have the right to migrate to sustain their lives and the lives of their families. This is based on biblical and ancient Christian teaching that the goods of the earth belong to all people. While the right to private property is defended in Catholic social teaching, individuals do not have the right to use private property without regard for common good. Every person has an equal right to receive from the earth what is necessary for life: food, clothing, shelter. Moreover, every person has the right to education, medical care, religion, and the expression of one's culture. In many places people live in fear, danger, or dehumanizing poverty. Clearly, it is not God's will that some of his children live in luxury while others have nothing. In Luke's Gospel, the rich man was condemned for living well while the poor man starved at his doorstep (Lk. 16:19-31). The native does not have superior rights over the immigrant. Before God all are equal; the earth was given by God

to all. When a person cannot achieve a meaningful life in his or her own land, that person has the right to move.

Second Principle: A country has the right to regulate its borders and to control immigration. The overriding principle of all Catholic social teaching is that individuals must make economic, political, and social decisions not out of shortsighted self-interest, but with regard for the common good. That means that a moral person cannot consider only what is good for his or her own self and family, but must act with the good of all people as his or her guiding principle. While individuals have the right to move in search of a safe and humane life, no country is bound to accept all those who wish to resettle there.[11]By this principle the Church recognizes that most immigration is ultimately not something to celebrate. Ordinarily, people do not leave the security of their own land and culture just to seek adventure in a new place or merely to enhance their standard of living. Instead, they migrate because they are desperate and the opportunity for a safe and secure life does not exist in their own land. Immigrants and refugees endure many hardships and often long for the homes they left behind. As human beings, we should cherish and celebrate the contributions of immigrants and their cultures; however, we should work to make it unnecessary for people to leave their own land. Because there seems to be no end to poverty, war, and misery in the world, developed nations will continue to experience pressure from many peoples who desire to resettle in their lands.[12]The Catholic social teaching is realistic, thus, while people have the right to move, no country has the duty to receive so many immigrants that its social and economic life is jeopardized. For this reason, Catholics should not view the work of the federal government and its immigration control as negative or evil. Those who work to enforce our nation's immigration laws often do so out of a sense of loyalty to the common good and compassion for poor people seeking a better life. In an ideal world, there would be no need for immigration control. The Church recognizes that this ideal world has not yet been achieved.

Third Principle: A country must regulate its borders with justice and mercy.

The second principle of Catholic social teaching may seem to negate the first principle. However, principles one and two must be understood in the context of principle three. And all Catholic social teaching must be understood in light of absolute equality of all people and the commitment to common good.[13]

A country's regulation of borders and control of immigration must be governed by concern for all people and by mercy and justice. A

nation may not simply decide that it wants to provide for its own people and no others. A sincere commitment to the needs of all must prevail. In our modern world where communication and travel are much easier, the burden of emergencies cannot be placed solely on nations immediately adjacent to the crises. Justice dictates that the world community contributes resources toward shelter, food, medical services and basic welfare. Even in the case of less urgent migrations, a developed nation's right to limit immigration must be based on justice, mercy, and the common good, not on self-interest. Moreover, immigration policy ought to take into account other important values such as the right of families to live together.[14]A merciful immigration policy will not force married couples or children to live separated from their families for long periods.

Undocumented immigrants present a special concern. Often their presence is considered criminal since they arrive without legal permission. Under the harshest view, undocumented people may be regarded as undeserving of rights or services. This is not the view of Catholic social teaching. The Catholic Church teaches that every person has basic human rights and is entitled to have basic human needs met: food, shelter, clothing, education, and health care. Undocumented persons are particularly vulnerable to exploitation by employers, and they are not able to complain because of the fear of discovery and deportation. Current immigration policy that criminalizes the mere attempt to immigrate and imprisons immigrants who have committed no crime or who have already served a just sentence for a crime is immoral. In the Bible, God promises that our judgment will be based on our treatment of the most vulnerable. Before God we cannot excuse inhumane treatment of certain persons by claiming that their lack of legal status deprives them of rights given by the creator.

Conclusion

Finally, immigration policy that allows people to live here and contribute to society for years but refuses to offer them the opportunity to achieve legal status does not serve the common good. The presence of millions of people living without easy access to basic human rights and necessities is a great injustice. It is the position of the Catholic Church that pastoral, educational, medical, and social services provided by the Church are never conditioned on legal status. All persons are invited to participate in their parishes, attend our schools, and receive other services offered by their institutions and programs.

In the course of this discourse thus far, this paper has successfully interrogated, examined and evaluated the principles of Catholic social teaching on migration and movements of peoples. Using specific quotes from Church documents that address the most common

misperceptions about Church teachings in areas immigration, it was noted that the excerpts quoted in this work focus on the dignity of human person. As such, they are most suited for use to educate those who are ignorant of the Church's social teachings on the movements of people as a whole. In order to comprehend the beauty, richness, and wisdom of the quoted Church documents, we conclude by saying: it is necessary for the reader to take the time to sit down, read them, and contemplate their messages.

Endnotes

1. Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope,* joint pastoral letter concerning migration, January 2003, Nos. 28-29.
2. Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris,* 1963, No. 25.
3. *Strangers No Longer,* op. cit., Nos. 33-39.
4. Pope Pius XII, *Exsul Familia,* Apostolic Constitution, Vatican City, 1952.
5. *Strangers No Longer,* op. cit., No. 39.
6. *U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity,* Washington, D.C., 2000, p. 11.
7. *Strangers No Longer,* op. cit., No. 37.
8. *Ibid.,* No. 38.
9. This resource was written by Fr. Thomas Betz, OFC, Director of Immigration and Refugee Services for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and is used with permission. Scripture texts used in this work are taken from the New American Bible, copyright © 1991, 1986, and 1970 by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C. 20017, and are used by permission of copyright owner. All rights reserved.
10. Pope Pius XI, *Acta Apostilicae Sedis*, XLIII, 1951, p. 843.
11. Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra* No. 193, May 15, 1961.
12. Fr. Thomas Betz, OFC, op. cit.
13. *Ibid*.
14. Pope John Paul II in his Address on *Responsible Procreation*, September 17, 1983. " *The Wanderer*, September 29, 1983, pp. 1-3.

SECTION 2

PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES AND HUMAN FORMATION

17

MAN, RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY: TOWARDS A NORMATIVE VISION OF THE HUMAN PERSON

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Abstract
This paper seeks to give a formidable normative structure that is geared towards human development. This is premised on the fact that the human person has a composite nature. That is, man, having a material and a spiritual nature. These natures cum dimensions in the human person does not in any way reduce the religio-cultural and social dimension of the human person. In fact, they enhance it the more. This paper argues that man is yet to fully realize some level of satisfaction in the way it relates with its fellow human being as a social being; this is evident in the different crimes against humanity that are perpetuated everyday for instance, abuse of minors, rape, robbery and other sexist practices. These anomalies are still very much evident in the religious palace wherein religion that ought to give a kind of solace to humanity, is being used as a tool for exploitation thereby creating an unhealthy religious belief system in the way religious beliefs are being handled. The paper further argues that the human person will only progress if there is a perfect use of reason to actualize his belief system, and further enhances the best way to relate well with his fellow human being. This is where the irreplaceable tools of philosophy come in as it will help in no small measure in sharpening the belief system of the human person on how to leave a sound life in the society and to get rid of the unhealthy sexist tendencies, abuses of minor and other atrocities.

Keywords: Man, Religion, Society, Philosophy, Ethics, Interactionism

Introduction

The different theories on the origin of mankind like that of Charles Darwin, Big Bang, Creation story of the Semitic tradition as recorded in the Holy Bible and a host of others, have presented an aspect of the human person that cannot be denied by any successive theories. This aspect is the fact that the human person is a social being that interacts. Many social institutions like the family, school, age grade, political party and so on, have laid credence to this fact. In other words, the different evolutionary theories have further proven that the human person is a relational being. As the human person continues to evolve, this relationship continues to spread also; both from the vertical perspective and the horizontal perspective. This simply means that man who is a social being is also a religious being; this is where his vertical relationship with the Supreme Being is also a cause for concern. This is so because it is believed that the Supreme Being has strong influence in the daily growth of the human person and as such, an effective relationship with him becomes expedient.

Be that as it may, there are certain actions and activities that have posited threats to the sincerity of these interactions and relationships judging from the fact of negative socio-religious trends: where the human person no longer values the sanctity of their relationship with the Supreme Being; where people use the name of the Supreme Being to cajole and deceive people; where human beings no longer have fear of the sacred and of sacred places; where humanity no longer appreciates the uniqueness of their interaction and relationship with their fellow beings. While some have tailored these disappointing acts to modernism, some others have said that all of these atrocities have long been there and as such there is no remedy.

The question now is, is it really true there is no remedy to the atrocities that have threatened peaceful coexistence? Can there be a remedy to the way people are easily deceived to do things in the name of the Supreme? Can human relationship ever improve in the light of modernism? Or is it the case that the older the crime, the somewhat impossibility of a solution? Now, this work does not intend to dwell on what has been in the past and in the present but to suggest that there is a remedy in view. This remedy is borne out by the rich tools of philosophy as a normative discipline that helps in interrogating certain anomalies in the society.

The method to be adopted in this work is speculative, prescriptive and critical. A close look at the methods that will be employed in this work shows that they are methods that are sole exclusive of philosophy.

However, let it be known here that the use of the term 'man' is for both sexes. It means human kind or human being as the case may be. These are names that are all inclusive, in embracing both sexes-male and female of this species of organisms, known by the biological name of Homo Sapiens[1]. Following, the descriptive dimension of man, dualists holds that man is a composite being that is made of matter and spirit. This means that man is believed to have a material body and a non-material soul. While, the dualists are of the view that both dimension of man are parallel, the integrationists say that both dimension constitute one substance, man. Be that as it may, the underlining truth is that man who has a material aspect, is known to have a vital force that is non-material.

Man and the Society:

Three sociological theories will help present the path through which this aspect will be taken. The sociological theories are structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism and conflict theory. There is no doubt these theories have their shortcomings because of their adherence to scientific principles and methods. However, attention will be paid to their sociological principles and how they apply to societal interactions.

Structural functionalism depicts the society as a social system consisting of various structures, organizations and institutions, influencing each other and affecting the whole system. It focuses on the function of the institutions and their contribution to the continuity of the social system.[2] This theory is suggestive of the function or the role an organization play in the growth of a society.

Symbolic Interactionism is interested to know how an individual acquires personal and social characteristics, in particular, self-identity. The theory concludes its assertion that people were not born with the sense of the self. They acquire it through interaction that takes place between them in the society[3]. There is no doubt, therefore, that this places primacy on the indispensable role of the society as it is the one that is responsible in forming the self-identity of the human person

Conflict Theory presents society as an arena of widespread conflict and struggle at every level of it. Thus, conflict theory sees society to be structured on the patterns that retain the discriminatory *status quo*. It favours some sides and side-lines others. However, the aspect of conflict theory that will be of utmost concern here, is the one that is open to reconciliation in the area of conflict resolution; wherein parties disagree to agree.

A close look at all of these theories, show the reality of interaction and how the society is necessary for the growth and development of the human person. It shows the strength to which every

institution is built. These theories carries with them a normative character in that the society or if you like the community has a strong influence in determining the integrity of the human person.

Man we all know is a social animal. The reality of this assertion is in its ability to be able to interact with its fellow peers. The different areas of socialization are fully suggestive of this reality in the human person. Primarily, man learns cultural discipline and societal norms from the family community which is very important for influencing the human person.

Sociologists have postulated different theories of society. This ranges from the fact that the society is a structurally built system that helps to empower the human person in ascertaining his set goals. A close look at most of the theories of societal development, will help discover that it is centered on the human person. A. Spirkin itemized collective interactions that further strengthens man's existence in the society. According to him, they include the family, the play or instruction groups, the production team and other types of formal and informal collectivity.[4] It is important to note that the family plays an important role in the psychological development of the human person. The family is a crucial instrument for the development of personality. This is because it is here that the child first comes to know about the basics of existence. In other words, it is here that the child first becomes involved in social life, absorbs its values and standards of behavior, it ways of thought, language and certain value orientations. From the family, the child finds itself in some other association as he grows older.

Apart from the family, other groups and institutions play significant roles in the social development of the human person. These groups or associations have a way of influencing an individual's personality whether for good or for bad but one thing that is sure, is the fact of an influence. Such a group can be the school institution or peer group. All these are societal institution that the human person cannot shy away from because they produce a kind of interaction that is needed in human development. In the different schools for instance, they meet another level of interaction under the influence of non-family members. This is not to say the family level of socialization is in sharp contrast to this institution's form of socialization rather, both run concurrently in that the child while in school realizes that they are judged by their performance and no longer being accepted unconditionally. This is where a partial level of independence emerges from the human person. This is so because they learn a new culture that extends beyond their narrow family culture. This new culture requires a high level of efforts in learning outside the scope of a family but to the wider community. Upon finishing from this institution, are lunched into a more intense

level of socialization that sees them responsible for forming and building the interaction of younger generation. Here most of them are lunched into the life of full adulthood in marriages, work and even colleges. Here they take full responsibilities for all their actions.

The human person is a being that is always in touch with his environment or society as the case may be. This is why it is impossible to separate an individual from the society; because the individual is a product of the society. Their relationship is very cordial. The individual lives and acts within the society. Man is biologically and psychologically equipped to live in the society. This is where the social life of the individual is formed; F.M Anayet Hossain & M. D. Korban Ali note that "social life are dependent on the following such as political life, economic life, voluntary associations, educational associations, method of communications and family [5]. This is why man is at the center of every political system like the unitary or parliamentary system. This same also holds way in the economic palace where man is at the center of every economic policies like socialism, capitalism, communism and communalism. Man is said to have survived all of these economic systems in their own uniqueness.

Man, who is a social being, is said to be religious too. In fact, some scholars refer to man as a religious animal. Some traditions and culture have opined that you cannot separate religion from their ontology. For instance, the Africans see themselves as notoriously religious. The question now is what is this religious dimension of man all about? This will bring to bare another important aspect of this work.

Religion and Man

Since the main thrust of this work is to build up a healthy religio-social dimension of the human person, it is fitting that having discussed man and his place in the society, man and the notion of religion be also explicated.

The word religion means different things to different people since there is no universally accepted definition of religion. However, from its etymology, the word religion according to Bernard Haring is derived from three Latin words as its root namely, *ligare* which means 'to bind' *relegare* which means to unite, or to link and *religio* which means relationship"[6]. From the etymology, one can immediately see that the underlining truth about the term religion is that it has to do with interaction that fosters relationship in order to bind and to link people together. However, the link or relationship here is one that exist between a person and a supreme being that is believed to exist. This divine Supreme Being that is transcendent is an object of worship by the human

person. This is what truly constitutes the essence of religion as Joseph Omoregbe argues:

Religion is essentially a bi-polar phenomenon. On the one end is man (religious man) while on the other end is the transcendent being, the deity he believes to exist and which he worships. Whether such a deity really exists or simply the figment of his imagination of the religious man is not important to the concept of religion, as long as the deity is really believed by the religious man to actually exist. For him, the deity is a reality. The concept of deity is essential to the concept of religion. Hence, where a belief in a deity is lacking, there can be no religion since religion, as we have said, is essentially a relationship established between man and a deity, that is, a transcendent personal being, believed to exist.[7]

The point therefore is that religion carries with it a relationship between man and the Supreme. This simply means that the truth of religion is centred on the existence of a Supreme Being that is transcendent. This Supreme Being is said to be very powerful in that it can determine the life of man to a very large extent. Since this is possible, man is supposed to have good rapport with the Him by a sincere worship of Him. This is where some persons also feel that religion is also a human activity. This is because religion also affects the human person. The belief and reliance on the Supreme Being is an indication of the limitations and weaknesses of the human person. This worship and appeal done to the Supreme Being further shows man's dependence. This is where Gallowaay's definition of religion becomes necessary. According to him, "religion is man's faith in a power beyond himself whereby he seeks to satisfy emotional needs and gains stability of life, and where he expresses in acts of worship and service"[8]

Religion is likened to a law that is inseparable from man's nature just as the laws of physics and life are inseparable from matter and living beings. This is because the Supreme Being who is believed to be the creator of the world (as evident in many traditions), has given man the longing for his creator and directed man towards him. Ever since the history of mankind began, man has been practicing different forms of worship and piety. In fact, some scholars say there was no nation on the earth that was unattached to a religion and performing its rites in one-way or another. This is because piety is an instinct, a natural feeling deeply rooted in man's being. It can neither be hushed, nor muted in an individual's conscience, nor can the human conscience be prevented from sensing it, or going towards it[9]

Different theories have been postulated for the evolution of religion. We have the sociological, psychological theories of religion and anthropological theories of religion. The Anthropological theory of Religion is propagated by Ludwig Feuerbach in his work, *The Essence of*

Christianity. Here, he states that religion is the creation of man and worship of a projected human self. This projection of himself is a product of the mystery of religion where one seeks help from a higher being. For Feuerbach, the higher being that is projected is man himself whose good deeds or evil deeds are not indifferent to God. He argues thus:

Man- this is the mystery of religion- projects his being into objectivity, and then again makes himself an object to this projected image of himself thus converted into a subject; he thinks of himself, but as the object of an object, of another being than himself. Thus, here, man is an object to God. That man is good or evil is not indifferent to God.[10]

The Psychological theory of Religion is advocated by Sigmund Freud in his works, *Totem and Taboo* (1913), *The Future of an Illusion* (1927), and *Moses and Monotheism* (1939). In all of these works, Freud argues that religion is a projection of man's childhood neurosis, the continual need of a Father and a reflection of infantile mentality. This simply means that for Freud, religion projects man's inability to grow up; it is like a puerile fixation and stagnancy where man depends on his parents for everything and this have so affected him that he has extended this dependency to an unknown Supreme Being for help.

There exist different sociological theories of religion, but the most prominent of them is in the works of E. B. Tylor tiltled, *Primitive Culture (*1871) and Emile Durkheim's, *Elementary forms of Religion* (1912). Tylor concludes that religion evolves from ancestor worship. He says: "using the phrase ancestor worship in its broadest sense, as comprehending all worship of the dead, be the of the same blood or not, we conclude that ancestor worship is the root of every religion"[11]. Joseph Omoregbe states that religion for Emile Durkheim, is a principle of control by the society to continually dominate her citizens. It is the principle of influence, which personified social forces of control in society into a god with all the attributes of society as its qualities[12].

Giving the fact that these three theories of religion are of different perspectives, yet one striking thing is that they have the reality of man as their subject matter.

Religion and its Role in the Society

Religion plays an important role on culture of a society. Every religion is the product of a particular culture within which it grew[13]. It is hard to comprehend any religion without understanding the culture from which it developed. Every culture would certainly have impact in the methods of religion. Certain trends in history will help accelerate this view. For instance, Christian religion grew from the Jewish culture and

one can understand why there is somewhat interrelatedness in both religion notwithstanding some differences though. This is because every society is unique in her cultural displays.

Religion is said to play very vital aspect in the human society where human person interacts in the different institutions whether domestic, economic and political institution. In fact, Shanjendu Nath gave some instances on how religion affect the social structure of the human person. They are in the realm of internal feelings, an external form of social control, and to help in the character formation of the human person.[14] According to him, an important aspect of religion is prayer and different classes of people belonging to different castes of society assemble in religious institutions for performing prayer and worship[15]. This praying and fellowshipping together has a way of building the sentiments among themselves and this further influence what they do as a group in the building of the different social institutions.

Religion also has a form of social control following the second aspect of Nath's bifurcation of the roles of religion to society. This is because according to him, the different activities and their different spheres of social life are still influenced by religious rites and ceremonies; such that it becomes possible for people to express their religious feelings through rituals and ceremonies. This is evident in the different occasions of social life like marriages, birth, harvesting, hunting, death and so on. Here, you see the reality of ritual and other ceremonies performed in these occasions. This same rite can be extended to the economic aspect of the society and even in the aspect of the inauguration of a building structure and oath taking. All of these points to the fact that religion plays an important role in the further structuring of the society and its institutions.

Nath went on to state that religion also help to shape the character of an individual[16]. According to him, religion brings a sense of social value in the mind of people. This will enable the human person to work in tandem with the norm of society that coheres with basic religious belief. He expresses this thus "in obeying the social laws or to respect the elders and to show sympathy towards the feelings of others, or to discharge the social obligations faithfully, the role of religion is immense".[17] This further proves the indispensable role of religion to the character formation of man wherein he is able to show civility in the ethical dictates of social life.

This view can be liken Loyal Rue's description of the function of religion. He sees the function of religion in the achievement of personal wholeness and social coherence[18]. For him, the mythical and the ancillary strategies of religions, shape the emotions and motivations of individuals

in a way that allows them to overrule the innate intuitive morality of their biological heritage in favour of the culturally defined values encoded in myths. This is premised upon the notion that religious myths actually do promote a morality that induces behavior leading to personal wholeness and social cohesion.

Looking at the above roles of religion within the context of human interrelationship, one can see that the role of religion to human society is to lead to a healthy humanity. Be that as it may, there exist some maladies that threatens this strength of humanity. The next session of this work will deal with some challenges that posit threat to human interrelationship.

Factors Militating Against Human Interrelatedness in the Society

This aspect will bring to bear the different ills that are in the society and religious institution that further proved that man is yet to attain the full realization of socio-religious essence. A close look at society, one will notice certain mishap which can be translated as *man's inhumanity to man,* the 'survival of the fittest' instinct and certain corrupt practices, that have tied down man's destiny from the will of progress. It is in the identification of all of these deficiencies that we now ascertain the role of philosophy in enhancing a formidable structure for the formation of the human person. The assessment of these maladies will be taken from different perspectives.

Sexist practices. There is no doubt that the society in which we live is characteristics of different agents, agencies and institution. However, outside this reality is the fact of gender awareness. According Sandra Bem, a psychologist "one cognitive process that seems nearly inevitable in humans is to divide people into groups. We can partition these groups on the basis of race, age, religion, and so on. However, most of the times we split humanity on the basis of gender. The first thing we instantly determine when meeting someone new, is their gender"[19]. This view shows the reality of gender consciousness, where people make a great divide of humanity on the basis of gender. With this in mind one is tempted to say this gender realization at people to be done is almost habitual and automatic as Issabela Crespi puts it "this process of categorizing others in terms of gender is both habitual and automatic. It's nearly impossible to suppress the tendency to split the world in half, using gender as the great divider"[20]. It is interesting to note that this great divide is not bad it in itself since nature has made it so. But the part that seem problematic is the reality of subjugation and denigration. Where a particular sex claims to be superior than the other; where a particular sex sees itself as the only qualified sex to attain a particular

height. This has led to the contention between what I call *feminism* and *masculinism*.

In a society where the reality of sexist practices abound, one can lay claim to the sad scenario of denigration. This is evident in burial rites, ownership of properties, domestic chores, political position, naming ceremonies and the likes. Ceremonies like these in some cultures are avenues for such sexist tendencies to be shown.

Rape: This is another act of man's inhumanity to man. It is a violent and forceful sexual act on another. Some to adult, while some others to minors. A. S Hornby defines rape as the crime of forcing somebody to have sex with one especially with violence"[21]. This means that rape involves the use of force. In other words, it is against the will of the person who is under compulsion to do so. In the same vein, Briganeti and Egbonimali see rape as an act of sexual violence that involves intercourse without consent or against someone being willing to engage in the act[22]. Samuel Okafor-Udah brought about another dimension of rape that occurs. According to him, this does not have to do with physical violence as such but a deception of a kind with the use of gift. He argues thus "an adult of any age range tactfully seduces a child of a tender age for either marriage or sex with an enticing gift and the child after collecting same willingly gives in for it with the adult, it is said to be rape as well[23]. He also went further to state that this form rape is viewed as "a sex crime carried out by pathological men or women who were unable to control their own sexual desires[24]. In a nut shell, rape is an unlawful sexual intercourse with someone with or without the use of force inorder to achieve sexual gratification. Different countries and societies have had a share of this anomaly. Samuel Okafor gave the Nigerian situation on rape when he noted:

Rape is a global problem with women and children being mostly vulnerable. They are the ones bearing the brunt of this evil in every society of the world … there are several cases, which are very irritating. Now and then, it is reported that a teacher has raped a student. A religious leader his flock. Robbers have raped their victim. A man has raped a sister-in-law or daughter –in-law. A master has raped a housemaid. A security man has raped his master's wife. A boss has raped his staff. A father has raped his daughter. A young man has raped his grandmother. A minor has raped a fellow minor. A traditional ruler has raped a subject. An 80 year old man has raped an 8 year old girl.[25]

A close look at the above shows that the case of rape has crossed through different sections of a society, ranging from the political, religious, social, traditional sphere. Such exploitation have eaten deep into the fabric of

the system. Thus the progression of the percentage over the cause of years has always been in the increase.

Child Abuse: This another anomaly that has threatened societal cohesion. A child is one who has not attained the status of an adult. The child is often judged as one between the age brackets of 7 to 14. Any harm done to persons of this age bracket is termed child abuse; however, it is interesting to note that the society have been guilty of this over time. According to Slavka Michancova, research reveals that about twenty percent of women and five to ten percent of men worldwide were victims of child sexual abuse (CSA)[26]. Beauty, following the Scope of Child Abuse Problem U.S. 2005 Data, asserts that:

> Child abuse is a worldwide problem which is carried out by the strong on the weak, affecting children from birth to 18 years plus of age. The most recent US data on the scope of child abuse problem dates from 2005, during which 3.3 million reports of abuse and neglect were filled. About 60 percent of these reports warranted investigation with one-half of these allegations substantiated. It further stated, that these data indicate the incidence of child abuse and neglect to be 12.1 per 1,000 children; 1,460 children (four percent per day) died in 2005 as a result of inflicting trauma with more than 77 percent of these deaths in children less than 4 years of age.[27]

From the above, it shows that child abuse cuts across different states of the world giving the fact that it is a worldwide affair. This act is often done by the strong to inflict pain on the weak. It should also be noted that parents are also part of those who abuse their children. They do this on the ground that they have absolute control over the affairs of their children as such, their biddings must be obeyed. Care must be taken because this act is a crime that is punishable by law. Thus, Michancova states that child sexual abuse is a serious crime that represent massive violation of human rights and generates long-term negative impact in various aspects of victims' lives.[28]

Violence: Religious and social violence have become the order of the day - where conflicts between people of different religions and social sects reigns and where the different religions try to prove the supremacy of their religion via violence. For example, in some areas of Nigeria, Muslims cannot live peacefully with Christians. Commenting on the bane of ethno-religious crisis, George Asadu says:

Though religion has played vital role in the society, and has contributed immensely to the national development of this country, it has also been wrongly used by some ethnic groups to afflict this country severally with conflicts leading to wanton destruction of properties and loss of human lives. Obviously, there has been too much blood letting in this country resulting from ethnic and religious conflict which is threatening the very foundation of Nigeria's corporate existence as a nation. The menance of ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria is fast eroding the core socio-cultural and religious value which forbids murder, coverteousness … this has hampered the economic growth of this country to such a great extent that poverty has engulfed the majority of the citizen. Worst still, the mayhems have produced many disabled persons, orphans and widows and (widowers) …[29]

The same is true of the political sphere of the state, where political actors do not really understand what political rivalry is all about. People see the differences in party alliances as differences of humanity and as a result all forms of violence are being perpetrated to pull the other person down. The same is true of the educational and social sectors. This is evident where members of a particular schools resort to violence to prove the supremacy of their school. Where some School Proprietors resort to blackmail and give negative and unfounded reasons why students should not be enrolled in another school due to unhealthy competition.

Racial Discrimination/Tribalism: Racism and ethnic bigotry are another forms of malady that has affected the society. This is almost synonymous with religious and social violence. This is where people gets what and how due to cultural affiliation. Where a black man feels comfortable with his fellow blacks and does not want to associate with the white. On the other hand, when a white man sees himself as superior to the blacks. This is also evident in a multicultural state like Nigeria for instance. In a situation when there is social hegemony and nepotism about who get a particular position. Where a Yoruba man feels comfortable with Yoruba people alone, or Hausa people do same with their fellow Hausa. Or the Igbo the same with theirs. This racist cum ethnic biases further strengthens the wrong use of ***son of the soil syndrome.*** Such a myopic view about life has a way of playing negatively in the normative vision of the human person

Other maladies include Deception and exploitation by some religious ministers on their subjects. This is evident when so called ministers of God blackmail the conscience of their faithful in order to get something material from them. Where the sacrilegious acts have become

the order of the day. The sin of simony have so rocked some religious institutions that you now begin to ask the way forward about authentic worship. Is it the case of the parading of a white man in Kenya whom they claim is Jesus? Or the one who asks his believers to eat grass and serpent? Or the religious leaders who ask his followers to kill in the name religion? All of these threaten societal cohesion.

Even the different **Corruption practices** in the different states are not left out. This ranges from stealing, robbery, kidnapping, electoral fraud; academic fraud and other social menaces. All of these menaces serves as clogs in the will of progress in any given state.

Philosophical Principles and Religio-Cultural Relationship: Towards a Normative Vision of the Human Person

Here, the irreplaceable tool of philosophy will be harnessed. Philosophy as a normative discipline is from two Greek words, *philos* and *Sophia*, meaning love of wisdom. A close look at the nature of philosophy will show that man is placed at the center of it all. This is as a result of man's quest to know more about reality. Williams Aso captures this clearly when he says "man as the subject of philosophy has unquenchable thirst for knowledge not only for empirical realities alone but also phenomenal realities and everything that concern human experience and the universe in general".[30] It is in this quest for the normative vision of the human person that the ethical principles of philosophy will be harnessed.

The ethical principles will help in carving out a normative vision of the human person; this is because ethics which is a core branch of philosophy is one that permeates virtually all aspect of life. It is a descriptive, prescriptive and normative discipline. Its normative vision will see to the formulation of the moral order of actions that are not adjudged by personal feelings or emotions, but within the overall ground of moral values and norms. Morality is not ruled by what a person feels alone or think alone. There must be an objective way of looking at morality that will help get rid of socio-religious maladies. In doing this, there must be a consideration for others. This is where the moral justification of 'otherness' comes in. In Paul Ricoeur's work titled *Oneself as Another*, 'otherness' is tied to the *self* and this *self* has a responsibility of preserving 'others'[31]. Martin Buber's intersubjectivity philosophy of dialogue, came up with the *I and Thou* interaction that presents the human person that is always in constant interaction with themselves giving the fact that all are of one substance. Edmund Hurssel gave a phenomenological approach to this normative vision when he came up with the theory of experiencing 'others' as myself[32]. Here, the consideration of the well being of others must first be considered.

Anyone who thinks of this will not rape, or cajole people in the name of religion.

Even the case of unhealthy sexist practices is not left out in the struggle to build a normative vision of the human person. Thus, in Simeone de Beauvoir's work *The Second Sex*, it clearly stated that she was out rightly against patriarchy supremacy and labeling of women. In this work, Simeone argues that women is the *other*. It is from this notion, othering as a philosophical term takes on the notion of prejudice, inequality, marginality[33]. This is so because while othering is used to describe those who belong to a subordinate social category, otherness on the other hand, refers to the characteristics of the other that is not to be stereotype as inferior.

As for the case of racial discrimination and ethnic bigotry, our knowledge of substance and accidents in metaphysics (a branch of philosophy) shows that every human person shares one substance – the humanity of the human person. The humanness of the white man or the black man or as evident in the different ethnic groups in Nigeria, the Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Efik or Ijaw is not lesser or higher than the humanness of the Fulani, Tiv, Idoma, Esan or Egede as the case may be. We all share one humanity. The fact that one is a white man or a black man or Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa is simply accidental to the being of the individual person.[34]

Emmanuel Levinas theory of *alterity* and *otherness* is not out of place. The French philosopher highlighted the need to think of the *other*. His *alteririty* expresses yet again a normative vision of the human person. This means considering the wellbeing of others. It is in doing this Francis Ikhianosime says that Levinas in his alterity is "trying to safeguard the other from violation, oppression and inferiorization, hence, his use of Alterity begins with a sense of responsibility to the other".[35] Levinas preoccupation here is in the case of having a responsibility towards the well being of others and not for the other to be discriminated upon all subjected to all forms of denigration.

A furtherance to this normative formation of the human person can be assessed from Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative. "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law"[36]. This formulation seeks an objective method of doing things in the society and in religious palace. The second formulation of his categorical imperative "Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only"[37] Since we live in a society, the wellbeing of others must be considered. None should let his non-challant attitude or negligence to cause harm to another as Richard Wollheim says argues "every action that occurs within a society and rises at all above the level

of triviality is bound to impinge upon other members of that society"[38] this simply means that any act of neglect done by one is capable of causing damage to everyone. Wollheim went further to state that " the only actions that are unconditionally exempt from the jurisdiction of the state are of the order of brushing one's teeth"[39] however, I beg to disagree here that not brushing a teeth affect the individual alone, it also affect those he communicate with; that is, those of low immune system.

John. S. Mill's philosophical influence is evident in his defense of utilitarianism and liberalism. Mill's utilitarianism assesses actions and institutions in terms of their effects on human happiness and enjoins us to perform actions and design institutions so that they promote in one formulation, maximize human happiness[40] this further shows that Mill's utilitarianism is a progressive theory for human development. Although, Mill's Utilitarianism has its own shortcoming, yet his principle on liberty, individuality and solidarity has much to say on the dignity of others.

It should be noted that human freedom is not meant to be an impediment to authentic relationship between persons rather it should be a bridge to aid human advancement and foster morality. It is painful to note that people use freedom in the wrong way. For some the freedom of the will is an avenue for them to be violent and as a result see their views as the most superiror. The normative vision of the human person here calls for a proper harnessing the rational ethics of freedom. This means the kind of freedom that is guided by rationality. It therefore means that the human person must continually live in a manner that justifies rationality. This is because, if man does not take advantage of his rationality, he may be steeped on a path of self-annihilation"[41] Philosophers down the ages have been passionate about doing a defence for an authentic relationship of the human person. They do this because of the belief that the human person is a relational being.

Even the African traditional society recognizes this interaction of the human person. This is because Africans conceive of the human person from the descriptive point of view and the normative point of view. While the descriptive point of view refers to the biological frame work of the human person; but the normative aspect of the human person draws strength from the sense of the community. In order words, Africans holds that for one to truly realize himself, he must be a part of the community. African ontology is communalistic; it is part of the unique identity of Africans thus Frank Ndubuisi says "in African metaphysics, the self is conceived essentially towards others; that is, a 'being-with-others'. The African is not just a human being but essentially a 'being-with'. Consequently it is the community who makes the individuals, because of his relationship with others in the community'[42].

Jack Aigbodioh on his part holds that, .African traditional (i.e. indigenous) cultures are noted by anthropological and sociological scholars alike for their communalistic form of life, which emphasizes the humanistic values of the co-dependency ethos with its universalistic appeal to equality and intersubjective recognition[43]. In fact, in African ontology, the human person fully realizes itself in the community. When Mbiti says that, the African says to himself, "I am because we are, the "we" referred to here is not an additive 'we' but a thoroughly fused collective 'we'[44]. To further buttress this, Aigbodioh concludes that communalism, or its cognate communitarianism (from community), is a term used to express the peculiar cohesive and integrative character of African traditional society[45].

It becomes pertinent to state that man relates as long as he exists and keeping with the norms of authentic relationship will help make the society a better place

Conclusion

In this work, we have succeeded in making an exposition of the notion of man and how he cannot be separated from the activities of the society. This is translatable from the perspective of the domestic interaction that exist in the family, the school and other social institutions. All of these sociological strata depicts the reality of interaction.

The work also made an assessment of religion from its etymology to the different theories that are associated with it. In fact the sociological theory as exposed by Emile Durkheim, the Anthropological as espoused by Ludwig Feuerbach and the psychological as espoused by Freud shows that the religion has man as its subject matter and this man in in constant relationship whether with his fellow men or with the supreme.

The work also argues that although man is seen as a being that is in constant relationship, yet this relationship has not be fully realized judging from the fact that different ills are perpetrated daily in our world. Ills like rape, sexist practices, ethnicism, violence, nepotism and the likes.

Be that as it may the paper concludes that only the principles of philosophy can provide a normative tools from the enhancement of the relationship and interrelatedness of the human person. To achieve this, there must be a proper adoption of some ethical moral principles that helps to foster cohesion in all strata of humanity. This principle is the need to consider one's good and the good of the 'others'. This means seeing others as having the same essence with set goals.

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18

HUSSERLIAN 'EPOCHE' AND THE EXPANSION OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract
Husserlian 'epoche' requires the researcher to intentionally set aside prejudices, biases, presumptions and presuppositions previously acquired from culture, religion, and society. This 'epoche' will enable the individual to have his or her own personal unbiased or unprejudiced assessment of the phenomena – objects, persons, events. Most, if not all cultures, religions, and society seem rigid and dogmatic in imparting knowledge to younger generations. Most persons who can reproduce the knowledge imparted to them are often celebrated as intelligent persons even when they may not have expanded the knowledge in question; thus ignoring those who may produce an unbiased or unprejudiced assessment of the phenomena – persons who may contribute to and expand knowledge. While the reproduction of cultural or communal knowledge by a given generation has historical values, it limits the generation in question to the limits of the knowledge community. This paper, using the analytical and phenomenological methods, argues for the expansion of human knowledge by encouraging researchers to have their encounter with the phenomena using the Husserlian 'epoche'. Such knowledge acquired by the individual should be seen as an expansion of or additional knowledge to that of the knowledge community.

Keywords: *Epoche,* Knowledge, Proposition, Phenomenology, Testimony

Introduction

Knowledge is essential to human survival. What to do or not do, what to eat and drink, the best environment to live in towards enhancing human life, the extent of what we know of other persons, objects, places and things, and so on are essential to human survival.

Now, nature seems to be evolving. And humans, as part of nature, seems to be acquiring more skills by the day which enable humans to have a better knowledge of nature as well as other persons. Thus the knowledge we currently possess of the nature of the person and reality, in general, seems to be the best of all knowledge hitherto produced by the human race because we have further expanded, via our own experiences, the knowledge we acquired from our predecessors. With all sense of sincerity and commitment to the survival of the human race, the knowledge we possess today we will also pass on to other persons (scholars or researchers inclusive).

However, despite our genuine commitment to the survival of the human race, humans are still plagued with viruses, natural and man-made disasters, famine and hunger, poverty and premature death, terrorism and wars due to our inability to manage ourselves as temperamental and sensual beings who, more often than not, are prone to be irrational than rational.

Finding solutions to the above challenges require handing over or transmitting knowledge from one generation to another. This is often done through the propositional knowledge of scholars or researchers. Such knowledge helps the scholar or researcher to be up to date with the historical development of the knowledge in question. But if all that the scholar or researcher does is to memorise and reproduce the knowledge imparted to him or her, then meeting the challenges of the seemingly changing nature and human behavioural patterns may be difficult.

There is, therefore, the urgent need to impart knowledge to scholars or researchers at all levels in such a way that they will be able to have their own experiences of the phenomena. Such experiences of theirs will be their contribution to the knowledge community and expand their knowledge of reality. To adequately expand human knowledge and resolve now challenges that threaten human existence, the phenomenological method of Husserl, especially his *epoche* is of great importance.

Thus, this paper will expose the phenomenological method of Husserl as captured in his *epoche* towards revealing how it can help expand human knowledge. Before doing this, it will expose what knowledge is and argue that knowledge, as taught in schools, are fundamentally propositional, historical and ultimately testimonial in nature. Testimonial knowledge attests to the need for *epoche* in expanding knowledge for the survival of the human race.

What Knowledge Is

To the epistemologist, the knowledge that is of importance is propositional knowledge, which is often in the form of 'I know that..."

Such knowledge presupposes that the knower has experienced phenomena – persons, objects, things, events and state-of-affairs. From a phenomenological point of view, especially as espoused by Husserl, such knowledge also include things like universals or essences, numbers, values, and so on. Knowledge here is an expression of the knower's experience (directly or indirectly) with a phenomenon via sense perception, rational or cognitive inference or judgment, testimony (knowledge from other persons' experiences), revelation, authority or experts, memory, and so on.

Traditionally, knowledge has been defined as 'justified true belief' (Plato, Theaetetus, 201 c-d). The main challenge with this definition, especially as captured by Gettier's counterexamples (Gettier, 1963: 123), is how to justify knowledge claims. It is not enough to claim to know something, to claim to have an experience of something, to claim to have come in contact with something or to claim to have reflected on something and, thus, have an idea of it without providing a satisfactory and reasonable explanation for one's knowledge claim.

Attempts to justify knowledge claims have led to different criteria of justification which largely depend on the school of thought of the knower. Materialists are likely to limit themselves to that which is perceptible to the senses and, if they are scientists, they are generous enough to include the conclusions reached by the senses with the aid of scientific instruments that help to meliorate the limits of sense perception.

Idealists seek the certainty of knowledge beyond the limits of sense perceptions. They are likely to place more trust in reason or inferential knowledge in their search for essences or universal qualities that can endure through time. If they are religiously inclined, certainty in knowledge will be sought for in the relationship they have with the divine or supernatural being who is believed to have created all things that can be known, and who infuses into the human mind the lacuna in sensual and cognitive knowledge via revelation, intuition, dreams and feelings.

For instance, as it concerns an idealistic conception of knowledge, Abanaku (2018: 52) is of the view that the ultimate reality (the One or the Supreme Being) is the sole criterion of truth for the One is truth itself. The most humans can know of reality is to some certain degree of certainty. Thus "human knowledge could be described as characterized by degrees of clarity, distinctness and truth as it deepens from individual through communal to ultimate knowledge." (Abanaku, 2018: 53)

But Teichman and Evans (1991: 65) negate the idealistic notion of knowledge because it seems to ignore the notion of propositional

knowledge. Propositional knowledge is seen by them as the testimony of a knower about an event that took place at a time in history, and the event is about nature that seems to be evolving.

However, irrespective of the school of thought one may adhere to, once the subject of knowledge (a knower) believes that he or she knows anything, the knowledge acquired becomes propositional at the point of communicating or transmitting it to others.

Propositional Knowledge as Testimonial Knowledge

The subject of knowledge (the knower or epistemic agent) believes that he or she knows when there is some reasonable degree of conviction. This reasonable degree of conviction is put to the test when the knower presents the knowledge he or she claims to have to another person or group of persons. This presentation of a knowledge claim is in the form of a proposition, that is, the knowledge claim is presented as a claim that can be true or false, even though the knower presents it with the conviction that the claim he or she makes is true.

On propositional knowledge, Hegel (1892: 144) is of the view that it gives us a partial picture of reality; partial idea from the perspective of the knower. While a full knowledge of reality can be attained at the level of 'Absolute Knowledge', before attaining absolute knowledge via dialectic, the knower produces propositional knowledge from a given perspective and groups things into different classes.

Now, propositional knowledge allows other epistemic agents (who are being presented with the knowledge claim of the knower) to verify whether or not the knowledge claim of the knower is true or false. It also brings to the awareness of epistemic agents that the knowledge in question is as understood and expressed by the knower; that is, it is the testimony of the knower concerning the knowledge claim.

Propositional knowledge, therefore, becomes the testimony of the knower at the point of dissemination. If epistemic agents (hearers) are convinced of the veracity of the knowledge claim or are reasonably satisfied with the justification provided by the knower, then it becomes knowledge for the epistemic agents based on the testimony of the knower. But if epistemic agents doubt the knowledge claim of the knower, then the knowledge claim becomes probable.

Furthermore, testimonial knowledge is historical in the sense that it is the proposition of a knower containing a knowledge claim of phenomena or state-of-affairs acquired in some distant or immediate past. Since reality is interpreted differently from the experiences of different epistemic agents, and what we claim to know seems to constantly evolve, then there is a need to constantly keep track of what we can know of the phenomena or present state-of-affairs. But if we

bring into our experience of the phenomena or present state-of-affairs the previous conclusions we deduced from our past experiences or previous conclusions reached by culture, religion, society, other researchers and epistemic agents from previous phenomena or similar state-of-affairs, then we may fail to detect what the present phenomena or present state-of-affairs is revealing or has evolved into. These previous experiences of ours or conclusions reached by culture, religion, society, other researchers and epistemic agents are what Husserl referred to as biases, prejudices, presuppositions, etc. To experience phenomena or a present state-of-affairs as it currently is or as it is currently revealing itself without bias, prejudice or presuppositions requires one to practice Husserl's *epoche.* The practice of Husserl's *epoche* will lead to a meaningful growth of knowledge.

Husserlian Epoche and the Growth of Human Knowledge

For Husserl, viewing the world from the opinions and conclusions of others is the "natural standpoint". The natural standpoint is the conventional way of learning or imparting knowledge to others. Also, this conventional way of perceiving reality limits reality to sense perception and trivializes our ability to know things inferred by reason – the idea of the mind, universals or essences.

To attain knowledge of things as they are (which is not possible for Plato and Kant), Husserl developed a method that requires the bracketing away of the opinion, bias, prejudice, and presuppositions of the natural standpoint to be able to experience the phenomena as it is. This method is known as *epoche* or the "phenomenological reduction". It is the reduction of experience to the level of not being influence by the judgments and conclusions of previous epistemic agents. This "phenomenological reduction" also known as "transcendental reduction" leads to the experience of the pure act of consciousness about the phenomena or state-of-affairs.

According to Lawhead (2002: 530 footnote) "Epoche was the term used by the Greek sceptics when they recommended we withhold our commitment and suspend judgment about things that were uncertain." Thus, we can say that Husserl is challenging us to suspend all previous judgments, conclusions, opinions, and presuppositions about a phenomenon or state-of-affairs. We should approach the phenomenon or state-of-affairs with the mindset of allowing the phenomenon or state-of-affairs to reveal itself to us. With the revelation we have experienced we can form our judgment about the phenomenon. The phenomenon is explicated from one's own experience without the bias or influence of any philosophizing (Husserl, 1960: 151). Such an experience of the phenomenon is pure and will help us know things as they are in

themselves because it brackets away biases and attitude acquired at the level of the natural standpoint.

This method of *epoche* also known as 'bracketing' is an intuitive process similar to Descartes methodic doubt. Descartes, armed with experience, doubted the knowledge of reality he previously had on the bases that the sources of such knowledge had limitations. During this process, he could not doubt that he was doubting or thinking. Thus he concluded that essentially he was a thinking being that exists. This idea of a thinking being that exists was something he could not doubt and he believed that the sceptics, no matter how much they try to doubt it, will not be able to doubt it (Descartes, 1912: 26 – 27).

Descartes method of doubting everything he used to believe to be knowledgeable to be able to arrive at the "thinking being" with all clarity and certainty is similar to Husserl's *epoche*. Husserl believes that with the method of *epoche* he can arrive at the knowledge of things as they are.

Looking at the limitations of the senses and reason as sources of knowledge, and given that propositional knowledge is dated for they are about past experiences, in order not to live in the shadows of the past (especially if we want to know things as they are today), we must bracket away from the knowledge of the past. Ojong and Ibrahim (2011: 185) have both stated the problems with some sources and theories of knowledge and, taking a clue from the works of Kant and Kuhn they opined that today's knowledge claims are a product of the experience of the knower with interpretation arrived at by the workings of the mind of the knower. And, given that reality changes, the interpretation arrived at when reality changes produce new paradigms that "make us see the world from a different perspective."

Besides, Ojong (2010: 39, 44) encourages any epistemologist who is experiencing "epistemic loneliness" (egocentric predicament) over false ideas, to overcome his or her fears and scepticism by engaging in epistemic discourse with other epistemologists. He or she will effectively engage the external world using the tool of language to avoid the challenge of 'private' language.

But given that the idea of the epistemologist is relative to some degree, the researcher or scholar need not bother too much about objectivity or truth as defined or presented to him or her by the epistemic community. His or her main concern is to explain reality as currently experienced or as it currently presents itself.

Furthermore, from Kant and Kuhn's idea of a paradigm shift, one can infer that if indeed, reality undergoes changes, each major change will produce a new paradigm. Every new paradigm will produce new knowledge. Thus the researcher or scholar needs to bracket away

previous paradigms to enable him or her detect possible new changes of reality to be able to acquire knowledge current to the reality of his or her time. Such knowledge acquired becomes a contribution to the knowledge of the epistemic community. Knowledge, as collectively owned, has thereby expanded or grown.

Glorifying the Past

Husserl does not condemn the past. He did not play down the importance of customs and traditions. He also did not condemn the knowledge of our past experiences or from experts. He was, however, against dogmatising or canonising the experience of the past to the detriment of what the phenomena or state-of-affairs is currently revealing. Thus, if we are to find new patterns in the phenomena or state-of-affairs, if we are to solve today's emerging problems and challenges, and if we want to expand the frontiers of knowledge then we need to include our own unique experiences through the practice of Husserl's *epoche*.

Conclusion

Humans are communal beings. We live in communities and share things in common with members of the community in which we live. Knowledge is one major thing we share in common especially as it is essential to the survival of the human race.

However, as beautiful and essential the knowledge we acquire from the epistemic community is, it is dated. If the researcher or scholar is to contribute meaningfully to the epistemic community he or she belongs to, he or she should practice the Husserlian *epoche* especially since the world in which we live seems to be evolving. Whatever the pure act of consciousness intuitively deduces or produces from *epoche* is, according to Husserl, the way the phenomena or state-of-affairs is. This knowledge from the pure act of consciousness will further be implemented by reason and senses in our everyday experiences. Such knowledge, if different from what was previously thought about the phenomena or state-of-affairs, will be a genuine contribution to knowledge. It will be an advancement of knowledge. But then, it will not be proper to dogmatise it or to canonize it as the ultimate truth as far as the phenomena or state-of-affairs is. To dogmatise or canonize will amount to using this conclusion to assess subsequent or similar phenomena or state-of-affairs, and this will be against the principle of Husserl's *epoche*.

In other words, each time we approach familiar or strange phenomena or state-of-affairs we should apply *epoche* so that the pure state of consciousness can intuitively know the phenomena or state-of-

affairs as it is. If the phenomena or state-of-affairs has evolved, the subject of knowledge that is investigating it phenomenologically will detect it and add the experience to that of the knowledge community. If the phenomena or state-of-affairs has not evolved, it will reveal itself as it did the previous time it was experienced.

However, as difficult as it is for many to practice *epoche* or "Transcendental reduction," it produces and expands the frontiers of knowledge, conquers new challenges, and keeps humanity surviving.

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AN ETHICAL APPRAISAL OF THE FAMILY AS AN AGENT OF PRIESTLY FORMATION IN AFRICA

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Abstract
The family is the first unit of human formation among the various units of formation in every age. It is a unit that is indispensable in the grooming of the child. The way a child was brought up within a particular family can go a long way to influence his general attitude towards life. If the child was exposed to a good and favorable formation within family, the child is bound to be positively disposed toward others, because the child would not only have passed through the system, the system would have passed through the child. If it is the other way round, then it will manifest in the child's general attitude towards life as a whole. It has been discovered that with the disengagement of moral and religious education in schools, the moral fabric of societal life is progressively depreciating at an alarming rate. A lot of children and young people are now living without the basic and rudimentary knowledge of morals and religion. The only emphasis on education in many developed countries is intellectual knowledge, devoid of human formation. Most modern societies depend so much on the positive laws of the state to groom children and direct the affairs of their lives. This is having a toll on products of post primary schools, which are the raw materials for formation at the level of the Seminary. It is against this backdrop that this paper attempts an ethical appraisal of the role of the family in the formation of the candidates for the priesthood. This paper adopts the analytical and hermeneutical methods of analysis. It concludes

that a proper attention to the role of the family, will produce better candidates for formation and reduce incidences of behavioural dysfunctions in priestly ministry within the society.

Keywords: Family, Formation, Agent, Seminary Formation, and Africa

Conceptual Elucidation.

Family: The concept 'family' depicts a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, or adoption, constituting a single household and interacting with each other in their respective social positions, usually those of spouses, parents, children, and siblings.[1] The family plays the role of development with the relationship of the parents and the Children; it is basically the "original cell of social life"[2], where values are transmitted, and the basic level of socialization from which the human person gets the first bits of education. The family is the key and basic unit of development, a key aspect of the family is the role of formation, the family serves to form the members of this social unit, a place or ideal situation where the more experienced members, the parents and over time, elder siblings pass on the necessary basic values and ideas that require proper and adequate cultivation. The family passes on the first form of education to the young ones,[3] helping them form their primary and basic conceptions of the human life. "It is the most basic unit of the Church"[4]

Formation: The concept of 'formation' basically references development, in context, the process of shaping a person. Further, formation basically is a series of holistic developmental strategies aimed at improving the human person in different and basic facets of life, as the Advanced English Dictionary would refer to formation as fabrication into a particular shape, this is the basis of the formation of the human person, forming the person into a particular and certain shape, a shape of primarily, all round brilliance. Formation, as implicitly stated earlier is an all-round activity which implies that it covers varying aspects of the personality be it emotional, physical, moral, social, cognitive, behavioural etc. Also, the instruments of formation are diverse, there are varying social groups that have a role to play in the formation of the human person, the Family being the basic unit that helps forms the perception of the human person, that presents the lenses by which the person sees the world, it is as though the grassroots, as though the background from which the development process takes its root, the human person would always have other instruments and factors, the peer groups and other social institution but a pivotal agent would always remain the family.

The Seminary Formation: The formation in the seminary is one that is structured to meet all areas that are necessary for a holistic human formation. The four cardinal areas of formation in the seminary are the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation. These are areas that are sacrosanct and intrinsic to ensure a balanced and full grown man, ready for the priestly vocation. These areas of formation are very integral to the actualization of the goal of an authentic formation.

The Human Formation: According to the Synod fathers, "the whole work of priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation if it lacked a suitable human formation.[5] "This therefore reveals the importance of human formation, as it represents the foundation upon which every other formation is built. The young men are first human beings, and would in their vocation deal with human beings. The letter to the Hebrews notes that "every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God" (Heb. 5:1). In order that his ministry may be humanly as credible and acceptable as possible, it is important that the priest should mold his human personality in such a way that it becomes a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their meeting with Jesus Christ the redeemer of man.[6] Future priests should therefore cultivate a series of human qualities, not only out of proper and due growth and realization of self, but also with a view to the ministry[3]. The seminary hand book adds that maturity in human formation entails a two-fold demand, namely, increasing knowledge of oneself in all humanness as a creature, with particular strengths and weaknesses and understanding this within the framework of the relationships which forms the context of the priests life.[4] An understanding of humanity of an individual, and a conscious acceptance of the human nature, towards a conscious effort to be better, and to grow helps in undergoing a human formation devoid of pretense and hypocrisy, one that is open to learning. As the priest grows both in the knowledge of himself and in his relationship with others, he will be more deeply formed into his priesthood. The seminarian is therefore formed to work on himself and mold himself better into the image of Christ, and by extension, work on his relations with men, so as to become a healthy and lovable conduit of God's mercy and love for humanity.

In *Pastores Dabo Vobis* the Holy Father, St. John Paul II of blessed memory talks about "affective maturity", which for him, is the result of an education in true and responsible love, and notes that it is a significant, and decisive factor in the formation of candidates to the priesthood.[5] Affective maturity presuppose an awareness that love has a central role in human life.[6] In his encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*, St. Pope

John Paul II notes that Man cannot leave without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is meaningless if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate innately in it.[7] This therefore implies that the seminarian is groomed and grows in love in all its entirety, physical, psychic and spiritual, with a human maturity subsumed in clear training in freedom, expressed in heartfelt obedience to the truth of one's own being, and to the meaning of one's own existence.[8]

Spiritual Formation: The formation of the human person, finds its fullest expression in spiritual formation. When it is carried out in the context of an anthropology which is open to the full truth regarding the human person, it leads to and finds its completion in spiritual formation.[9] The hand book of the Seminary of all Saints adds that spiritual formation sets the foundation for the attitudes, habits and practices of the spiritual life in a lifetime of priestly ministry especially as regards priestly celibacy.[10] As a result of this, the *New Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sarcedotalis*, notes that initial admission to the seminary should be preceded by a spiritual and ecclesial programme, in which a serious discernment of the motivation in responding to a vocation can be undertaken.[11] This programme which is referred to as the Spiritual Year is a programme that is set aside for the spiritual formation of aspirants to the priestly vocation. For one year, the aspirant is engaged in spiritual exercises that also help in his discernment of his vocation. The major seminary, however, continues in this spiritual grooming as the daily schedules of the seminary contain different spiritual activities that are a necessary ingredient of his vocation.

The seminarian also has access to a spiritual director to whom he meets for guidance and counseling, on spiritual matters. The essential content of spiritual formation specifically leading towards the priesthood is well expressed in the Vatican Council's Decree *Optatam Totius*: Spiritual formation (…) should be conducted in such a way that the students may learn to live in intimate and unceasing union with God the Father through his son, Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.[12] Those who are to take on the likeness of Christ, priest by sacred ordination should form the habit of drawing close to him as friends in every detail of their lives.[13] Prayers and study of the word of God and the attendance of Holy Mass are core spiritual activities for all seminarians and priests in formation.

Pastoral Formation: The whole formation imparted to candidates for the priesthood aims at preparing them to enter into communion with the charity of Christ the good shepherd. Hence their formation in its

different aspects must have a fundamentally pastoral character.[14] This means that one major aspect of formation in the seminary is the pastoral formation, where students are trained to be true shepherds of soul after the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore seminarians are engaged in evangelical activities and are also posted to parishes.

The *Handbook of the Seminary of All Saints* notes that seminarians are introduced to the apostolic life by hands-on-experience in areas such as parish and campus ministry, counseling, parish religious education programmes, diocesan tribunals, vocation offices, hospital ministry, serial ministry to the poor and the disadvantaged etc.[15] Through these field experiences the seminary is helped to understand the apostolate, and is prepared to make a more matured commitment to the priesthood of Christ.

Intellectual Formation: This aspect of formation is, perhaps, central to the whole project of formation in the Church. This is a very vital aspect of the priestly formation that cannot be overemphasized. In *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, St. Pope John Paul II of blessed memory notes that "Intellectual formation has its own characteristics but it is also deeply connected with, and indeed can be seen as a necessary expression of, both human and spiritual formation: it is a fundamental demand of human intelligence by which he participate in the light of God's mind and seeks to acquire wisdom which in turn opens to and is directed towards knowing and adhering to God.[16] The challenges of the rapidly developing world and the intellectual demand of a highly knowledgeable society makes it important for the Priest to be a man of great intellectual fecundity and knowledge to meet the challenges of evangelism to highly intellectual people. The synod fathers notes that "if we expect every Christian to be prepared to make a defense of the faith, and to account for the hope that is in us (Cf 1 Pet. 3:15), then all the more should candidates for the priesthood and priests have diligent care of the quality of their intellectual formation in their education and pastoral activity. For the salvation of their brethren and sisters, they should seek an even deeper knowledge of the divine mysteries.[17]

The seminary is not only a place for spiritual and human formation, but also a place where there is a rich investment in intellectual rigor and exercises. The peculiarity of the priestly vocation is one that demands that the seminarian is equipped with philosophical and theological knowledge. The young man in formation is exposed to the different schools and areas in philosophy that helps him delve into existential questions and rationalizations about the world and creation in general. The seminarian is exposed to a high level of education and academic activity befitting of every higher institution of learning, to learn

undergraduate courses in philosophy, so as to come out a philosopher of refinement, knowledge and understanding, balanced intrinsically by studies in theology, (knowledge of God) which is in fact the goal of his philosophical endeavor. Therefore, like all other young men and women undergoing undergraduate studies in philosophy, the seminarian undergoes rigorous intellectual exercise in philosophy, but this rime with a purpose and a goal to be able to wither the storm that comes from a proliferation of knowledge that could pose a challenge to faith and learning in the knowledge of God.

The Holy Father, John Paul II of blessed memory explains this further when he notes that "the theologian is first and foremost a man of faith. But he is a believer who asks himself question about his own faith (*fides quarens intellectum*), with the aim of reaching a deeper understanding of the faith itself.[18] This is what philosophy helps to do, as it asks so many questions on existence and God. The need for philosophical studies geared and channeled towards a better understanding of the Christ is of the essence, as the philosophical traditions of the seminary are studied up to the point of supplementing theology, through the inclusion of various Christian philosophers and their philosophy that possesses a theological touch.

Theological formation is therefore very vital as it is the destination of all philosophical studies and the focal point of the intellectual studies of a seminarian. For John Paul II, theological formation is both complex and demanding. It should lead the candidate for the priesthood to a complete and united vision of the truths which God has revealed in Jesus Christ and of the church's experience of faith.[19]

Who are the Agents of Priestly Formation?

Throughout the course of the formation of an intending Priest, there are various persons, structures and institutions he comes in contact with which shape his personality and necessary qualities that place him in a better position to exercise his clerical responsibilities. The role of these agents cannot be treated with levity because in the long run, the impact of these agents go a long way to influence the candidate's conception of what the Priestly Ministry entails and how he is to go about the exercise of the ministry. There are so many people involved in the work of formation. But for the purpose of this paper, we would like to identify the main agents or units involved in the work of priestly formation. They are the key instruments being used by the God and Church to ensure the formation of future priests for the Church. We shall examine some of these salient agents which shape and influence Priestly formation and

their respective roles in the whole formation process. These are as follows:

The Family

As stated earlier, the family plays a pivotal role in the early upbringing of the child. It is the primary or primordial unit or agent of formation of the child. The attention paid by the family to the upbringing at the early stage of the growth of a child makes a lot of difference in the maturity of the child. The more attention given, the better for the child, the less attention given, goes a long way to affect the development of the child. This does not apply to the early stage alone, but at every stage of the development of the child. The whole gamut of formation should be wholistic. There is this tendency for some families to pay attention one or some aspect(s) of the child's formation to the detriment of the others. A lot of parents pay particular attention to the intellectual formation at the expense of human and spiritual formation, which is so important in the life of the child. They do this by sending their wards to the best school that are famous for academic prowess in the society without minding what they are able to offer in the areas of values and their relationship with the creator.

It is of paramount importance for the family to give priority to the wholistic formation of the child till the child attains the age of fending for himself or herself, which is the age of reason, the age at which they can now take complete responsibility for their actions:

The fecundity of conjugal love cannot be reduced solely to the procreation of children, but must extend to their moral education and their spiritual formation. The role of parents is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute. The right and the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable[20].

Having enjoyed tutelage under the guidance of their parents in a wholistic manner, it is most likely that the child would take the path for which he has been brought up while growing up. This also applies to the seminarian who is in formation. While on holidays with the family, the onus is on the family to guide and support him as he undergoes formation. In the most of numerous distractions that could arise while on holidays, it behooves of parents to ensure that attention is paid to the seminarian's well-being so that he may not be swallowed by the negative influences that abound all over our contemporary African society.

The Diocesan Bishop/Presbyterate: The Diocesan Bishop is first and foremost the one who discerns the vocation to the Priesthood of any candidate. He is responsible for the seminarian from the beginning to the end of the formative process and ultimately decides if the candidate is fit

enough to be ordained and to exercise the Priestly Ministry.[21] Although, he may not directly carryout these functions, the Bishop puts the necessary personnel and mechanisms in place to help him carryout this responsibility and that is where the role of the Diocesan Presbyterate (especially the Vocations Director) comes in. During the course of the seminarian's formation, he is bound to come in contact with various Priests in the Diocese who through such encounters help to shape the personality of such seminarian.[22]

The Vocations Director is primarily saddled with the responsibility of formation of seminarians in the Diocese whenever they are away from school (the seminary). Under the overall supervision of the Bishop, he monitors the growth of priestly qualities in aspiring candidates and inspires the blossoming of these necessary qualities. As an illustration, here in our Nigerian clime, it is the practice to send seminarians on pastoral work during their holidays or break from the seminary in which the Priests in question are required to observe the seminarian and write a report of what has been observed during the period of his work. It is also the responsibility of the Priest to guide and direct the seminarian on what it entails to possess the necessary priestly qualities. This shows in no small measure the great responsibility placed on the shoulders of the Diocesan Presbyterate in the formation of candidates. The Bishop also intervenes from time to time to examine the progress candidates are making in their formation in all aspects of their formative life.

The Seminary: The seminary, which is a place where seminarians are trained, plays a very crucial role in the formative process as an agent.[23] The seminary which is not only an educational institution for the intellectual formation of Priests also coordinates the various elements which culminate in a holistic priestly personality. In this sense, this means that even if the seminary is an educational institution where seminarians bag degrees in Philosophy and Divinity, it is not just all about that. If not, it would not be different from the secular institutions where people study for degrees. Apart from the intellectual formation, the seminary also takes into cognizance, the spiritual, human and pastoral aspects of the candidate's formation which are geared towards the effective exercise of the Priestly ministry[24]

The seminary carries out its function through the instrumentality of Formators (basically Priests) and other lay members of the community, including the Lecturers and other relevant persons who contribute to the day to day activities of the seminary. The Formators, though, play a very crucial role as through their actions and encounter with the seminarians, ideas and conceptions about what the priesthood

entails are formed in the minds of the candidates. This is not exclusive of their encounter with other Priests, such as those in their respective Dioceses.

The Laity: The Laity of the Diocese from where the seminarians come also play a crucial role in the discernment process. During his formative years, the seminarian will be privileged to work with various segments of the Laity in his Diocese and beyond. He will be actively involved in the affairs of Pious Societies, Associations, Lay ministers and other lay ministries in the Church. His encounter with these various categories of persons go a long way to help him stand better prepared to relate with these various segments of Christ's faithful by furnishing him with experience and concrete problem solving tools that will help him in the exercise of the ministry in the future.
On the other hand, the Laity also helps the seminarian to sustain himself and give an appropriate assent to the call of God's work.[25] They also serve as guardians and can be helpful in helping the seminarians to focus on their call. They can serve as advisers, dialogue partners and counselors to the seminarians which in the long run go a long way to shape the candidate's disposition towards the Priesthood.

The Subject of Formation: Apart from the aforementioned, kit is pertinent to note that the candidate is primarily responsible for his own formation, as other attempts to form him will result in futility if the candidate remains closed-in to himself and wrongly disposed to the whole process. This point is well expressed in where it states that:

> Each seminarian is the protagonist of his own formation, as he has already been mentioned and is called to a journey of ongoing growth in the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral areas, taking into account his own personal and family background. Seminarians are likewise responsible for establishing and maintaining a climate of formation that is consistent with the values of the Gospel.[26]

Hence, the seminarian should develop what is referred to as "formative attitudes" such as availability, openness and docility to learn from the different circumstances he comes across in life and in various dimensions of his personality.[27] The communitarian climate of the seminary also plays a crucial role in helping the candidate to internalize vocational values interwoven in inter-personal relationships.

The Family: The family's role, which is sometimes downplayed, is of utmost importance in the shaping of a candidate's personality. The

family serves as the foundation on which every other attempt at building a formidable priestly character springs. A Christian family can truly assist candidates to discover and nurture a call to priestly vocation in the candidate.[28] The spirituality of the family could either foster or mar a candidate's desire for priestly service while a dysfunctional family or a family which pays little or no attention to spiritual matters can create a warped mindset in the consciousness of the candidate which further influences his disposition and openness to formation. While it is true that through the extra-ordinary grace of God, genuine vocation to the priesthood can spring from even the most despicable situations, we cannot overlook the influence of environment and family on character formation. If the foundation of the family is shaky, all other agents or institutions of formation will have a hell of a time molding the candidate to suite his call. The all important role of the family will be discussed in subsequent sessions.

The Holy Spirit: While discussing the various inputs of human agents in the formation of a candidate, we must not leave out the necessity of grace and God's intervention because the whole enterprise of Priestly formation is controlled by God Himself who chooses. This fact is all exemplified in Christ's admonition to His Apostles "You did not choose me; I chose you…" (Jn 15:16). Hence, it is the Holy Spirit who forms the candidate through the instrumentality of these various mediators (Patron Wong, 2014). As a result, it is very necessary that all requisite agents of formation should teach the candidate the importance of openness and docility to the actions of the Spirit which inflames the heart with sincerity and clarity of purpose.

An Assessment of the Family as an Agent of Formation

As earlier stated, the role of the family as an agent of priestly formation cannot be over-emphasized. This fact is re-echoed in prominent Church documents on Priestly formation. Emphasizing the foundation-laying responsibility which accrues to the family, a Second Vatican Document says:

Since the reality of the Christian Family is endangered nowadays, much importance should be given to pastoral work on behalf of the family, in order that the families themselves, generously accepting the gift of human life, may be 'as it was a first seminary.[29]

In line with the above stand, and in consideration of all necessary elements which promote priestly vocation, another salient document on Priestly formation states:

A very special responsibility falls upon the Christian Family, which by virtue of the Sacrament of Matrimony, shares its own unique way in the

educational mission of the Church, Teacher and Mother. Families can become a first seminary in which children can acquire from the beginning, an awareness of piety and prayer and love for the Church.[30]

The above statements from the Church's Magisterium accentuate the importance of the family as an agent of Priestly Formation. The life of piety, the consciousness of the importance of prayer, the ability to learn submissiveness to God's will and respect for the Church and authorities all spring forth from the spiritual tradition of a family. If the father and mother in the home develop a culture of family prayers and devotion, the children do not need to be told of the importance of prayers in their lives as Christians. Other salient points that need to be examined are the vocation-friendly nature of the family, how they encourage members to open themselves to a life of service and tolerance by listening to the cares and needs of each member of the family, how much support members get from the family in pursuing a career or vocation which is in view of the happiness of such individual.[31] All these elements combine to either foster or discourage the sprouting of the vocational seed in the hearts of aspiring candidates to the Priesthood.

As a way of diversion, it is pertinent to assess the concept of the family in our Traditional African culture. The average African is always concerned with inculcating certain societal values and morals in members of his or her family basically for the preservation of the family's integrity in the society which in turn fosters respect among society members for such family. African families do not joke with the moral formation of their wards which are often tied to the religious practices of the family and the communities at large because they recognize that such persons will someday go out as an ambassador of the family or cultural heritage. It is a common African saying to their wards that 'they should know the child of whom they are wherever they go'. This goes a long way to demonstrate the importance attached by Africans to the preservation of the family name which is only possible if the members of such family have a sound moral foundation. Each individual in the family is considered as an ambassador of the family. Hence, the family takes the duty upon itself to embark on extensive social, religious and cultural education of its members so as to avoid the situation where members become deviant in the society as a result of poor education.

If families generally hold forth to this African model of the family, the task of formation of candidates to the Priesthood will be much easier. Not only will they be good Priests but good Christians and patriotic citizens for those who may eventually not make it to the Priesthood.

Another important consideration is that the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph should continue to serve as a reference point to all families.

Fathers and Mothers should look up to Joseph and Mary in the upbringing of their wards. Jesus Christ, in His sovereignty, subjected Himself to the Headship of Joseph his foster father and learned the dignity of labour as a carpenter. From his foster father, Christ must have experienced how hardworking his foster father was, who provided for his family and lived in accordance with the commandments of God. In His human nature, Christ learned the relevant skills and the use of the necessary tools in carrying out manual labour.[32] As a result, St. Joseph and his wife, Mary should be honoured and invoked in the attempt to plant and cultivate the seed of vocation to the Priesthood as he can truly become the head of our domestic Churches which are 'the family'.

The Role of the Family in the Formation of Future Priests

It is worthy of note that the role of the family in the training and molding of a child's character is un-negotiable irrespective of the vocation such child wishes to embrace. Hence, we shall examine certain duties and responsibilities of the family in the training of their wards which could in the long run sow the seed of the vocation to the priesthood in their minds.

Religious Education of Children: The Church's teaching since the commencement of the Second Vatican Council explicitly states that the duty of religious education of children is a shared responsibility between the Ministers and Parents. According to the Code of Canon Law, the right and obligation of parents to procreate and educate their wards arise from the meaning and significance of marital union itself.[33]

Since they have given life to their children, parents have a most grave obligation and possess the right to educate them. Therefore, it is for Christian parents particularly to take care of the Christian Education of their children according to the doctrine handed on by the Church. The Second Vatican Document, *Gaudium et Spes,* also emphasizes this point when it states that "parents are consecrated by the sacrament of marriage to a specific function: they are active co-workers in the salvific and evangelizing mission of the Church, a service they perform by their educational duties towards their children."[34]

These following documents all add up to the point that parents are responsible for the moral upbringing of their children which serve as foundations for their views about life and principles. A faulty moral upbringing will surely lead to a faulty personality so will a faulty personality lead to a faulty formation of the necessary priestly qualities in a candidate. The Formators can hardly work on a candidate with a faulty personality due to a faulty moral foundation except by the extra-ordinary intervention of the Holy Spirit.

Assist in the Process of Discernment: It is the role of the family to 'assist' the candidate in the process of discernment and not to determine or enforce the vocation to the priesthood on the candidate or discourage him from embarking on such a journey. With prayer, advice, mentoring and counseling, the family can play a very important role of formation of the candidate's attitude towards the priesthood. By the very fact that the candidate grew up in the midst of his family, it is expected that the parents, guardians and siblings understand his character, disposition, principles and attitudes better. This fact places the family in a very good position to help the candidate discern if truly the vocation to the priesthood is his calling. In the whole process, the family must be wary of imposing their wishes on the candidate as this in itself could backfire.

It is common knowledge in Nigeria that some candidates are answering the call of their parents or guardians and not their own call. In some places where the priesthood is regarded as a status symbol or some kind of reputation which brings dignity to the family, some candidates can be placed under unnecessary pressure to become priests without the family members bothering to understand the candidate's true disposition towards the whole process. On the other hand, some families do not want some candidates to embrace the call to the priesthood and regard it as a wasted life. These perspectives are a misconception of the role of the family in the process of discernment.

Collaboration with Other Agents of Formation: It is the responsibility of parents who have candidates aspiring towards the priesthood to cooperate and collaborate with other agents of formation such as the Bishop, Vocations Director, Seminary, Parish Priest, among others. This collaboration could be in form of material or spiritual support. It is the practice in many Dioceses that the Bishops are in charge of the financial responsibilities of the candidates. However, it is not out of place for parents of seminarians to come together once in a while and donate towards the training of seminarians in order to ease the burden on the Diocese, especially in developing regions like ours in Nigeria. Apart from the material support, it is the duty of parents to pray for the candidates and all those in charge of their formation that the Holy Spirit will guide them in making the right decisions.

In conclusion, parents can also play a crucial role in the encouragement of others, even if not their own children, who have expressed interest in the vocation or call to the priesthood, to embrace the vocation by being sources of testimony to others of the beauty and the dignity which comes with the service of God and his Church. In Nigeria where we have Vocations Committees saddled with the responsibility of fostering vocations in the Diocese, parents of aspiring

candidates can volunteer to be a part of such initiatives, which in itself can be a sign of encouragement to others.

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PERSONHOOD AND FORMATION: A PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHT FROM AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract
The paper identified a direct link between the concepts of personhood and formation. The establishment of this link is warranted by the interdependency in their functionality analogous of the metaphysical theory of matter and form. Formation does not take place in vacuum; human beings are the ones formed for the office of the shepherds of souls in the Church. It follows necessarily, therefore, that the person of the seminarian avails the formation program the bedrock for its functionality. The paper acknowledged the importance of formation as it is obvious in the plenitude of documents from the Church at different levels and epochs emphasizing that the seminarian be formed after the mind of Christ. Moreover, it noted that such documents are very often grounded on various perspectives and theories on the human person from philosophy and theology. Nevertheless, the paper argued strongly from the African purview on the human person that understands the human person as a being ontologically connected and in a relational existence with other realities. Recognizing this in the formation process will go a long way in enhancing the formation program of Seminarians. To achieve its aim, the paper consequently employed the tools of critical, analytical and comparative methods of inquiry. This revealed that with a philosophical insight from an African perspective, there exists an understanding of the similarity between personhood and formation, the latter being a series of conscious activities which an individual is not born with, but something one sets out intentionally to achieve.

Keywords: Personhood, Formation, Matter and Form, African Perspective, Christ-like shepherds

Introduction

An individual is usually considered in African culture in relationship with others in the community. The relational consideration among Africans always emphasizes the need to consider others. Mbiti's philosophy of inclusiveness rightly captures this communal orientation in the expression – 'I am because we are'. This constitutes an underlining factor in African postulation on personhood. This paper considers the African notions along different perspectives on personhood and formation noting that the African consideration on the issues of personhood and formation of an individual might prove to be more insightful and fruitful when applied to the formation of African Seminarians than what is bequeathed to us in Western philosophy. Furthermore, the paper uses the Aristotelian theory of form and matter to show the connection on how African consideration of an individual person informs the nature of the formation given to him.

Personhood

In the general parlance, the term, *person* is considered as an individual. It is a term which is employed to give a comprehensive name to man's being – a name expressing itss entire reality in an unequivocal way. It never refers to animals or plant but only man.[1]It is a term that describes man in a unique manner, and as possessing abilities which are exclusive to the human race. Such abilities include reason, morality/freedom, consciousness and personal identity among others. This is in line with the philosophical consideration of man as a being characterized by consciousness, rationality, and a moral sense, and traditionally thought of as consisting of both a body and a mind or soul.[2] Aristotle aptly captures this that among animals "endowed with sense" humans were distinct in that "the human race exists by means of art also and the powers of reasoning".

Batista Mondin traces the origin of the concept of personhood to Christianity where man is understood as a being with his singularity, unique and unrepeatable, with substantial equality and dignity - one created in the image of God (*imago Dei*).[3] This "image and likeness" of God in man is understood as be a man's soul. The Christian notion explains what is generally held in Greek philosophy that there exists in personhood is a manifestation of the combination of the spiritual and the no-spiritual. The Greek and Latin cultures existed before Christianity but do not recognize the absolute value of the individual, rather absolute value depend essentially on class, ranks, wealth and race.[4] Hence race

superiority was common before the Christian era when personhood attained an important position as against race because of the effect of the salvific events of Christ's paschal mystery on the salvation of the soul of an individual regardless of race, colour or tribe.

Interestingly, early Greeks philosophers have a long history of postulations on the human person. For instance, Plato presents a dualistic theory on the human person as comprising of the body and the soul. He goes to say that the soul is the principle of life and movement – the essential core of the human person, while the body is inanimate and therefore susceptible to physical actions by this principle of life.[5] Furthermore, Plato holds that the soul is not completely unified, because there are competing forces warring within the human person which are known by personal inner experience. Consequently, he divides the soul into three factions: the *appetitive soul* which pulls man to the direction of physical gratification and material acquisition; the *rational soul* which is the voice of reason; and the *spirited soul* which is the willful and dynamic faculty within the soul.[6] Plato found intelligence as "the most divine thing in man, the most essentially human attribute because (it is) the only part of himself which he does not share with the animal kingdom.[7]

Augustine, in line with the Platonic understanding of the human person, holds that the human person is composite of the body and soul. He also further attributes specific roles to the soul such as the self on which the highest truth can be attained. It is the soul alone that can attain communion with God – the highest truth. It is the image of God and is immaterial.[8] This was the beginning of using Philosophical principles for Christian postulation on *imago Dei* that which Augustine defined as "that principle within us by which we are like God, and which is rightly said in Scripture to be made 'after God's image"'[9]

Rene Descartes, the father of Modern Western Philosophy, also argues along the dualistic conception of man, namely that the human person is a composite of soul (mind) and body. The body for him is made up of physical substances that interact with the physical world, while the soul is a spiritual substance; it is the "I" (ego), the thinking self, the seat of pure thought that generates ideas.[10] This power of the soul enables man to be conscious of himself without at the same time being conscious of the world. This view will be rejected later on by the existentialist philosophers of the 20th century, particularly Martin Heidegger who conceives man as a-being-in-the-world.[11]

Battista Mondin broadened the understanding on the human person beyond issues of man's composition, noting that the human person can be understood on the ontological, dialogical and psychological levels. The ontological understanding entails the person as an individual of the human species; a unique individual substance with a rational nature.

This involves the "I" in my being that can neither be represented by another nor inhibited in another – the person as he remains in himself. On the psychological level, the person is the fact of consciousness, which is being aware of reality pertaining the existence of the "I". On the dialogical level, the person is understood as a relational being that interacts with the world and other beings.[12]

Mounier supports Mondin's claim on the dialogical person by introducing the concepts; vocation, action and communication. For Mounier, the person has a meaning that cannot be substituted, his place in the universe of persons cannot be occupied – this is his vocation. Action explains that the life of a person is a research until death, an anticipated unity that cannot be actualized – a person is an incessant action. He further points out that communication explains that the person is a being that encounters others, a being who interests himself with another in such a manner that he respects his "I".[13]

Furthermore, Martin Buber in contributing to the discussion on man proposes that the meaning of the person lies in his relational ability with things other than himself. In other words, man derives meaning through the rapport man has with things. This is because man lives on the shoulder of things; he alters them, uses them, and governs them[14]. In a nutshell, the person is the "I" – the individual that is composed of body and soul and constantly interacts with other beings and with world.

Formation

Formation is a common practice in human communities. It consists of series of activities geared toward making an individual or communities imbibe certain knowledge, tradition, morals and value system. In the earliest times, formation was mostly meant for those to be charged with leadership responsibilities to prepare them for governance. In the ancient Egyptian civilization, for instance, princes were given special and exclusive education by the priests serving at Pharaoh's palace. Amedeo Cencini posits that formation has three dynamisms which are the educative, formative and the accompaniment. The educative dynamism seeks to draw out the level of awareness of what the person is, so that the person gets the maximum fulfillment of his potentialities; this leads to self-awareness and self-fulfillment. The individual is assisted to develop his natural potentials and encouraged to perfect them for the enhancement of his personality. The formative action implies that the subject is trained to acquire a new identity – formation becomes a discovery of the new and truer self, molded with the truth of the ideal.[15] This is the result of a process marked with shelling of certain aspects of the individual and acquiring positive qualities of the task in view.

A consideration of how the Church views formation will enhance this discuss; the Second Vatican Council emphasizes the importance of formation in its remark that the renewal of the Church depends in great deal upon the priestly ministry animated by the spirit of Christ; hence priestly formation is of critical importance to the Church.[16] Furthermore, formation is not a private affair or instantaneous; it does not take place at a particular moment, like a season. Rather, it touches upon the past, present and future of the individual as a pedagogical, theological, initial and permanent process that prepares one to consecrate oneself to God. Formation is offered to whoever has discovered a plan from on high for the self. This is because it is a mystery and divine action which shapes the image of Christ in the heart of those called by God.[17] This entails being accompanied in a journey of transformation. Accompanying means a journey of faith; formation then entails helping the subject to journey towards God and to experience God[18]

Furthermore, Pope John Paul II in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* highlighted four areas of formation; human formation, intellectual formation, spiritual formation and pastoral formation. Human formation helps the individual to attain affective maturity, form his moral conscience, attain series of good human qualities, balanced personality, and good use of freedom. This is the bedrock for other aspects of formation. According to the document, "The whole work of priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation if it lacked a suitable human formation."[19] A balanced human formation cannot be substituted for or with anything.

Spiritual formation helps the seminarian to share in the holiness of Christ by entering into an intimate relationship with Christ. Along with other faithful, the candidate to the priesthood strive towards deeper communion with God. According to the Holy Father, the educational process of a spiritual life, seen as a relationship and communion with God, derives and develops from this fundamental and irrepressible religious need.[20]

Spiritual formation, as we have just seen, is applicable to all the faithful. Nevertheless, it should be structured according to the meanings and connotations which derive from the identity of the priest and his ministry.[21]

An integral part of the spiritual formation is prayerful contemplation of the Word of God (*Lectio Divina*) through which the seminary is familiar with the God whom he humbly listens to, and he response to him in prayer. This will be his guide as he seeks Christ in the people.

Next is the intellectual formation which seeks to help the individual acquire academic knowledge; it requires proper training in Philosophy and Theology. According to the Pope,

Intellectual formation is deeply connected with, and indeed can be seen as a necessary expression of, both human and spiritual formation: It is a fundamental demand of the human intelligence by which one "participates in the light of God's mind" and seeks to acquire a wisdom which in turn opens to and is directed toward knowing and adhering to God.[22]

These three areas of formation are geared towards pastoral formation which seeks to build the candidate into a priest – shepherd of souls, after the example of Christ, the good shepherd.[23]

The whole formation imparted to candidates for the priesthood aims at preparing them to enter into communion with the charity of Christ the good shepherd. Hence their formation in its different aspects must have a fundamentally pastoral character.[24]

This is the most practical aspect of formation. It is the most vivid expression of how well other aspects are properly integrated in the individual. It will be the manifestation of an inner disposition to make Christ in a way that is peculiar to the people he pastors.

Hylomorphism

This section is important because it provides the theoretical framework for this discuss. Aristotle developed the concept of Hylomorphism as he completed issues connected to the process of "changing" and "becoming". While rejecting the atomist conception that everything is made up of tiny fundamental building blocks of matter, and that change is a rearrangement of these fundamental units, Aristotle holds that all things in nature are composed of form and matter – they are intrinsic principles that make a body come to be as what it is understood to be.[25] Put succinctly, hylomorphism is the theory that all physical things are composed of two principles of being: the prime matter which is an undefined primitive, and a substantial form, which is a definite mode of existence.[26]

For Aristotle, all material things are characterized by two elements of mutability and the different individuals of a species. Form also called formal cause is the essence which accounts for the actual existence of a thing. It is that which determines matter – it defines matter to a particular individual substance. It is also conceived as the design or arrangement of a body in nature. Matter – material cause, indicates the material constituents of a body. It is substance by which a body is made. Matter is indeterminate in itself but determined by form. It is a principle that makes form physical.[27] These two principles are co-dependent and

intrinsically necessary to the existence of a natural body. They share a key relationship simply expressed in the position that form actualizes matter.[28]

As regards the human person, the soul or the mind; which is the principle of life, is regarded as the form, that is, the essence of the human person. The body is understood as the material cause of the human person. This is because the body is the substance or material aspect of the human person and the soul is the principle of individuation that defines what it means to be human; it is that which primarily makes the human different from other natural bodies.[29]

The Formation Process Vis-À-Vis Aristotle's Hylomorphism

It is with this understanding of the complexity of the human person that formation is discussed here. Formation is aimed at the salvation of souls, but this salvation is achieved through the discipline of the body (1Cor. 9: 27). Hence the body serves as a necessary and indispensable channel to the salvation of the soul. As regards the person to be formed, this principle of form and matter helps the understanding that the body is intrinsically connected with the soul. So, the final point of formation is the mind of the individual – it is formation of the mind. The mind holds the basic principles that inform the voluntary operations – human actions, of the rational man. This emphasizes the position that the body is not the end point of formation but the soul that bears the rational capacity of the human person. All the elements of formation are internalized in the nonphysical aspects of an individual.

The Priest – Shepherd of Souls

The goal of priestly formation can be expressed in the phrase "until Christ is formed in you". The Church expresses this as being formed into another Christ – *Alter Christus* and even in the exercise of the sacraments, the Priest is not only another Christ but *Ipse Christus*- Christ himself. The various activities in the years of formation prepare the candidate for the Catholic priesthood, a position that places him at the service of God's people to humbly and carefully guide them to attain the salvation of their soul. This explains why formation necessarily concentrates on providing the human, spiritual, academic and pastoral development required to enable the ordained priest to respond faithfully and effectively to both God's call and the needs of the Church represented in the pastoral demands of his flock.

Priestly formation must provide the spiritual and personal growth guidance that elicits from the candidate for Priesthood, a prayerful and mature commitment to the way of Christ. This is so that he may speak from the context of the church tradition; fully and authentically

articulate the gospel of Christ; and appreciate God's word and the efficacy of the sacramental life of the Church.[30]

The emeritus Pope Benedict XVI, however sounds a note of warning on the tendencies of being drawn away from focusing on these when, in his homily at a priestly ordination on the 3rd of May 2009 in Rome, commented that the priest is in the world, but runs the risk of also being "of the world". This emphasizes also that formation must instill in the priest the discipline of detachment from the material things of the world.

An essential element of the priestly formation is clearly pointed by Pope Benedict XVI in his remark that Catholic priests appear to spend most of their days serving Catholics, but the role and mission of the priest includes the service of all of humanity. According to him, the priest works to translate the elements of the faith into a language that is accessible to all in the society; he dialogues with and expresses the truth of God, that the human consciousness may be nourished with the fullness of life only attainable through Christ. By preaching Christ, the priest is called to be a peaceful, uniting and joyful presence among Christians and all people of goodwill. And in living the mission of Christ, he further participates and serves in Christ's threefold office as Priest, Prophet and King, already shared through baptism.[31]

There are further insights from the present Pope who opines that priests must be deeply involved in the daily experience of the flock. For Pope Francis, the priest being a shepherd must 'smell like the sheep'. This means that he is to be out amongst the flock entrusted to him – he should be personally close to them. He is not to just available for the office of celebrating the sacraments alone as central and primary to the priesthood that might be, but be engaged in the lives of parishioners and others in the community entrusted to him.[32] The Pope further emphasizes that a priest is not ordained for his sake but for the sake of God's people. Following the example of Christ the true Shepherd, the priest must be a shepherd ready to lay his life for the flock through selfless service; he must not only feed the flocks with spiritual food but be sensitive enough to their physical needs. By this the gospel message of love will make more sense; in practice and not just spoken words.[33]

A priest is a good shepherd when his motivation is the salvation of the people. Hence, he makes the doctrines of the church available and teaches the true faith. Pope Saint John Paul II had emphasized this saying that the supreme act of a priest is the direction of souls: he must be available to his flock; impart the faith; and be humble to the prompting of the Holy Spirit that he may transmit fruits of love and peace.[34] Finally, Federico Suarez puts this in another way when he says that the success of

the priestly ministry is not judged based on its efficiency but on the impact it has on the lives of people.[35]

The African Perspective on Personhood and Formation

Personhood

The African understanding of the person has two dimensions; the normative-social and descriptive-metaphysical. The descriptive-metaphysical dimension explains that the human person is made up of a material aspect (body) and an immaterial aspect (soul) which are inseparable while on earth.[36] This is exemplified in the Igbo conception where man is made of *ahu* (body) and *Mmuo* (spirit).[37] From the Yoruba perspective, man is a composition of at least three elements namely the soul, the spirit and the body. The body is material while the other two elements are non-material. Furthermore, in their metaphysical postulation, man is a composition of body (*ara*), soul (*emi*) and inner-head (*ori*), the last being the metaphysical symbol of human destiny which is externally represented by the physical head.[38] The normative-social dimension explains the person in relation to the community – it is the communitarian perspective. Here, the person draws his identity and essence from the already existing values of the society; this has a social and moral derivation.[39] This goes with both social and moral commitments as an individual within a community. Hence, Ifeanyi Menkiti opines that a person can only be explained with reference to the environing community.

As far as Africans are concerned, the reality of the community takes precedence over the individual world and history. It is in an ongoing human community that the individual comes to see himself as a man; it is in first knowing his community as a fact of the psycho-physical world that the individual comes to know himself as a durable, more or less permanent fact of this world. The sense of identity of an individual only makes sense with reference to the community.[40]

From the above it is clear that human relationship is a primary element in the determination of the personhood of an individual. This goes a long way to emphasize and show that the human person in African thought system is one that is inherently and intrinsically connected to other individuals in the society – founded on community. This is also built on the belief that the physical is inherently connected to the spiritual in the African worldview. The activities of traditional or native doctors will make this vivid. Even when he lives in isolation and far from the main community settlement, the native doctor is kept abreast with the happenings in the community and constantly intervenes as situations warrant. He is dutiful and maintains a sense of the sacred in an appreciable distance, and yet very close to the people as an

intermediary and a check to the community. Above all, he does not neglect the people in their need or fail to provide prompt directives.

Formation

Formation in Africa is centered on how personhood is achieved. This is because personhood is not something that is given but shown by the society and accepted by the individual. An African has to go through processes of incorporation or initiation. Through initiation an individual is transformed from what he was into who he ought to be. According to Ifeanyi Menkiti, to attain personhood, the individual must undergo a long process and ritual transformation until he or she attains the full complement of excellence seen as truly definitive of man.

During this long process of attainment, the community plays a vital role as catalyst and as a prescriber of norms. As far as Africans are concerned, personhood is something the individual could fail to attain.[41] This implies that the individual must take the ritual of incorporation serious in order to learn the social rules by which the community lives and then attain the necessary excellence in character. Formation is not just about growth in wisdom as one ages, it is in gathering of the traits considered to be definitive of full personhood which necessarily affect the very core of one's being. In other words, for Africans, formation is internalization of traditional or societal virtues to the decree ascertainable that one is qualifies for the appropriate rite in the process of initiation. Hence, Dominic Umoh writes that in Africa, initiatory rites constitute a crucial mechanism which guarantees the authentic growth and development of individuals in their communal settings.[42]

Moreover, Augustine Nwoye puts it that formation of the person in Africa is influenced by a number of cultural groups. According to him, socialization occurs through dance, songs, story-telling and heroic recitation. These are avenues through which Africans are taught individually to reflect high level of emotional maturity as projected by the community. The formation program in an African setting include teaching of virtues like, verbal sobriety, diligence, perseverance, patience, moderation among others. These virtues help young Africans to be active and responsible members of the society. The agents of this formation include older adults, school leaders, and social models. Hence, there is a saying among the Yoruba that *oju meji li n b'imo, igba ojo lo n wo d'agba* (It takes two pairs of eyes to bear a child i.e Father and Mother, but two hundred eyes are required to train him). This expresses the traditional belief and practice that a child is not just the child of the parents, but he is the child of the community. Therefore, the upbringing and training is the responsibility of all.

In line with this, Dama Mosweunyane holds that formation in Africa is done within the platform of communalism; children are formed within the community, their wellbeing seen in the welfare of the group and society. Children are trained to participate in the culture and work for the sake of common good. Formation is characterized by transmission of skills and attitudes from generation to generation by words of mouth and the mode of apprenticeship. The Teachers are individuals with lifelong learning and experience. Hence, the children learn from their Teachers by listening to them and imitating their actions in the society.[43] Formation in African Traditional Society is done within the community and for the good of the community. The individuals learn the values that are necessary for active participation, sustenance and growth of the Society. Formation is seen as initiation into the society to attain personhood. It is pertinent to note that personhood is possible through dialogue because it through dialogue that the moral vision of culture is transmitted[44] in the community.

An Insights from African insight into the Formation of the Catholic Priest

Through the varied activities that complimented the seed of faith sown by the early missionaries characterized by unceasing evangelization, Catholicism has grown and has reached many lands of the earth with a variety of cultures. Africa is one of these lands that have received the Catholic faith despite having a culture that is uniquely different from the Jewish and Roman culture in which it grew. Many Africans have imbibed the culture of the Catholic faith in their African societies.

For the Catholic priest to get to the heart of the African society, it is necessary to have a proper understanding of the peculiarity of his flock– its philosophy, methods of socialization and the ideology that feeds its actions. This community orientation would help the priest to better understand his role in the society as one sent to work for the growth of the immediate society he finds himself and the community of the Church at large, after all, every high priest is chosen from among men to represent men in their relationship with God. (Hebrews 5:1)

Being aware that he is intrinsically a being connected with others will help him to acknowledge that he is equal with others in the sight of God and still a man like others. This help the priest to consider himself as a servant and not a king or master over his flock. This will enhance his interaction with the people even outside the celebration of the sacraments. The emphasis here is that the priest needs to be one among the people – like Christ, participating in their life, constantly communicating with them in preaching the gospel and leading all to God.

Furthermore, African traditional practice of formation is largely be imitation - "watch and do-as-I-do". The entails that apprentice focus on the master to understand and be able to do what he has seen the master do. This type of formation is not based on theories. In the same way, the African paradigm suggest that priestly formation should can go beyond theories but lived principles applied in practically lead the people to God.

Another way to consider formation is I regards to how Africans see reality as a whole and ultimately sacred; there is an ontological connection between the visible and the invisible. This understanding when put into formation would help the seminarian develop a deeper understanding of the sacred. This understanding would also inform a deeper understanding of communal existence through which he learns to share in the community life respecting the customs, traditions, ethics and social boundaries of the people.

Conclusion

The various perspectives of examined in the paper show a connection between personhood and formation. In this paper, personhood refers to what it means to be a human person, while formation can rightly be referred as a conscious activity to fortify personhood, which can simply be expressed as the nature and nurturing of an individual. From the African perspective, it is emphasized that priestly formation, like initiation rites, always focus on grooming priests to be human, insightful, mature, instructed, developed and community oriented persons. This is line with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria's advocacy that "seminary formation should enable priests to lead a truly priestly life and at the same to be men of their people. It is in the bid to achieve this that the paper posited that formation should be taken to the hearts and custom of our people to enable the priest/seminarian to adhere to beliefs and practices that, in spirit of the Gospel, help him to maintain a communal-oriented individuality as entrenched in traditional African heritage.

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A Philosophical Inquiry On The Place Of Virtue Ethics In Human Formation For The Catholic Priesthood In The 21st Century

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Abstract
The inquiries concerning the ontological status of man and its implications for human formation for the nobility inherent in human nature become evident have been deliberated and scrutinized by diverse philosophers that defined human nature. It is palpable that Plato accentuated that man is a fallen soul imprisoned in a body and needs liberation. Aristotle called him a rational animal while Severius Boethius and Thomas Aquinas admitted that man is a rational subsistent being. Moreover, Max Scheler and Karol Wojtyla sustained that the human soul makes him an incarnate spirit. A systematic and comprehensive examination of philosophical anthropology of these philosophers unambiguously affirmed that human nature is ontologically composed of body and soul, emotion and reason, material and spiritual entities in such a way that man is neither an animal nor spirit but a rational animal. This unique status serves as a foundation of human formation that can facilitate the attainment of human personality suitable for the candidates of the Catholic priesthood in 21st century. This paper explores how Aristotelian-Aquinas' understanding of human nature and virtue ethics can help human formative processes for the seminarians that will later become the intermediaries between God and his people in the field of evangelization, bringing Christ to all and bringing all to Christ.

Keywords: human, ontology, nobility, priesthood, formation, virtue

Introduction

Human formation is a generally defined as a process of helping teenagers to recognise, appreciate and cooperate with available means of developing their inherent behavioural capacities into excellent characters to the admiration of others in the society. In the context of this paper, Catholic major seminary is the nursery bed of the church to give appropriate human formation to the candidates for the sacred priesthood of Christ. In this perspective, the primary goal of human formation in the seminary is to rationally cultivate the personal and emotional maturity of each seminarian and nurture the human qualities that are necessary to be rationally balanced and capable of bearing the weight of priestly responsibilities in our contemporary world. These responsibilities are often evident and evaluated in the ability "to love the truth, to be loyal, to respect every person, to have a sense of justice, to be true to their word, to be genuinely compassionate, to be men of integrity…balanced in judgement and behaviour" (*Pastores Dabo Vobis* no. 43), Hence, the seminary programmes of formation are defined, designed, determined, justified, practiced, promoted and preserved by the church authority in such way that seminarians are well-oriented and naturally behaved like those set apart from others in the society. It is the responsibility of the seminary authority in conjunction with the respective seminary commission to develop the fundamental contents and supervise the application of the needed principles and moral qualities of human formation for the seminarians of their region and time. As a matter of fact, there is need for regularly scheduled human formation conferences to address issues surrounding the seminarians' physical well-being, habits of good nutrition and exercise, freedom from addictive behaviours, as well as addressing the essential issues in the development of a healthy emotional life, the establishment of mature friendships, maturity in dealing with qualities necessary for leadership and positive social interaction within community (nos. 43-44).

The onus is on the Dean of Seminarians' Affairs in collaboration with other formators to assist the Rector in the development of programmes for human formation in the seminary. This is because the collaborative efforts and adequate monitoring of formators are necessary in all the various levels of human formation in the seminary. The efforts, progress and maturity of each candidates to the priesthood are often nurtured and supervised by the community of formators through lectures, seminars, conferences and tested effectiveness of acquired skills and talents through academic, social and liturgical engagements.

The appropriate human formation for the candidates of a particular nationality, region, culture and generation before ordination and incardination into a specific diocese is non-negotiable because noble

characters expected of a priest cannot automatically derived from the grace of ordination. In his summary of *Pastores dabo vobis*, Cardinal Pio Laghi maintains, "in the normal run of things,…priestly ordination does not put in place a new humanity. In a personality which has not been moulded, in a character which has not had its rough edges smoothed off, in an individual who is not capable of calm and appropriate human relationships, the grace of ordination is discredited. In a mature personality, on the other hand, it shines out in all its fullness". (https://smseminary.org-human-formation). Therefore, this paper attempts to demonstrate how the four cardinal virtues of prudence, temperance, courage and justice obtainable from the providence of the natural law can smooth the rough edges of human traits, reason and emotions to generate excellent habitual characters that can make the nobility in human nature of seminarians of our time undoubtedly evident. The order of expository and evaluation of the concepts and issues involved in this paper are largely based on Platonic understanding of cardinal virtues. While the articulation of arguments evident in Aristotelian-Aquinas tradition will be employed for the justification of the place of each cardinal virtue in cultivating excellent habitual characters appropriate for the candidates of the sacred priesthood.

Human Formation and the Moral Character Suitable for Human Personality

A comprehensive anthropological study of man shows that human beings have some characteristics that are similar with other animals like gorillas and chimpanzees as evident in the need for food, reproduction and social life. However, the distinguished rational abilities of man that are fundamentally rooted in advanced technology and deliberative choice of action set him apart from other animals in the same genus (*Summa Theologiae*, part one of second part, q. 1, art. 1). A closer look at the anthropological foundation of Aristotelian-Aquinas' moral philosophy explicitly shows that objective standard for evaluating if a man has adequate human formation is based on the ability of the man to practically live and act excellently well the actions that are ontologically entrenched in human nature. This is a reality that is unanimously acknowledged, cherished, preserved and promoted in every culture of the world. Hence, there is need to scrutinize and evaluate the fundamental structures of the system that Aquinas defined, analyzed, justified and promoted to elucidate the process of human formation that can facilitate a practical demonstration of human personality suitable for the seminarians of our time. Thomas Aquinas in the second part of his *Summa Theologiae* clearly argued beyond any reasonable doubt that the core of the rational element that actually distinguished human beings

from other animals in the same group is found in what is known as *synderesis* [practical reason].

The term *synderesis* is described by Aquinas as the basis of inner principles (conscience) regulating the moral consciousness of every man 'to do good and avoid evil'. It is obvious that *synderesis* has two distinct natural powers governing human cognitive and appetitive dispositions (*Summa Theologiae*, first part, question 79, article 12). The cognitive disposition is the seat of intelligibility of the goodness that is rooted in the physical and metaphysical entities while the appetitive disposition is the power of desirability for the goodness that the rational power recognizes to be good and necessary. As Fagothey clearly upholds, "what appeals may supply a need, satisfy a desire, arouse an interest, stimulate an emotion, provoke a response, motivate a deed, or merely draw an approval" (70-71). This implies that in the process of human formation and character development, an action is good when it agrees with the rational nature of human beings and vice-versa (Aquinas *Summa Theologiae*, first part of second part, q. 18, art. 5). In human formation, therefore, what is morally valuable is whatever action that man judges to be honorably good, just, worthy, desirable and has inherent values that correspond to the nobility in human nature. Aquinas has come up with arguments to show that appropriate human formation is impossible without cultivating the necessary integration of animal and rational elements of man to generate characters needed to demonstrate to others the excellent characters that are feasible in human nature. In Aristotelian-Aquinas moral tradition, this feasibility is achievable through the use of four cardinal virtues [courage, temperament, prudence and justice] to build a solid foundation suitable for admirable characters expected of candidates for the sacred priesthood. It is pertinent to examine the contextual meaning of habit to provide a robust foundation on which the relevance of cardinal virtues in the formation of human characters can be evaluated and justified.

Habit and Attainment of Moral Character for Human Formation

The term habit is ordinarily known as human way of life that has the capacity to enhance human to act either morally or immorally about himself and others in the society. In the primary sense of the word, habit is a disposition of man toward actions that are possible in human nature. As Aristotle posits, "habit means a disposition according to which that which is disposed is either well or ill disposed, and either in itself or with reference to something else" (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, bk. v, chapter 20). In the context of this paper, habit becomes natural capacity of man that can improve and strengthen the consistency of traits inherent in human nature. In human formation, good habits are cultivated into maturity to

form good characters through subtle, gradual and dynamic processes that are spread through a period of time before it can be evident in human society. In the understanding of Chukwujekwu, "habit becomes one's second nature in the sense that one now performs or acts in the way of the already acquired character with ease" (Chukwujekwu 78). Judging from this quotation, the failure to recognise the nitty-gritty of the processes and dynamism involved in the cultivation of habits into good characters is responsible for odious actions of moral deviants that are contrary to the nobility inherent in human nature. It is obvious that, "habits are corrupted or weakened by contrary habits. Even mere neglect or laziness can weaken a habit" (Gratsch 105). Hence, in human formation it is necessary to give adequate attention to good human habits that can facilitate moral characters appropriate to seminarians that are preparing to embrace the celibate priesthood of Christ. Aside, rational sanctions are necessary to deter bad habits that are capable of becoming the sources of inhuman tendencies and abhorrent characters in their lives. Thomas Aquinas demonstrated the nuts and bolts of four cardinal virtues in the formation of honourable characters achievable in human nature.

Thomas Aquinas and the Relevance of Virtue Ethics in Human Formation

It is reasonable to briefly examine the historical background and origin of the four cardinal virtues before going to the definition and relevance of each of them in human formation for honourable characters that behove *sacerdotes inferi*, priests in the making in our major seminary. It is on record that the training of young minds with ten habitual virtues for moral integrity and nobility were at first known with the ancient Egyptian priests and neophytes that came all over the world of that time to learn from them (James 30). As evident in the work of G.G.M. James,

> virtues were not mere…ethical sentiments, but were positive valour and virility [powers] of the soul. Temperance meant complete control of the passional nature. Fortitude meant such courage as would not allow adversity to turn us away from our goal. Prudence meant the deep insight that befits the faculty of seership. Justice meant the unswerving righteousness of thought and action (30 and 171, Elders 454).

Plato was one of the Greek neophytes that visited ancient Egypt to learn about the Egyptian mysteries and *seboyet* [wisdom] between the sixth and seventh century BC. He later condensed the ten Egyptian virtues recommended for domesticating human emotions for man to attain appropriate moral insights inherent into four: courage, temperance, prudence and justice (James 3). These four cardinal virtues were considered as the intellectual and moral powers of human soul to

provide solutions to practical questions of day-to-day relationship with the gods and others in a dignified manner. In a nutshell, the four moral cardinal virtues that serve as the foundational stones of Aristotelian-Aquinas' formation of human character are perceptible in Plato's Republic (Aso The Place of Virtues in attainment of Final End, 125-126). It is apparent that Aristotle, a student of Plato, learnt about the four cardinal virtues in Plato's academy and elucidated more on the nitty-gritty of their interrelatedness in human formation for deliberative choice of action. Thomas Aquinas cherished the scholastic definition, analysis, justification and evaluation of the place of each of these cardinal virtues in human formation for noble characters that honour and respect human dignity (*Summa Theologiae*, part one of part two, q. 55, art. 4; q. 61, art. 2). As a way of establishing a solid foundation of human formation in any contemporary Catholic major seminary in Nigeria, it is pertinent to give analysis of how each identified virtue can contribute to the growth and development of characters that befit the candidates for the sacred priesthood in our contemporary world.

Aquinas and the Place of Prudence in Human Formation for Seminarians

The focus of human formation in the seminary revolves around the aim of helping seminarians to cherish *synderesis* or practical wisdom to behave excellently well according to the noble and moral potentialities that are naturally realistic in human life. Aquinas in his philosophy of human action defined, analyzed, justified and promoted prudence as the virtue that governs the details of factors that are involved in the phenomenology of deliberative choice of human character. As Thomas Hibbs gathers from Aquinas "prudence involves not simply the subordination of particulars to appropriate universals, but the appraisal of concrete, contingent circumstances" (Hibbs 92). If this is indisputable, it follows that human acquisition of appropriate knowledge of the principles and circumstances surrounding attainment of noble characters for seminarians is highly cumbrous. Consequently, Aquinas in his wisdom heightened the obligation of every human being, including seminarians, to previously "grasp what is pertinent and to assess what ought to be done in complex circumstances" (98) before carrying out any deliberative choice of action. Judging from this perspective, "the virtue of prudence becomes the source of excellence performances evident in memory, intelligence, foresight, circumspection, caution and shrewdness (*Summa Theologiae* part two of second part, q. 47, art, 8) of human beings before noble actions inherent in human nature can be excellently demonstrated for others to cherish. Again, it is incontrovertibly evident that any man that ignores the relevance of prudence and its subsidiaries

in human formation will definitely end up in moral blunders that often lead to improper characters that are not in tandem with human formation necessary for candidates to the sacred priesthood. This is obvious when unreasonable and cosmetic lifestyles overlaid human judgment and make deficient object of deliberative choice seems more genuine than they really are in themselves. Hence, in a house of formation for the sacred priesthood, Aquinas would underline the fact that seminarians need to know and cherish the virtue of prudence and employ the same to govern their emotional drives for characters that enhance noble characters. Nonetheless, there is need for the virtue of temperance to drive prudence to take its place of importance in honorable characters of man.

Aquinas and the Significance of Temperance in Human Formation for Seminarians

In part two of his second *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas philosophically defined the virtue of temperance as necessary restraint of bodily pleasures like the desire for food, drink, lifestyle, sexual activity and other emotional needs that are capable of making ignoble and inhuman characters abound in human life. He is quite aware that human beings often indulge in short-lived pleasures at the expense of honorable choice of action accessible in human nature because of deficient human formation. In his study of human nature, Aquinas authenticated the requisites to nurture virtues that restrain what he called concupiscence drives in the eletrico-chemistry of human body that excessively indulge in pleasure and avoidance of displeasure. In this context, Aquinas is not actually condemning bodily pleasure in its entirety. Instead, he articulated arguments to heighten the fact that the virtue of temperance is essentially necessary to moderate the way and manner man enjoys pleasures that is not contrary to the nobility concomitant with human nature (art. 3). In other words, whenever the satisfaction from emotional drives are sufficiently governed, the attainment and demonstration of noble characters for others to see and admired will be adequately safeguarded. Therefore, it is palpable that abstinence, chastity, humility and similar dispositions that govern the impetuousness of bodily desires of man are derived from the virtue of temperance (*Summa Theologiae* part two of second part, q. 161, art. 4). In human formation for the candidates of celibate priesthood, the place of temperance and correlated virtues in governing the resilient urge for activities that are repulsive in human society and endanger to their vocation cannot be overemphasized.

Aquinas and the Relevance of Courage in Human Formation of Seminarians

The role of temperance as one of the cardinal virtues is very clear in taming excessive impulse coming from any bodily appetite for pleasure and habitual consequences. It is quite obvious in the phenomenology of human behavior that some emotional dispositions that are polygonal in their unique operations as often evident in emotional feeling of dilemma in which available options of action are equally desirable and undesirable Chukwujekwu 151 and Gratch 191). In the opinion of Aquinas, the virtue of courage and its corollaries are fundamentally meant to govern irascible appetites that are awkward to achieve or avoid like hope, daring, fear, despair and restraint (Aquinas *Summa Theologiae*, part one of second part, q. 23, art. 1; Plato The Republic, Bk. IV, 439c). Judging from this background, Aquinas wanted us to know that sometimes certain objects of good have associated risks and fear that can inhibit human beings from obeying the command and impulse coming from *synderesis* of prudence. For instance, the fear and risk associating with giving a helping hands to a victim of accident or arm robbery especially in Nigeria of today. In this circumstance, it is worthwhile to do good and avoid evil but any attempt to throw caution into the wind, one's effort can result to stupidity and extraordinary regret. Therefore, Aquinas justified courage as the virtue that has all it takes to moderate human irascible appetites that can hinder human being from obeying the moral command of practical wisdom to prefer noble over ignoble characters in human relationship (*Summa Theologiae,* part one of second part, q. 123, art. 3). The knowledge and appreciation of the virtue of courage is necessary in human formation of seminarians for discernment in following the impulses of practical wisdom to courageously behave according to the nobility inherent in human nature and vice-versa. The upshots of the virtue of courage in human psychology includes: endurance, patience and confidence. Hence, in Aquinas' human formation, a courageous seminarian is morally equipped to persistently evaluate and confront obvious direct and indirect obstacles against his deliberative choice of honorable character with a firm hope emanating from confidence and doggedness derived from a resolution to be a man of integrity. Justice is the virtue that insists on harmonious interrelatedness of all contrivances derive four cardinal virtues to generate conventional characters in human society. It is appropriate to examine how the necessary harmony among the virtues are practically attainable in human formation.

Aquinas and the Role of Justice in Attainment of Noble Characters for Seminarians

In Plato's Republic the virtue of justice is fundamentally defined as the

habitual disposition to determine, justify, promote and preserve the harmonious relationship with others in a given community without making anyone subservient to others but giving each member a justified place of honour. This is a replica of Plato's thought on the distinct role of each cardinal virtue and interrelatedness among them in the generation of a deliberative choice of characters that are unique to human beings. Aquinas employed the Platonic-Aristotelian taxonomy of moral virtues to demonstrate that the function of justice is to ensure whatever is fundamentally desirable for any of the virtue is equally appropriate for the good of others and the harmony expected to exist among them (*Summa Theologiae,* part one of second part, q. 58, art. 5). In the final analysis, it is apparent that the virtue of justice is basically concerned with the harmony that ought to exist in a community where individuality and equality are cherished, promoted and preserved from any aberration; the virtue of prudence approves necessary motivation for deliberative choice of action; the virtue of temperance controls concupiscent emotions and courage fortify emotional drives against fear and despair in carrying out noble action in the society. Judging from this standpoint, it is palpable that "people fulfil their natural end by adhering to the cardinal virtues of justice, temperance, courage and prudence, of which justice is the *Summum bonum*" in accordance with the essential principles enshrined in the natural law. In other words, natural law becomes the knot that naturally tights up the bond that exists among these cardinal virtues and their complementary influence in the growth and development of habitual and noble characters of man. It is necessary to examine the importance of natural law in the coordination of cardinal virtues for human formation.

The importance of Natural Law in Human Formation of Seminarians

In a common parlance, the idea of law in human society is designed and preserved to guide man to achieve his desirable goal and to restrain him from circumstances that can encumbered the fulfilment of any anticipated objective. Aquinas in the first part of his *Summa Theologiae* rationally defined a law as "a rule or measure of human acts, whereby a person is induced to act or is restrained from acting" (*Summa Theologiae,* part one of second part, q. 90, art. 1). The fundamental principle of law and its relationship to human action is based on the fact that the criteria of a good character is logically depends on its conformity with rational justification traceable to eternal law. This is a providential reality for every created being to act naturally according to the proper end that is ontologically established in their respective nature. In actual fact, Aquinas clearly showed that the rational and uninhibited participation of human

beings in this eternal order is acting in conformity with the natural law. This implies that natural law is the ontological platform established by God for human beings to naturally recognize the characteristics of what is good, desirable and commendable and vice versa. It is obvious in Aquinas understanding of human action that natural law is indisputably the ontological source of *synderesis*, the practical wisdom needed all the time to know what is good and do it and recognize what is evil and avoid it. Therefore, the rational capacity of *synderesis* in seminarians are to be cultivated and nurtured into habitual and virtuous capacities for noble characters. In the seminary formative processes, any attempt to overlook the ontological basis and contributions of the cardinal virtues to human deliberative choice of action, nobility will be deficient in the characters of the candidates to the priesthood.

Integration of rational abilities and emotional feelings in human formation for noble characters

The philosophical understanding of human emotions shows that they are natural drives of the animal cravings toward the object of desire and human beings share these yearnings with other animals as perceptible in the sensitive part of the soul (Kadankavil 160). As a matter of fact, anthropological studies of human formation have demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that human emotions are neither morally good nor bad until the willpower, evaluation and intentional choice of action becomes obvious. This implies that human nature is naturally porous for both honourable and dishonourable human traits and characters. Hence, the waywardness that is abound in human nature needs to be tamed through a process of human formation to liberate human beings from barbarity that is capable of obstructing attainment of noble characters (Desmond 92). Without mincing words, a closer look at Aristotelian-Aquinas anthropological theory of human action clearly shows that when emotions are govern with reason towards a good end, the action derived from such end becomes morally good, appropriate and correspond to the dignity inherent in human nature. It is also perspicuous in the aforementioned theory that when emotions are allowed to run wild, the action sourced from such disposition automatically becomes immoral, inappropriate and divergent to the nobility that ontologically characterised human nature. If this claim is incontrovertible, it implies that adequate integration of emotional and rational feelings in human formative processes basically serves as the foundation of noble characters associated with a gentleman in human society.

A systematic analysis and evaluation of the four cardinal virtues already examined illustrated the fact that each of them has prominent place in the processes of the internal and efficient principles of noble

action excellently evident in the habitual character of a man (Aristotle *Nichomachean Ethics*, bk. II, chapter 6). In the context of this background, the four cardinal virtues become the software while human habits become the hardware of actions that define, determine, substantiate, demonstrate, facilitate, promote and preserve the dignity entrenched in human nature. Hence, a virtuous man or gentleman is the one that knows how to tame those emotions that are contrary to reason and yield to emotional derives that are sourced from rational feelings to form the basis of the deliberative choice of action in human formation (Gratsch 108; Garrette 67).

A strict observation of the processes involved clearly shows that the animal and rational natures of man are integrated together through human formation to arrive at the appropriate actions that befit human beings. As a matter of fact, it is evident in the writings of some metaphysicians like Plato and Aristotle; philosophical anthropologists like Thomas Aquinas, Max Scheler, Battista Mondin, Karol Wojtyla and religious existentialists like Paul Recour, Emmanuel Levinas, Martin Buber and Gabriel Marcel that only human beings among other creatures are endowed with a character in which rational abilities and emotional tendencies are coalesced together as one. In other words, human beings are not totally spiritual to lack element of bodily structures and emotions as palpable among the spirits neither are they like other animals that have no rational abilities except instinctual drives. As a matter of fact, these two aspects of human personality are so intermingled and jointly responsible for human characters. As Joseph Omoregbe cleverly encapsulates, "man is a harmonious blend of reason and the passions. He is neither pure reason without instincts nor pure instincts without reason…As a result of this fact, man's instincts are rational instincts, i.e, instincts permeated with rationality (103). Hence, no one can easily separate the influence of the two factors in human character and able to justify the ontological basis of human formation and personality with associated values in human society. As Omoregbe further claims, "it is because man is a blend of reason and passions that he is capable of weeping (sympathy, love, hatred, benevolence, judgment etc.), neither a god nor a beast is capable of weeping; the former is incapable because it is a disembodied being without passions while the latter is incapable because it lacks reason" (104). Judging from this milieu, it means that the instinctual tendencies apparent in ordinary animals are guided purely by regular emotional instincts whereas the ones ostensible with human beings are imparted by rational emotional dispositions. This implies that any attempt to have unblended foundation of rational abilities with emotional feelings in human formation would

automatically lead to characters that are depraved and contrary to human dignity.

It is appropriate that every youngsters especially those in the house of formation and formators to remember and appreciate the fact that human nature is not purely emotional, spiritual, rational or irrational but fundamentally involved in the aforementioned aspects of man and obviously integrated into natural inclinations necessary for human characters. In other words, "human formation is all about the development of a well-rounded and competent man, possessing personal maturity. The basis of this is the fact that we human beings are physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, social, intellectual and spiritual with the potentiality of each being fully realized by our efforts of co-operating with God's grace". Therefore, the necessity of human formative processes for candidates to the priesthood can never be overstressed because seminarians are not angelic beings with the nature and character that is already determined, structured, universal, logical, fixed, immutable, eternal and perfectly composed to remain the same all the time like those in a mathematical world where 3+3 constantly equals to 6.

It is unmistakably clear that human beings including seminarians are composed of body and soul, reason and passion by which they are exceptionally different from other creatures and need to pass through a process of human formation before attaining excellent characters. This implies that, "since the charism of celibacy…leaves man's affections and his instinctive impulses intact, candidates to the priesthood need an affective maturity which is prudent, able to renounce anything that is a threat to it, vigilant over body and spirit, and capable of esteem and respect in interpersonal relationship between men and women" (*Pastores Dabo Vobis* no. 44). In the context of this paper, Seminarians are obliged to learn how to guide themselves with rational moral calculus to gain foresight for avoidance of any fundamental bad habit that can primarily hinder honorable characters ontologically concomitant with human nature become evident in them. After all, "the goal of the entire seminary formation…should be the development of moral leadership and witness the seminarian manifest to others" (no. 44). This is not easily attainable without some disciplines, sacrifice, practice, pain, patience, perseverance, determination and hope. Therefore, it is required that seminarians assiduously cultivate the integration of four cardinal virtues to have appropriate human formation so that the nobility associated with human nature can be exceptionally obvious in their character for their good and the good of the church.

Conclusion

In conclusion, for an appropriate human formation of seminarians to reach an appreciable end, rational abilities are needed for dignified moral choice and precision while emotions are necessarily guided for moral impetus and moral virtues are gradually cultivated for habitual dispositions for noble characters conceivable in human nature (Harman 1). The habitual dispositions sourced from the phenomenological interrelationship of reason, emotions and cardinal virtues will eventually become the repository of noble characters expected to characterize the personality and moral ideals of whoever successfully allows human formative processes of the major seminary to pass through him. There is no doubt that human nature is morally promiscuous and can easily wandered into habitual dispositions that are capable of disfiguring the ontological nobility that clearly sets man apart from other animals. However, the conceivable clashes between reason and emotions, good and bad habits, desires and deliberative choice in the process of forming human characters can easily dissolve into a moral disposition that transcends the purported phenomenological conflicts among all the factors that play indispensable roles in the formation of human character provided discipline, sacrifice, assiduousness, perseverance and nobility are appreciated by the seminarians of our time.

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SEX SLAVERY AS DEHUMANISATION: A CONTEXTUAL APPRAISAL IN MARTIN BUBER'S DIALOGIC APPROACH

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Abstract
Sex slavery is an evil that denigrates the human person. It is a criminal form of enslavement which limits one's autonomy, freedom of movement and power to decide matters relating to one's sexual activity. Unfortunately, this apparent evil has become widespread especially in Nigeria and has reached an alarming rate. Despite modernization and technological advancements, this modern form of slavery has taken another dimension. This paper discusses sex slavery in Nigeria and seeks to demonstrate how it not only denies full humanness to others but is accompanied by cruelty and suffering; the human person is treated as less human and women, who are mostly affected by this evil, are stripped of their dignity. Martin Buber's philosophy of interpersonal relationship as an approach to resolving the dehumanisation of the female gender is the essence of this paper. The fundamental fact of human existence is simply a person with another person, a man with a woman and a human being is a creature capable of entering into living essential relations with others. This paper attempts to show that Buber's philosophy of dialogue serves as a means of resolving sex slavery in Nigeria and beyond. It requires the reorientation of the human mind in seeing the other person as a *Thou* instead of an *It*' This paper, which is basically expository, descriptive and analytic, approaches this issue from an existential perspective using Buber's philosophy in understanding the human person as relational for authentic human relationships.

Keywords: Sex slavery, dehumanisation, sexual activity, Dialogue, Interpersonal, Relationship.

Introduction

Slavery is a practice that militates against the human person because through it, a person or group of persons are subjugated, oppressed, victimized, objectified and discriminated against. It is an evil that goes against man's essential nature which is to be relational and his purpose of existence. Being intensely engaged in a relationship with another person is one of the greatest joys of being human. Human communication is at the core of our existence. It is an indubitable fact that being-with-others fundamentally characterizes our existence. We come into existence and notice other human persons as co-existents, and as persons we must have to deal with in one way or the other. Unfortunately, slavery is a form of cruelty that denigrates an individual and is symptomatic of the inability to fully exist as genuinely human. This negative trend that slavery portends raises questions such as: How may I understand the other person, who is different from me? How may I relate to this other with whom I must have to deal in my concrete everyday existence? What is the philosophical basis for interpersonal relationship? How is person to person relationship different from person to things? To what extent can we enhance respect for human relationships so that we built a society that is more egalitarian, free and healthy? What is at issue here is the question of the relationship between persons. Interpersonal relationship is something we experience daily. That is what keeps us moving forward. That is what makes us human.

This paper, is therefore, an attempt to address the evil of sexual slavery/exploitation using the philosophy of Martin Buber. This paper advocates a reordering of our mindsets and modes of thought in seeing the human person for what he or she really is – a dignified being that is to be respected, loved and treated as an existential subject. This reorientation is to be done and achieved through the lens of the relational existentialist, Martin Buber. For the purpose of this work, the terms, sex slavery and sex trafficking, will be used interchangeably.

Overview of slavery

Slavery could be said to be as old as man. It refers to a condition in which individuals are owned by others who control where they live and what they work; to the legal, economic, political and social rules that allow one group of people to own people belonging to another group for their own benefit. Essentially, slavery involves domination, oppression, control and so on. It existed in many cultures in early human civilizations and has continued to exist in some form for thousands of years in societies around the world. Although, it could be found in almost every society, slavery, as we have studied in our history lessons, has its legacy in colonialism and imperialism which served as fuel to agricultural

industries till end of the of the 19th century. The freedom granted to slaves by governments in Europe and America were not followed up by social, economic and psychological supports. Consequently, slave like conditions and mentalities persisted. According to *The Economist*, October 30, 2016, more than 200,000 adult slaves remained in Africa's Sahel until the 60s. The negative consequences of slavery are obvious when one looks at the uneven social and economic development of nations that were not only victims of slavery but were suppliers of labour to these countries that have now being termed 'developed'. Hence, the compartmentalization of the world into categories of first and third, developed and under-developed, rich and poor. It is very probable that there are probably more slaves now than at any other point in history because, in all its forms, slavery has always existed in modern societies long after the 19th century.[1]

The most common form of modern slave trade is referred to as human trafficking. Trafficking in human beings is a "phenomenon that involves a variety of areas and diverse aspects and its multidimensional extensiveness contributes to an often unfocused perspective". Human trafficking is defined as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harboring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation."[2] This definition has three essential constituents: first, the action of trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons; second, the means of trafficking includes threat of or use of force, deception, coercion, abuse of power or position of vulnerability; and third, the purpose of trafficking is geared towards exploitation. Exploitation includes, "at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs."[3] In other words, human trafficking has many forms of exploitation. The objective of this essay is to examine the form of exploitation that has to do with a person's sexuality.

Sex-trafficking is said to be the most common form of human-trafficking in the world today. It refers to the "recruitment, harbouring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud or coercion, or in which the person forced to perform such an act is under the age of 18 years."[4] From the foregoing, sex trafficking is a sub-category within the wider framework of human-trafficking and is for the purpose of sexual exploitation including sexual slavery. So, sex trafficking necessarily includes sexual slavery but not all forms of sexual slavery fall under the umbrella of sex trafficking.

Sex Slavery/Trafficking

Sex slavery, which could also be described as sexual exploitation, is the attachment of the right of ownership over one or more persons with the intention of compelling them to engage in sexual activities. In other words, the victims are deprived of their sexual freedom, choice and rights and are subjected to the sexual manipulations of their enslavers. According to Mark Klamberg:

Sexual slavery is a particular form of enslavement which includes limitations on one's autonomy, freedom of movement and power to decide matters relating to one's sexual activity. Although it is listed as a separate offence in the ICC Statute, it is regarded as a particular form of enslavement. However, whereas enslavement is solely considered a crime against humanity, sexual slavery may constitute either a war crime or a crime against humanity. It is partly based on the definition of enslavement identified as customary international law by the ICTY in the Kunarac case.[5]

From the above, sexual slavery is seen as a form of enslavement with a sexual component. It includes the wielding of any or all of the powers attached to ownership over one or more persons, such as by buying, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty. Also, the person would have been made to engage in acts of a sexual nature. The evil also includes forced marriages, domestic servitude or other forced labour that ultimately involves forced sexual activity. In contrast to the crime of rape, which is a completed offence, sexual slavery constitutes a continuing offence.[6]

Sex slavery has its roots in ancient history. In the ancient world, the Greeks and the Romans amongst others made a practice of forcing captured young women to be consigned to a life of servitude as concubines or domestic servants. In the 13th century, African slave trade was not limited to slaves for servants, agriculture, or the labor industry but also extended to women who received a higher price than men, primarily because of the sexual appetites of their owners.[7] However, in recent times, the rise in the harm and suffering associated with transporting women and children for the purposes of sexual exploitation has taken an alarming rate. The trafficking of women and children for commercial sexual purposes lies in the expansion and ever growing sexual entertainment industry, which is most importantly a demand-driven phenomenon. Unfortunately, women and children are perceived as the most exploitable and controllable and are therefore deemed to be the most in demand to contribute to this expanding and very competitive economic market, driven by maximum profit gaining.[8]

There have been a significant rise in the magnitude of this form of trafficking and it is said to be reaching severe dimensions worldwide in the recent context of globalization despite the laws and sanctions that have been put in place. Several reasons have been adduced for the continued rise in trafficking including gender discrimination, war and armed conflict, poverty, persistent unemployment, lack of education, lack of information, gender discrimination, poverty and deprivation, lack of legislative and policy protection, harmful socio-cultural practices, and economic inequality, which is said to be the most convincing factor because it results in neighbouring cities, regions or countries being attractive destinations for people in poverty stricken cities, regions and countries. These factors in themselves are, however, not regarded as the causes of trafficking in persons; rather, they merely contribute to the vulnerability of victims and render them more prone to a variety of harms.[9]

The likelihood that a country will become a source of trafficking is greatly influenced by the economic and political instability of that country. Internal armed conflict, civil unrest and natural disasters furthermore displace populations and increase their susceptibility to exploitation and abuse. Enslavers and traffickers make false promises of good working conditions and higher wages in foreign countries to lure victims into their traps.[10] The unsuspecting victims, who seek a better life for themselves and their families, are easily deceived by these lies and they fall prey to the enslavers and traffickers and become objects of dehumanization and indignity.

Even though victims of sex trafficking crime are encouraged to leave the economic struggles of their home countries in search of better opportunities, movement itself is not what constitutes the crime of trafficking. The force, fraud or coercion that is exercised on a victim by another person to perform sexual activities and remain in the service of that person, are the determining and defining elements of this crime of trafficking. Sex slavery involves a variety of crimes and exploitation including violence, cruelty and ill-treatment of victims. The exploitation of victims for profit through the use of force, fraud or coercion remains the common denominator of this crime and the trade of human beings continues to evolve into new and more multifaceted forms of exploitation, using debt contracts and other means to coerce people for the purpose of profit gain.[11] The victim's human rights are taken away and the person is stripped of dignity and is reduced to a level below that of animals. This is what constitutes dehumanization and objectifies the human person.

The concept of human rights is based on the belief in the dignity of the human person. It recognizes that the human person requires

certain minimum standards in order to fulfill a basic life of dignity. Furthermore, as they are derived from the dignity of a human being as such, these rights belong to all human beings and cannot be removed by any authority, under any circumstances. Human rights are held by every human being, simply because one is a human being and for no other reason.[12] In other words, no one, for whatsoever reason, has the 'right' to take away the rights of another human being. Unfortunately, the human rights of the victims of sex slavery are trampled upon, taken away and made to perform indignifying acts. This is what criminalizes the actions of sex enslavers and traffickers and renders their actions evil in itself.

The cost of the sex slavery industry is most difficult to measure. The cost is more than just dollars being spent on sex. It also includes the damage done to individuals. There is also the cost in both physical and mental health with sex slavery. The self-esteem of the unfortunate victims is usually extremely low. It only takes a few days to break a woman; it takes many years to help her to rebuild her life. Victims of sex slavery/trafficking go through physical, psychological and emotional trauma associated with the exploitation. Those who are trafficked face violence that may occur during various stages of the trafficking process – from recruitment to destination which has a profound impact on the health of the victim. The physical, sexual and psychological abuse experienced by victims of sexual exploitation, combined with the forced or coerced use of alcohol and drugs, isolation and manipulation has long-term implications for victims' overall well-being and present a challenge for rehabilitation. The psychological harm experienced by victims exposed to severe and persistent trauma and abuse are similar to those observed in victims of torture and repeated sexual abuse. Escaping from the slavish or trafficking situation does not free the victim from the consequences of the period of exploitation, which she or he has endured. Chronic physical, psychological and social issues often affect sex-trafficked victims throughout their lives, whether they are free or enslaved.[13]

In his Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle developed the concept of human flourishing or eudemonia. For him, the aim of ethics and politics is to show people how to achieve eudemonia, which can be interpreted as well-being. The well-being of an individual is to be achieved by living a life in society and living a life concerned with the society. Aristotle's consideration of well-being, human flourishing and fulfillment is firmly situated in the context of society.[14] Thomas Aquinas, like Aristotle, situated his consideration of harm and liberty in a social context. The frustration of basic needs or potentialities of human beings is perceived to be morally bad and harmful, for it reduces the ability of a person to be fully actualised as a human being. Thus, harm consists in not just the

absence of physical injury but also obstacles or lack of resources that prevent us living fully human lives. Harm, then does not just occur at the one to one level, which is often easily visible, but at the institutional and systemic level whereby human flourishing is constrained.[15] Thus, sex slavery militates against the flourishing and fulfillment of the human person. Where the human person is not allowed to flourish, dehumanization takes place. And as such, sex slavery, trafficking, and every form of exploitation are evil *per se* that is, they are intrinsic evils.

Martin Buber's Philosophy of inter-personal relationship

Martin Buber was a Jewish-German existential philosopher; and as a theologian and a Biblical translator, he was said to be one of the most influential figures in the twentieth century intellectual- spiritual life. His ontology or theory of existence revolves around a concept of relation. Persons and things are seen to exist only in relation to other things and persons. The word, *relation* implies a state of affairs which connects two separate entities. The very essence of any existence is this connecting state of relation which Buber calls the *between*.[16] Relation, as an event or action, occurs between two entitles, that is, between a person, whose attention is completely turned toward someone or something other than himself, and another person or thing who confronts him. Buber says that essence of man which is special to him can be directly known only in a living relation. The individual is a fact of existence in so far as he enters into relation with other individuals.[17] He defines man as a creature capable of entering into living essential relations with the world and things. The fundamental fact of human existence is that an individual steps into a living relation with other individuals. The essence of man which is special to him can be directly known only in a living relation.[18]

According to Buber, the principle of human life is not simple but twofold, being built up in a twofold movement which is of such kind that one movement is the presupposition of the other. He calls the first movement the primal setting at a distance and the second, entering into relation.[19] So, man is man in virtue of his sense of distance and relation. It is obvious that entering into relation presupposes the primal setting at a distance. Man can only enter into relation with a being that has been set at a distance which has become an independent opposite. Only man can perform this act of setting at a distance because only man has a world - an unbroken continuum which includes not only all that he and other individuals know and experience but all that is knowable now and in the future.[20] In other words, one can only enter into relation with that which is not himself - an independent other, a being which has been set at a distance. The primal setting at a distance involves the self understanding itself as being separate and apart from the being which is

not the self: the self identifies the other as an Other. Identifying the other as an Other allows the self to enter into a relationship with it. This setting at a distance which makes entering into relation possible is proper to the human category.[21]

Man's Two Basic Relations to the World

From the foregoing, entering into relation means entering into an I-Thou relation, and at the same time one cannot identify distance with I-It. When an individual fails to enter into relation, however, the distance thickens and solidifies, so that instead of being that which makes room for relation it becomes that which obstructs it. This failure to enter into relation corresponds to I-It, and distance thus becomes the presupposition for both I-Thou and I-It.[22]

The underlying principle in Buber's philosophy is the idea that man has two modes available to him through which he can engage the world. The first mode (I-It) is that of experience, while the other mode (I-Thou) is that of relation/encounter.[23] According to him, there is no I taken in itself but only the I of the primary word I-Thou and the I of the primary word I-It; and when a man says I, he refers to one or other of these. The I to which man refers is present when he says I. The existence of I and the speaking of I are one and the same thing. The I of man is both the I of the I-It and the I of the I-Thou and thus the I of man is twofold. Man's two basic relations to the world are fundamentally different modes of self-expression and so the 'I' in these relations has different meanings. The I of the I-It is spoken where and when the beings around are observed and treated as mere objects of observation; and the I of the I-Thou relationship is spoken where and when one stands with the whole of one's being over against another and enters into essential relationship with him.

Buber opines that the I-Thou precedes I-It, both logically and in the history of the human consciousness. Through the Thou a man becomes I, and this implies that man's I-consciousness develops only gradually from relational events. This means too that the abstracted I, which is the prerequisite for the primary word I-It, is inextricably embedded in the web of relation, in the relation to the Thou. The first primary word can be resolved, certainly, into I and Thou, but it did not arise from their being set together; by its nature it precedes I. The second word arose from the setting together of I and It; by nature it comes after I. This is why Buber declares that in the beginning is relation.[24]

Buber makes a distinction between the person and the individual. The person is the man who has become truly or authentically human, that is, attained being or spiritual existence as the I of the I-Thou relation, through his encounter of the other as Thou. The individual,

however, is the I who has only experienced or used the other as his It, the object of his intent or purpose.[25]

The Life of Dialogue

The heart of Buber's philosophy might be considered to be in his conception of dialogue.

In the Buberian conceptual scheme, then, genuine dialogue is not simply a conversation, a way of communication, a means towards other goals. Dialogue becomes the goal in itself, the central purpose of human life. It is quite obvious that dialogue typifies, in a superlative way, what Buber has described as an I-Thou attitude towards an other. A dialogic relationship is one where genuine dialogue occurs between partners.[26]

Buber identifies certain defining features of the life of dialogue which are the constituents of the structure of I-thou relationship. The absence of any of these will mean the absence of relationship. These features include accepting and confirming the otherness of the Other. Such confirmation does not mean approval; but no matter what the person has against the other, by accepting that person as a partner in dialogue, the person has been affirmed.[27] The act of acceptance and confirmation belongs to the very structure and actualization of real human existence of I-Thou relationship. Another feature Buber identifies is mutuality or reciprocity of relationship. Only in the mutual or reciprocal saying of Thou, relationship comes into being and I and Thou become co-partners. The mutuality is the mutual participation of both the partners in each other's existence. The mutual conditioned nature of relationship is not one sided; and I-It is unilateral.[28] A third feature Buber highlights is opening up and making present of everything, that is, not investigating the other but courageously and intensively stirring one's own being to enter into other's life. The exclusiveness of relationship is another feature which refers to total and unlimited *presentness*. The other (Thou) in relationship is not more a Thou beside other Thous' but he becomes a Thou who cannot be replaced or exchanged.[29] The encompassing or inclusion of everything is the last feature Buber highlights which means living or experiencing through what the other is living or experiencing through.

Application of Buber's Philosophy to Sex Slavery and Trafficking

Buber's philosophy of inter-personal relationship is a salient panacea to the evil of sex slavery and sex trafficking in Nigeria and by extension, the entire human society. Buber promotes a philosophy of mutuality, reciprocity, genuine relationship and genuine dialogue. It is a philosophy that generates peace through mutual interaction and conversation, that is,

'I-Thou' relationship. The concept of dialogue perceives the human person as 'thou'.

In a society where genuine relations that ought to exist between individuals has been largely obliterated by the objectification of the human person through sex slavery and trafficking, Buber proclaims that man can achieve authentic human existence only by turning to one another as a whole being in the posture of I-Thou, in which the other is made really present in his concrete wholeness and uniqueness and where there is a genuine response to the irreducible claim of the encounter itself. At a time when mutual understanding and intimacy of communion are threatened by sexual exploitation, Buber has with earnest insistence appealed to those healing powers which may be awakened by man meeting his fellow man and woman. Buber's central message and insight is, therefore, that human beings are ordained to find fulfillment and authentic selfhood by living with each other in a relationship of genuine life of dialogue.[30]

It is important to note that underlying the practice of sex slavery and sex trafficking is the objectification of the human person where an individual is seen as tool to be used. So, the evil of sex slavery, sex trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation persists because the human person and probably the female sex are not perceived as 'thou'; instead, they are perceived as 'it.' According to Buber, the I-It relationship is a subject –object relationship which does not possess genuine dialogue, listening and response. In this relationship, an individual is regarded as an 'It' that is tossed around as a mere thing other than thou. Buber's philosophy would orientate individuals in upholding human dignity and foster respect for human rights and by inclusion, women and children.[31]

Buber's concept of confirmation which can be described as acknowledgement and recognition of the other would go a long way in curtailing sexist tendencies. In confirmation one meets, chooses and recognizes the other as a subject with the capacity to actualize one's own potential. In order for confirmation to be complete one must know that he/she is being made present to the other. There must be this re-orientation by individuals that recognizing other including women and children as subjects actualizes their own potentials and is a tonic for positive growth as an individual and the life is not about greed, money, making profit while disregarding the dignity of fellow human beings. Unfortunately, they may exist this fear that confirming others may lead to poverty or a lack. This is a problem of mistrust which Buber considers mistrust as one of the hindrances of dialogue. Mistrust leads to oppression, discrimination and criminality. The issue of mistrust can be resolved with mutual dialogue which brings trust and love.

Furthermore, the notion of I-Thou relationship stems from mutuality, reciprocity, relation and genuine dialogue. It is a concrete encounter, because individuals meet one another in their authentic existence, without any qualification or objectification of one another. Buber's I-Thou relationship opens an avenue for encounter in which people could engage with each other fully through dialogue. In other words, human beings – both enslaver/traffickers and victims can encounter each other authentically without objectifying one another. When such occurs, the victims and every individual would be treated with utmost respect as fellow Thous who have the right to experience life and contribute to it. Buber's notion of inclusion and relation becomes relevant here. Inclusion, according to Buber, means the ability to develop a dual sensation among those engaged in dialogue: experiencing oneself and simultaneously perceiving the 'other' in its singularity. The inclusion of a person causes one to experience and know one's fellow human being. That quality of inclusion will help those involved in sexual exploitation to experience and understand themselves as well as experience and understand what their fellow existents go through in their situation and experiences. Accordingly, relation is mutual. My 'thou' affects me as I affect it.[32] There is deep sense of reciprocity and mutuality in relation.

It is only when people overcome their self-centredness, greed and lust and see one another as thou that mutual, inclusive, reciprocal, relational and genuine dialogue in love would occur which would promote peaceful harmonious co-existence and human beings to flower, flourish and contribute uniquely in a no small measure to the development of the entire human society. To have a genuine relationship of dialogue, both men and women must recognize the "Thou" of the other: Only persons who are capable of truly saying *Thou* to one another can truly say *We* with one another.

Conclusion

This essay has been concerned with the application of Buber's philosophy of interpersonal relationship to the evil of sex slavery and trafficking with a view to resolving it. The basic foundation on which Buber's whole project is built is his insight that man has two distinct ways of engaging the world - I-Thou and I-It. Modern society largely ignores the I-Thou mode of encounter through which man enters into relation with the other; and canonizes the I-It mode of experience through which man treats the other as an object to be analyzed and utilized. Buber's contention is that inasmuch as the latter (mode of experience) is important and indispensable for human survival, it is not

sufficient. As a matter of fact, a human being is not fully human unless he also opens himself up to the mode of relation (I-Thou).

In Buber's philosophy, men and women are essentially relational beings. All true living is meeting, and dialogue is the ridge on which we meet. In dialogue, men and women penetrate the polite superficialities and defenses with which they habitually armor themselves; they listen to one another with an authenticity that forges a bond between and among both sexes. Upholding and respecting the human person and entering into a living and essential relation with another is an act of incredible bravery. This is because it requires leaving behind false notions of selfishness, dominance, superiority and arrogance in a realm of experience in which we can understand and predict and master and enter into a realm that cannot easily be predicted and manipulated, and which exposes us to grave risks such as betrayal and exploitation. Man becomes what he essentially is in relation to others.

A pragmatic application of Buber's concept of dialogue would definitely go a long way in curbing sexual exploitation of different forms. It will encourage a spirit of mutual togetherness, genuine conversation, genuine wholeness, and genuine connection between individuals - men and women. There is need for confirmation and inclusion of one another through dialogue which brings closeness, mutuality and reciprocity. There is emphatic need for recognition of the dignity of women and children who are mostly victims of sex slavery and trafficking. Thus, the human person should be seen as an end in itself and never as a means to an end.

Buber's philosophy does not in any way suggest that there would not be failures, errors and mistakes considering the fact that it is human nature that is being dealt with but it simply entails that in the midst of friction and tension, there could be need to understand one another as persons with dignity and essence. Sex slavery and trafficking is difficult to curb. Despite the numerous laws and attempts to stop it which are commendable, it still thrives. While appreciating the efforts of the government, non-governmental organizations, religious institutions and individuals, there is a need to go back to the source; the education of the young which Buber emphasized greatly in his works. While individuals in the society need a reorientation in seeing one another as 'Thous' the young one – the future of the society – need to be educated and taught to build up a society where mutual respect is upheld, the dignity of the human person is held holy and fellow existents treat one another as Thous. That would mean introducing the young to philosophical ideas especially what we may refer to as relational existentialism and inculcating in them the values of the I-Thou relationship.

In the "I-it" relation, the individual deals with the world and other persons functionally, manipulatively as things to be investigated and used. This type of relation is wrong as it has been a major cause of many problems in modern life as reflected in the educational systems of nations that see schooling as a production factory. In the I-Thou relationship, the individual encounters other persons and God as Thou (You). This involves interpersonal dialogue, an encounter which opens up the true depths of reality that engenders direct connection and a sense of unity for the individuals and the community with the necessary ethical underpinnings. To Buber, education is relational between the teacher and the learner on one hand between the educational system and the community on the other. Education is subjective. The active role of the learner in selecting and building his/her own knowledge as to be effective in his relations or encounter with people. Education should generally be seen as a relation based enterprise in that the nature and the direction of the society determines the essence of its educational system.[33]

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WHAT CAN A WOMAN KNOW? EPISTEMIC BIAS AS DEPERSONALIZATION

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Abstract
Since such publications like Lorraine Code's essay, "Is the sex of the knower epistemically significant?" and Sandra Harding's "Is Gender a variable in conceptions of rationality: a survey of issues" the conversation of the relation between gender and knowledge has remained an intellectually polemic area of discussion in epistemology, particularly, feminist epistemology. The relation between gender and knowledge is not merely theoretical, but it also involves power relations. Power dynamics have a lot to play with knowledge acquisition and how we accord truth values to an epistemic agent. Although, mainstream epistemology pretends to be gender neutral with the knowing subject, such claim can arguably be said to be nominal rather than practical. This paper interrogates particularly how we determine knowing subjects. It argues that the female gender or woman has sometimes been treated with discrimination in determining whether she is a knowing subject or not. This paper further situates this discrimination as fallouts of biases or prejudices. Far from creating an unwholesome epistemic situation such biases are associated with power. Epistemic bias against women apart from showing how gendered-power structure of societies affect the shape and possibilities of knowledge production, it further argues that such epistemic bias also depersonalizes the woman and this is a form of dehumanization. This paper concludes with an argument for an inclusive gender-balanced structure of epistemic relations as a pathway that can create a more robust epistemic relation for knowledge. It is believed this can further strengthen the understanding of the human person as an epistemic agent.

Keywords: Epistemic bias, Depersonalization, Gender, Human person, Power dynamics.

Introduction

The goal of every cognitive or philosophical inquiry is the desire to know. Aristotle begins the opening line of his, *Metaphysics,* stating this fundamental truth, saying, "All men by nature desire to know."[1] This desire to know is not just fundamental to human nature it is also part of man's evolutionary make up and destiny. Man as *homo sapiens* (intelligent being) is also *homo quaerens* (thinking and knowing being). The history of epistemology in the Western tradition from Plato till date is largely concerned with "How do we know what we know?" "Do we really know anything at all?" Much of the efforts in traditional epistemology have focused not on the knower, per say, but, on what the knower can know. The concern was more on what can pass as knowledge to make it legitimate or genuine in the face of skeptical opposition which argues that we cannot know anything at all or what we can know is limited. It is this challenge that gave direction to epistemology for a long while. However, from the 1970s and more robustly, around the 1980s new epistemic questions have been asked about who this anonymous "we" referred to in the common interrogatives? The critical interrogation basically seeks to know, like Lorraine Code asks, "Is the sex of the knower epistemologically significant?"[2] It further seeks to find out whether gender has any role to play with the way knowledge is acquired or accepted. For a long time, orthodox epistemology claims that in the search for knowledge, the gender of the knower was significantly neutral.

However, this assumption has been exposed by these critical interrogations, which has come under the umbrella of feminist epistemology as hypocritical. Code, for instance, argues that "the fact of being male or female seems to be fundamental to one's way of being a person in such a way that it could have a strong influence upon one's way of knowing"[3] She argues that in the pursuit of knowledge, there are sometimes gender biases and discrimination at least historically speaking. Women sometimes are not allowed access to certain aspects of learning. From this, at least, biological makeup creates a limitation of cognitive capacity. Thus, there is both a type of knowledge that a woman can acquire and what is accessible to her. Miranda Fricker has argued vigorously in her book, *Epistemic Injustice, Ethics and the Power of knowing,* that this politics of epistemic practice "has an irrepressible connection to social power, or that social disadvantage can produce unjust social disadvantage"[4]. The point is that is there is such politics of social stratification; it also leads to situations of cognitive authority or powerlessness. Thus, gender plays a role in knowledge acquisition and

this sometimes creates an air of imbalance. Apart from an imbalance in power relations, knowledge leads to how we are conceptualized, classified, or personalized. This paper, which seeks both to address issues in this epistemic imbalance, also seeks to expose how biases in epistemic relations and conceptualization lead to depersonalization. It seeks to further argue ways in which there can be epistemological inclusivity. The end point is to both have a normative vision of epistemology as well that of the human person. This paper adopts analytic and expository methodologies.

Understanding the Feminist Thesis and Philosophy

Feminist epistemology is a form of social epistemology. Social epistemology refers broadly to the evaluation of social dimensions of knowledge. Knowledge within social epistemology is not taken solely as an individual activity but sometimes as a social or a collective achievement. Thus, social epistemology deals with those social means of arriving at knowledge or social justification for our knowledge claims. Feminist epistemology "examines the relations between gender and knowledge, where gender is understood not as an attribute of individuals, but rather as an axis of social relations."[5] The concern of feminist epistemology is based on social bifurcations along lines of gender. Society is conceived, at least from this biological point of view of things existing either as male or female. The concern of feminist epistemology is an examination of the connection between power relations of gender and knowledge.[6] This concern is different from feminine epistemology which concerns itself what ways women can know. Although, the broad scope of feminist epistemology concerns all such discussions include those hitherto known as feminine epistemology. Heide Grasswick notes that the scope of analysis for feminist epistemology is broadened beyond gender, but involves all such divisions of race, class and sexuality and all such axes of oppression. Feminist epistemology becomes a face of 'liberatory epistemologies'.

Feminist epistemology is a reaction to an overall social class grouping arguably created by radical systems like Marxism. It seeks to overcome the epistemic disadvantage for belonging to a particular class or gender, in this case, the female gender. Marxism with all its variants, helped to create social and class divisions in society and this had its own power play of one group having superiority over the other; the bourgeoisie over the proletariat. This class system reinforced an age-old division and domination like patriarchy and androcentric biases arguably perpetuated by some world religions, where women are given a secondary or an inferior class position. This class oppression saw the rise of women's liberation movement (WLM) and other forms of self-actualization

movements like feminism. From movements to philosophy, feminist epistemology seeks to address situations of imbalances created by class, race or gender superiority.

The concerns of feminist epistemology are not just about the power imbalance, but also involve some aspects that are moral. The imbalances caused by class bifurcation are also moral. They impede on the virtues of such purportedly epistemic inferior other, like women. If women are regarded as inferior, they are less likely to be trustworthy and their testimony easily dismissed on the grounds of a default class stratification that deflates their epistemic credibility. The concern of trustworthiness bears on the virtues of agents. Therefore, gender imbalance has a crystallizing effect not just on power relations, but also on virtues. Feminist epistemology seeks to interrogate all these issues that are the fallout of gender and their relations with knowledge. The effects of gender biases have an overarching aftereffect in many areas within the overall epistemological framework. The scope of feminist epistemology thus deals with the many intersecting areas of women's lives and feminist philosophy.

The goal of feminist philosophy is not just for justice, but to give meaning to women's history and to seek an inclusive philosophy or epistemology. Nevertheless, critics against the foundations of feminist philosophy argue that feminist philosophy generally begins with an assumption that women are oppressed or marginalized and the same experiences of women are universalized rather than taken within contexts.[7] No matter how the arguments go, we cannot deny that feminist epistemology is radically transformative of how women are seen and their experiences evaluated and also that the issues of epistemic marginalization on the grounds of gender are no longer left to silence. The starting point for a meaning discourse is the question of biases in epistemic relations.

Knowing Subjects and Biases in Epistemic Relations

Knowing is a function of different variables and how one can know and what a knower can also know are also impacted by different variables. The main thrust of feminist epistemology is an interrogation into the role and place of gender in knowledge practices. Kristen Campbell argues that for feminist theories of knowledge, the gender of the knower is epistemologically significant and that deconstructive feminist epistemologies maintain that the Western subject of reason is not sexually neutral but presupposes a masculine knower.[8] This is why feminist scholars like Sandra Harding and Patricia Hill Collins argue for a reconstruction of new models for knowledge with the woman as a

knowing subject. Therefore, we cannot really ignore the sex of the knowing subject.

Be that as it may, within feminist epistemology, there is the question of who the knowing subject should be whether the female knower or the feminist knower, or both? But, to pursue this would be creating another imperfect situation that first gave birth to feminist epistemology. Lorraine Code has elaborately written on how the female knower can be impeded and rendered epistemically inaccessible to some knowledge. Constraints on the sex of the knower can lead to constraints in knowledge in general. This creates a situation of 'epistemic obscurity'. This kind of situation can be warranted with certain kinds of knowledge limited or designated as strictly for male. In responding to the interrogative, what can a woman know? It seems that the process of socialization sometimes, limit what certain persons can know based on their gender. This kind of situation creates a biased epistemic situation. Some of these social systems or epistemic situations are reinforced by male chauvinistic teachings and philosophy. For instance, Aristotle in his *Republic* regards woman as irrational, higher than slaves and lacking in authority. He even argues that women are meant to be subject to their husbands and that they are sometimes deceptive.[9] The Danish Philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard holds that "the attainment of the ethical and religious levels of existence to be open to men only; women are aesthetic being". In Roman mythology, women are regarded as Dionysian creatures, meaning they are for merrymaking and wining.

The putative designation of women into inferior catalogues to that of men is a function of epistemic biases. Biases are "persistent and widespread psychological tendencies that can be detrimental to objectivity and rationality."[10] In logical thinking, when a premise is implicitly accepted in our theories and methods, it becomes a philosophical bias. Philosophical biases are acquired from professional practice and other disciplinary traditions that defines a scientific paradigm. Thus, when we have used a basis for a long time, implicitly, it becomes foundational, and this makes one undermine the strength or foundation upon which such claim rests. Biases could either be cognitive, conflict of interests, statistical, or prejudices. Biases could also be understood in different contexts, like biases in the media, academia, etc. Biases could be explicit or implicit. It is explicit when it is intended and implicit when it is not intended. Gender bias against women and androcentric cataloguing of women can arguably fall under implicit bias. Philosophically, implicit bias suggests that "people can act on the basis of prejudice and stereotypes without intending to do so".[11] Implicit bias lead to discriminatory behaviour in favour or against a subject, and these raise metaphysical, epistemological and ethical questions.

Evaluative judgments based on implicit bias or any such biases can be termed epistemic bias. Epistemic bias can be implicated in epistemic injustice. The wrong labelling of women has epistemological implications, including epistemic injustices. Jules Holroyd and Katherine Puddifoot[12] identified five types of epistemic injustice that can be due from such epistemic relation. The first is testimonial injustice, where a person is given less credibility than they deserve due to stereotypes about the competence or sincerity of those with their social identity. This thought is explored in Miranda Fricker's book, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing,* 2007. The second is epistemic appropriation where the contribution to knowledge provided by a person is not recognized as their contribution and is instead attributed to someone else. This form is deeply explored by Emmalon Davis.[13] The third type of injustice from epistemic bias is epistemic exploitation and this occurs when members of a marginalized group are expected or required to educate members of privileged groups about injustices that are faced by those who share their social identity. This form is explored by Nora Berenstain.[14] The fourth form of injustice due from epistemic bias is what Miranda Fricker identified as Hermeneutical injustice when some people are unjustly excluded from contributing to the shared conceptual resources that are widely used in a society. The fifth kind of injustice is contributory injustice, which occurs when an agent is wilfully ignorant in using conceptual resources that thwart the ability of others to contribute to the knowledge community. This form is elaborately explored in the thoughts of Kristie Dotson.[15] Women arguably suffer all the forms of injustices outlined above by epistemic biases against them.

Be that as it may, biased epistemic labelling of women imparts on the qualitative difference in how we accord trust or truth-worthiness to women as knowing subjects or not. With man given a status of an epistemic superior, it renders without interrogation, that women's knowledge are inferior and subjective. In traditional epistemology, the gender of the knower has, for the most, been treated as a "featureless abstraction,"[16] while for the least, this knower, in an uncontested given, has presumptuously been an imaginary male. This gender-biased situation presents a problem of knowledge, granted that knowing is a combination of both the objective and subjective factors. While the objective component of knowledge is what is known, the subjective component is the knower. John Bewaji has argued that the subjective component has mostly been ignored in classical epistemology and this has largely resulted in impartial accounts of knowledge.[17]

Arguably, the undermining of the subjective component of knowledge, in this case, the female knower, can be due to how the objective component has been appreciated. What is known is a product

of many factors, including individual creativity, social conditions, location of the knower, affective sides, etc. These conditions have also generally led to social roles and how men and women apply themselves to different tasks or activities. This in turn imparts on what can be known. For instance, women are more inclined into sewing clothes, cooking, doing domestic chores, etc., while men are generally disposed to doing some more mechanical and physical jobs and roles like fixing stalled cars, mowing the laws, etc. These polarised gender roles impact what particular people are inclined to knowing. The consequence is that it leaves knowledge for the most to be sexually differentiated by practical expectation. Nevertheless, the fact that men have applied themselves to particular roles does not mean women lack the cognitive capacity to do so and vice versa. Hence, knowledge being a sexually differentiated product by practical expectation does not necessarily mean a logical necessity, that is, because men are expected to always mow the lawns, for instance, does not mean women cannot do it. Hence, to completely delimit women's knowledge based on practical expectation, or social default on certain issues, for instance, is to create a lopsided account for knowledge situation *ab initio.* The consequent effect is that this affects the overall subjective component or condition for knowledge.

The challenge of epistemic biases to the subjective component of knowledge mirrors the overall questions of marginality discussed in feminist epistemology. There are different forms of gender marginality or exclusion that affect knowledge production. For instance, when women are refused admission into certain schools of learning, they are marginalized both institutionally and epistemologically. This is one of the forms of marginality which affects what a woman can know and it only resurfaces the question of who a knowing subject should be. Lorraine Code surmises, that "as long as the view prevails that women cannot know according to the highest criteria for establishing knowledge, it seems that they are in fact not just marginalized but excluded, confined somewhere beyond the limits of both marginality and centrality".[18] Therefore, the sex of the knower is epistemologically significant.

The sex of the knower is important because in a certain way, it gives grounds for justification of what we claim to know and epistemic justification aims at the truth in a very strong way. For instance, we are more likely to ask, someone a question that we think is likely to produce the right answer. If we were to ask the time for Mass today, we are more inclined to ask the priest, because we believe, he would be a more justified epistemic agent. These are the issues about the subjective component of knowledge. The properties of a knowing subject are not just on account of his cognitive capacity, but also by its location, position as well as gender. These add up to what makes the knower a viable

epistemic agent or a truth-bearer. If women have been largely marginalized and this is allowed to gain enough ground, then, we we cannot claim that the sex of the knower is not epistemically significant.

Ordinarily, proposing the sex of the knower casts doubt on the autonomy of reason. In our commonsense assumption, we really do not require the gender of a person to determine the rationality of a claim; rather, it is a function of the coherence in thought, logic and strong appeal to reason and truth. This assumption that gender is unimportant has nevertheless been contested by scholars like Edward Craig[19] and Miranda Fricker.[20] The epistemic duo has argued that matters of truth and rationality are inextricably tied to power and social identities. Fricker tries to explain how social power enters into epistemic practice by explaining *who knows?* Fricker uses Craig's framework to explain this relationship. Craig in explaining the meaning of "know" imagines a case of an epistemic "state of nature" in which we seek true belief in order to survive. In this state, we have a fundamental need to acquire true beliefs. This desire for truth drives our practice and this, in turn, leads to seeing "good informants" people who would tell us the truth as whether *p*- in order to multiply our epistemic resources.[21] Therefore, to distinguish a good informant from a bad one, three features are identified, namely, (i) competence (ii) trustworthiness (iii) indicator-properties. Knowledge in this case is enshrined in a good informant. What it means is that someone who is trustworthy and competent is said to have rational authority. These properties are for the most social properties. Hence, if we take a woman on the basis of some social exclusion and epistemic marginalization as being a bad informant, she, therefore, is being excluded from rationality or being a good sources of knowledge. Hence, rationality is generally a function of social factors, not just some internal epistemic properties. In this wise, if a woman is disdained as a bad informant, then, she is already excluded from being a good source of knowledge.

Miranda Fricker has argued that rational authority has a lot to do with social power or powerlessness. When we find a credible person who has rational authority, he also possesses some social powers, because of the ability to tell the truth. The contrast to this is someone who lacks social authority is one who is powerless. This is not the only dimension that rational authority presents. The powerlessness due from lack of rational authority leads to a kind of depersonalisation. It leads to a metaphysical obscurity or oblivion. We are not likely to recognize as a person, someone we think lacks rational authority. The context of being a person goes beyond the physical features, but, one we strip of qualities enabling a person. Being a person goes beyond a biological make up, but also to some other extraneous factors, hence, we regard institutions

sometimes as a juridic person. From an ethical point of view, a person can be conceived from the point of responsibility. If we deny that an individual is incapable of truth or knowledge, we absolve him of responsibility to any such claim; hence, we do not hold him accountable. Ethically, a person goes beyond biological features. The point here is, epistemic biases against women, have inadvertently led to some form of powerlessness and this kind of metaphysical obscurity leads to depersonalisation. Powerlessness diminishes one's social and epistemic relevance as well as its authority. While, biases in epistemic relations are sometimes a function of historical androcentrism; seeing women from uninterrogated social misconstructions, this limitation depersonalizes. It suffices to examine the phenomenology of personhood briefly.

The Phenomenology of Personhood and Depersonalization

The question of personhood is essentially philosophical. The quality of being a person is metaphysical and even controversial. There are several theories on personhood and the term contrasts strongly with other related terms which are sometimes used interchangeably with it. Boethius as cited by Frederick Copleston defined the person as "an individual substance of a rational nature".[22] The implication of this definition which long dominated the whole of medieval philosophy holds that every human being is a person. For Aquinas, the disembodied soul is not a person because he loses at that point what gives it rationality. In Thomas Aquinas, the person is made up of body, soul and mind. Aquinas placed emphasis on the rational substance.

With Descartes on the other hand, the emphasis was changed. A person consists in self-consciousness. This is the naturalist epistemological tradition which is reflected in the writings of Locke and Hume. It does not place a premium on the body, but on consciousness and its ability to relate to the world and performing actions and being able to represent them. This naturalist position places emphasis on what a person can do. The emphasis is on ability rather than on any ontological criteria. A person is one on account of a consciousness that can be; a consciousness that can produce something or is doing something. Some critics have argued that a person is not brought into being on account of his functions.

The non-embodiment view of personhood contrasts with the position of embodied and embedded in the world. This is first captured in the philosophy of Edmund Husserl, but more concretely expressed in Martin Heidegger's phenomenology of being-in-the-world. Dermont Moran argues that "In Husserl's phenomenology, the heart of embodied selfhood is the *person,* understood as the unified, goal-directed center of action, bearer of rights and status, responsibilities and moral standing".[23]

For Heidegger, we are more defined on account of our experiences. Thus, persons are those whose experiences are meaningful in the world. Meaning, therefore, defines a person. The contributions of modern thinkers generally tend to regard freedom as the chief characteristic of the human person.[24] The idea of person for the most in modern philosophy has a moral connotation unlike the metaphysical connotation that was emphasized in the scholastic and the medieval period.

The personalists view of personhood begins with a primordial distinction between "an individual" and "a person". Copleston explains that the term "individual" is used in a pejorative sense, one that is essentially egocentric. The individual is the egocentric man.[25] The individual is described on the biological level, a practical materialist, no moral vocation, a member of the crowd. The person, on the other hand, contrasts with this view and has a moral vocation. Copleston gives the personalist manifesto which expressly defines a person as:

> …a spiritual being constituted as such by a manner of subsistence and of independence in being; it maintains this subsistence by its adhesion to a hierarchy of values, freely adopted, assimilated and lived, by a responsible self-commitment and by a constant conversion; it thus unifies all its activity in liberty and develops, moreover, by means of creative acts, its own unique vocation.[26]

With the personalists, a person is tied to a vocation which is fulfilled with social interaction and beyond. A person is a transcendental being, one who is an embodiment of collectivity. A person for the personalist is beyond being a member of the human species, but also one that can contribute to a purpose or vision. A person is beyond biology. Whereas an individual is anti-social being, a person is a social being. As a social being, "he is more than a mere being in the group, but one oriented towards a society of persons, and a society of persons is a society of free, morally responsible human beings".[27] This personalist view of a person is opposed to Marxism which creates both a social caste system and regards man only within his economic value or benefit. However, man is not conceived not from a parochial plane, but, from a holistic plane. Personalists like Emmanuel Mounier and even Karol Wojtyla are doctrines antithetical to individualism.

The personalist creed is a reaction to the perceived depersonalisation created by such philosophies which undermined the creative vision of man, his transcedentalness, axiological relevance or teleological goal of man, yet conceives him from a limited sense or on account of some metaphysical values. Personalism tends to give dignity to the human person and correct the Darwinian error that the difference between man and other terrestrial being is in degrees and not in kind. Darwinian

evolutionary vision and the social engineering places man not at the centre of the cosmos but like every other creatures seeking survival. In personalism, a fundamental difference in the classification of all beings is the distinction between person and non-persons. Thus, in the words of Jacques Maritain: "Whenever we say that man is a person, we mean that he is more than a mere parcel of matter, more than an individual element in nature, such as is an atom, a blade of grass, a fly or an elephant…Man is an animal and an individual, but unlike other animals or individuals." [28] Personalist thesis also holds man as having a dialogic relationship with the world like the I-Thou of Martin Buber.

Personalists also hold the dignity of the person of the individual. The quality of being a person is not dependent by this on variables such as intelligence or social prowess. Also, the quality of being a person cannot be derived by a cosmological reduction of any sort, but are functions of some irreducible conditions. It means that being a person is not a function of what one is able to do or not. Also, in personalism, the human person is relational and always in communion. He is never always alone. "Relationship is not an optional accessory for the human person, but is essential to his personhood. He is a being-for-relation."[29] Personalist see the human person's strive for communion as a function of his rationality. Thus, the human person is never judged in isolation. To evaluate him in isolation from relationality is to both deny him rationality as well as depersonalize him.

The personalist view of a person is very metaphysical, conceiving of man beyond his physical features. However, epistemologically, the starting point for conceptualisation on personhood is rationality and epistemic responsibility. This understanding of personhood is more fluid beyond metaphysics. The fluid conception of personhood is one that makes us conceive of a person in other senses like ethical, moral or legal. As an ethical term, it may refer to a mode being and as a legal term, it may refer one as a human individual, a partnership or a cooperation. Epistemologically, a person is not just a human being, because, the conception of a person would invoke the idea of an epistemic agency. An epistemic agent goes beyond a human person, but include also non-human epistemic agency including collectivities like groups or institutions. This is the ground for discussing non-human epistemic agents as having group beliefs. Therefore, to depersonalise in the epistemological sense is to deny an epistemic agent of the ability to hold epistemic belief, at least, or knowledge at best. When, therefore, we deny an epistemic agent the privilege of having epistemic claims or knowledge, we depersonalise them. In this wise, when, women, as a consequence of epistemic bias suffer epistemic injustices, they at some level are depersonalised. This depersonalisation which is due from epistemic bias

is not on account of women being incapable of certain epistemic belief, truth or knowledge, but, that such biases have unjustly impaired, marginalized or circumscribe them from such. The consequence is that, we limit the possibility for a wholesome picture of what is possible in a knowledge situation. Knowledge situation is understood as the "interaction of factors that directly or indirectly contributes to the knowing process It concerns the question of the relation of the knower, sense data experienced and things known.[30] If we must have a wholesome knowledge situation, epistemic justice to the knower is important. This first helps establish *prima facie* ground that he is a viable, credible or truth-worthy epistemic agent. If he is denied this quality, not on account of any sufficiently grounded incapacity, but, one on the basis of implicit or epistemic bias, then, we are poised to have a shaky foundation, on whatever is established by the subject of knowledge. Biases in epistemic relations, especially of women, raises further the challenges to having genuine knowledge or a wholesome knowledge situation.

Concluding Remarks: What Can a Woman Know?

From the discussion above, we have seen that epistemic biases are sometimes default thought patterns which skew our judgements in favour or against a person, class of persons or situation. The concern of feminist epistemology is one that aims to correct this imbalance epistemic relation. Persistent gender inequality has affected how the subjective component of knowledge affects areas of what can be known and unknown. Why this seems to spiral the skeptical challenge, it has also left the efforts to gaining purity, balance and wholeness in what we can know. Biases are the stumbling blocks to what we can know. As long, we pretend that the gender of the knower is unimportant, the female knower will continually be disdained by implicit biases, and this will continually ferment the grounds of epistemic injustices in epistemic relations.

The analysis above shows there is a need to improve the dynamics of our epistemic practices, one that seeks to eliminate all forms of marginalization. If we wish to raise the quality of knowledge production and authorization, we must seek to be all inclusive of the composition of epistemic communities, one that seeks to give equal grounds for male and female knower. Our attention must be properly paid to a robust appreciation of the epistemic advantages that can accrue to those who are otherwise marginalized. A useful way which has been advanced by feminist epistemology is feminist standpoint theory. Feminist standpoint theory is a transformative shift that holds three principal claims to correcting the epistemological imbalance and impasse occasioned from

biased epistemic relations, namely, "(1) knowledge is socially situated, (2) marginalized groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for them to be aware of things and ask questions than it is for the non-marginalized, and (3) research, particularly that focused on power relations, should begin with the lives of the marginalized".[31] Feminist standpoint theory advocates that the lived experiences of the knower, in this case, the woman, cannot be discounted. It also analyses the effect of power structures on knowledge production. The Feminist standpoint theory offers new methodological starting point and approaches to knowledge situations which generally eliminate such forms of epistemic injustices due from a marginalized knower in mainstream epistemology. The framework advanced by feminist standpoint theory, makes the question, what a woman can know as almost superfluous, if it is not asked in the same way, what can a man know? This is because, when a woman is given equal chances bereft of biases in the epistemic community, a woman can know as much as a man, given the same epistemic context. Therefore, feminist standpoint theory privileges social contexts and experiences of the knower, precisely, female knower.

The extant of biased epistemic relations in knowledge communities mirrored in the typical anonymous knower of *S knows P* in mainstream epistemology, have helped to reduce the credibility of women as knowers. When women are so biased, the starting point is to doubt their competence or epistemic credentials. What this means in the first instance is that, they are denied rational authority and this is epistemologically tied to personhood. When we raise the question, what can a woman know, we are entering into the polemic waters of epistemic injustice and this can only cause systemic gaps in the interpretive resources available to epistemic agents and knowledge gaps in the epistemic community. Feminist standpoint theory, therefore, resolves this impasse, which is also the position of this paper, for a situatedness of knowledge. Situated knowledge which is a feminist thesis, holds that all forms of knowledge reflect the particular conditions in which they are produced and at some level reflect the social identities and social location or gender of knowledge producers. This position deflates the myth of scientific objectivity. This position advances that all knowledge must take into cognizance the perspective of the knower. The knower is always a combination of functions, including idiosyncratic skills and talents. Alison Wylie expresses this intent more robustly:

> What individuals experience and understand is (contingently) shaped by systems of social differentiation that structure and are, in turn, structured by the material conditions of their lives, the relations of production and

> reproduction that condition their social interactions, and the cultural and conceptual resources available to them for representing interpreting these relations.[32]

Therefore, to interrogate, what can a woman know, is to begin with a *prima facie* unbiased recognition of the woman as an epistemic agent imbue with credibility and rationality; a person whose situation must be be cognized, taking her experience in context as well as social conditions in perspective. This can only help to enrich the epistemic community, granted that all knowers, male and female, are equally appreciated. The synopsis of the above submission for our conversation is that to further close the gaps caused by skewed epistemic relations from biases, women's experiences should be taken into context as well as their experiences. Each time we advance the embers of epistemic exclusion of women as knowing subjects we further rupture the challenge of scepticism or increase the chances of having a wholesome and a more warranted knowledge and knowledge production. Apart from the many epistemic advantages these have, epistemologically, it restores personhood to the woman as a knowing subject, as epistemic injustice and biases depersonalizes.

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THE HUMAN PERSON IN YORUBA CULTURE AND PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract
The question: who is a human person? has remained a perennial question in the study of philosophy and religion. In spite of the fact of the establishment of the fact that the human person is an individual substance of a rational nature, different cultures continue to reflect on the question of the human person from the particularity and peculiarity of their cultural category. Thus, this paper investigates the concept of the human person from the perspective of the Yoruba people. The Yoruba believe that a human person consist of a body, which is physical, and a soul which is spiritual. At creation, Yoruba mythology of creation has it that Olodumare worked in collaboration with some gods to bring the human person into existence. These gods are Orisanla (God of creation) who was responsible for molding the body, Ogun (God of iron) was the beautifier; who for example cut the hands into fingers and Olodumare gave the soul. This paper is aimed at giving an explanation to what makes

a human person among the Yoruba. For the purpose of this study, the phenomenological method of inquiry would be employed.

Key words: Human Person, Yoruba Culture, Body, Soul, *Olodumare, Orisanla,* gods.

Introduction

The purpose of this work is to discuss human person in Yoruba culture. A human person is a living being that contains a real and existing power to direct its own development toward fulfillment through perfect, unconditional, and infinite Truth, Love, Goodness, Beauty, and Unity, and will do so if all the proper conditions are met. A human being is referred to as "eniyan" in Yoruba context, which connotes a good or responsible person hence the saying "kii se eniyan" that is person is not responsible or reliable. This by implication means that a human person must be dependable with total sense of readiness to be there for others. If a human person is not making any contributions to the community in which he or she is part, then to Yoruba people, he is not a human person per se. Although he has the features but not the competence. This idea has earlier been presented by Gbadegesin (1983) that "the normative concept of a person evolves from the way in which man is understood in a given community in terms of his relations to other living beings and his role among other men." Therefore human person in Yoruba context mean somebody that is part of the community in all ramifications. This is in line with the understanding of *Akan* people about human person. "In fact, a person of high moral standards or conduct would be described approvingly as *oye onipa paa*—literally; she is a real (human) person. In contrast, an individual who fails in his striving in the Akan community may be judged as *onipa hun*, which literally means "useless person," an opprobrious expression. (Wingo 2006)

In the lesson note of Open University on person and persons, there is an agreement that "someone who has suffered some catastrophe that has put them in a permanent coma, a 'persistent vegetative state'. Their biological classification has not altered; they are still a human being. They have lost something, however. In a sense, they have ceased to exist…. A being in a persistent vegetative state is a case of something human that might not be a person." Therefore a human person must be alive, active and productive.

Who Are the Yoruba?

Yoruba people according to Atanda (1989) constitute one of the major ethnic groups in modern igeria and they effectively occupy the whole of Ogun, Ondo, Oyo and Lagos State and a substantial part of Kwara State.

A considerable number of Yoruba people also inhabit the South- Eastern part of Republic of Benin (formal Dahomey). In agreement, Omojola (2015) states that, the Yoruba live in the South-western part of the present day Nigeria and they occupy the states of Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, Lagos and Ekiti. They are also found in some parts of Kogi, Kwara and Edo States and beyond the lower Niger northwards into Nupe land. They could also be found beyond the boundaries of the present day Nigeria in Dahomey (Republic of Benin) and Togoland. Since the result of the last census in Nigeria is controversial, it is difficult to give the accurate total population of the Yoruba people. All that is known about them is that they are regarded as one of the most advanced communities in West African in; religion, agriculture, commerce, education, art, intelligence, government and warfare.

This group of people has as part of their values collective community development, cultural observes reflecting in their interaction with others- mode of dressing and diets. They also value honesty, humility and diligence. And more importantly, they value communal life. All these are taught in their informal training beginning from home. According to Kanu and Omojola (2018), Yoruba values are inherent in their formation as they assert that "at rising, children are taught to greet elders, sweep the surroundings, they are also taught from time to time to respect elders, to have value of honesty, charity, industriousness, cleanness, humility, support- members helping themselves in developing someone's project, as a group or people of the same trade helping themselves. Formation of children was even taught to be done collectively. Most Africans gain this knowledge ever before they grow up to form associations according to age groups and they begin to compete and use themselves as yardstick for success, development and progress. All these are taught through proverbs, songs, art, communal life, and folk tales/ lore during moonlight play.

The Human Person in Yoruba Culture and Philosophy

The understanding of human person in Yoruba culture therefore is seen beyond ordinary because it has to do with physical and spiritual. Akíntúndé and Fálọlá (2016) put it this way "Yoruba religious thought makes a distinction between the physical body (ara) and the spiritual elements that inhabit it and give it life and individuality. Still, there is the conception that the two are inseparable entities that make up human personality. The spiritual elements consist of both the head (orí, the inner head) and breath (èémí), which are the vital components without which the body dies. Orí, which is more than a physical head that carries human brain, controls one's destiny and direction through the use of one's ẹsẹ̀ (legs). Ese (legs) is regarded by the Yorubas as a vital part of the

human personality make-up, both in a physical and spiritual sense. This is the symbol of power and activity. It is therefore an element which enables a man to struggle and function adequately in life so that he may bring to realization whatever has been marked out for him by the choice of ori. Makinde (1983).

Orí also guides one's deeds and actions; a bad and good choice depends on one's choice of orí. In essence, orí is the element that predetermines a person's success or failure in the world." Therefore, human person consists of physical in body (Ara) and spiritual body in head and breathe (Orí and èémí). Abimbola (2006), added that One's ori-inu (spiritual consciousness in the physical realm) must grow in order to consummate union with one's "Iponri" (Ori Orun, spiritual self).

Makinde (1983) alludes to this by saying that "apart from the body and soul which, in Yoruba thought, are the two main elements (the physical and the spiritual) of a person, there is a third element, also spiritual, of a person, known as ori (inner head) whose function it is to determine human destiny." Makinde went further to say that the Yoruba concept of the choice of destiny through ori also emphasizes the need for hard work to bring to fruition the potentiality for success represented by the choice of a good ori. This leads us to believe in ese (leg) as an important ingredient of human personality. This means to a very large extent, success determines a human person. This success in human person is what Yoruba people refer to as "Eniyan" not just the person with features of a human being.

Reflecting on what make a human being (Eniyan) and how they come about, Gbadegesin (1983) is of the opinion that "eniyan" is the combined effort of "Olodumare", the supreme deity, and some subordinates. Yoruba conception of a human person refers to all the tangible elements that make a person both externally and internally such as brain, intestine, liver, and so on. Emi (Soul) is believed to be the immaterial element that provides the energy without which a person is said to be living or being conscious. Akíntúndé and Fálọ́lá (2016) in their attempt to draw the relationship between body, soul and head referred to Ifá verse that the body (ara) was molded by Òrìṣà-Ńlá, the orí (head) is provided by Àjàlá and the ẹ̀mí is provided by Ọlọ́run (Olódùmarè), God in Yoruba believe. This relationship has been grouped into physical-material and mental-spiritual by Gbadegesin (2003) as follows: "Ara" – body belongs to the first, èmí –soul, to the second, and "orí"- head and "okàn"-heart has physical and mental aspects.

In another version, Makinde (1983) asserts that the Yoruba people believe that the human personality has two main elements: the physical and the spiritual body and mind (soul). And that the creation of the physical elements of a person by Orisanla does not include hands and

legs. It was the duty of Ogun (the god of iron) to cut the hands into fingers and also cut the legs out of the shapeless trunk. The researcher finds this Ogun assignment as beautifier very interesting. Being the god of iron according to Yoruba people, he would have enough instruments like cutlass and others apparatuses to do the separations.

The physical head which is said to be the first to be molded is regarded as the beginning of all things from which the body was made and Gbadegesin (2003) explained the importance of this (Ori) as follows "The idea of orí as a spiritual component, chosen by the individual and having the power of a guardian and protector over him/her, seems too deep-rooted in the Yoruba world-view to be given up. It is therefore the "ori" so chosen, with the destiny wound up in it that determines the personality of the individual. And though the orí is symbolized by the physical head, it is not identical with it. For the orí is construed as the inner—or spiritual—head (orí-inú)." From these two versions of the creation of human persons, it can be deduced that Olodumare (God) worked in collaboration with some gods to bring forth man. They were Orisanla and Ajala according to Akíntúndé and Fálọlá. Makinde says Orisanla and Ogun.

As an extension to the above concept of human person in Yoruba culture, Abimbola (2006), opines that Yoruba belief holds that all human beings possess what is known as "Ayanmo" (destiny, fate) and are expected to eventually become one in spirit with Olodumare. Also, the thoughts and actions of each person in Ayé (the physical realm) interact with all other living things, including the Earth itself. Each person attempts to achieve perfection and find their destiny in Orun-Rere (the spiritual realm of those who do good and beneficial things).

Impact of the Community on Human Person

Taking lead from the fact that a human person must be responsible and reliable, indigenous Yoruba community comes together to raise a child for his good and good of the community. At pregnancy, 'Ifa' priest is consulted to know the type of child that should be expected. Even at times, a prediction of a particular type of child may come to a family and how to prepare and care for such a child will be discussed along with the announcement before pregnancy. A woman who is carrying a future king will know before birth for example. At arrival, naming ceremony will be done to welcome the child to the community and everyone in the community has it as a responsibility to care for him through proper formation or informal education. Hence the saying in Yoruba that "Eniyan kan lo n bimo, igba owo lo n to" literally means that it is only one person that gives birth to a child and two hundred hands bring him up.

In the typical Yoruba culture, a diviner must be consulted before any serious decision is taking because as Idowu (1966) opines …the full responsibility of all the affairs belongs to the Deity…through all its changing scenes, its joys and troubles; it is the Deity who is in control". Sacrifices are used regularly to appease the gods because it is equally believed that evil world can change destinies. Therefore regular prayers in form of sacrifices are important to one Ori as will be needed in the mind of Abimbola (2006). "Iwapẹlẹ (or well-balanced) meditative recitation and sincere veneration is sufficient to strengthen the "ori-inu" of most people. Well-balanced people, it is believed, are able to make positive use of the simplest form of connection between their Oris and the omnipotent Olu-Orun: an adura (petition or prayer) for divine support". What happens in this type of prayer is this: "Eshu Elegbara" (a god) initiates contact with spiritual realm on behalf of the petitioner, and transmits the prayer to Ayé; the deliverer of ase or the spark of life. He transmits this prayer without distorting it in any way. Thereafter, the petitioner may be satisfied with a personal answer. In the event that he or she is not, the Ifá oracle of the Orisha Orunmila may also be consulted. All communication with *Orun*, whether simplistic in the form of a personal prayer or complicated in the form of that done by an initiated Babalawo (priest of divination), however, is energized by invoking ase. (So shall it be) Abimbola (2006)

The community guides individual to a matured age and at times initiate them especially male children to a cult for support and protection. Human person are guided through choosing a trade that is suitable as dictated by the diviners. Even in marriage, the community still pays attention to the choice of partner. In times of trouble, they still run back to their family and community for solutions. In case there is any failure after all these efforts have been put in place, they resign to "Ayanmo" (Destiny or Fate) hence, the saying that "Ayanmo ko gbo Oogun". (Destiny has no remedy). This is as well related to the choice of Ori (head), hence those with difficult cases without remedy are termed to be "Oloriburuku" that is, having a bad head. This however will lead us to whether Yoruba believe that human person lives after here, that is, the physical realm (heaven) that Abimbola (2006) is pointed at earlier.

Human Person and After Life

Primarily, Africans believe in life after here or live beyond here or Ancestral World. In the explanation of Abanuka (1994), that " Ancestors are an aspect of the African experience of the universe… the dead are not considered as very far removed from the living, and those who are still living are conscious of their journey to join those who have gone before them to the land of the dead". In the mind of Mbiti (1969) however, "A

person dies and yet continues to live: he is a living- dead, and no other term can describe him better than that". To the family members, the diseased continues to live as and remembered as if he travels. Keeping the dead in the temporal sight by his loved ones is what Mbiti describes as the cult of the living –dead in all African societies. Ige (2006) added that they even move round and "It is only those who possess special power or medicine that can notice their presence."

Being particular about Yoruba people, Mbiti insists that "they are uncertain about the final lot of the departed: some are put in a good place, others in a bad place; the first group meets relatives and lives more or less as the people did in this life, but the second group is thought to suffer without end." This is the story of the ancestral world that the researcher heard in the oral tradition of Yoruba people. The second group may not be able to survive and they disappear without attention hence, they emphasize good relationship here on earth so that they can reunit with the ancestors and continue to live here after. Also, Yoruba believe that after a while, the diseased will leave the ancestral world and return to their families to live again or to fulfil some uncompleted assignments hence they have names like- "Yetunde", "Yejide", "Yewande" or "Iyabo" – mother has returned, and "Babatunde" "Babajide" or "Babade" – father has returned. In the mind of Idowu (1966), ancestral world exist and there is an annual festival in their honour especially for those that have been deified. Remembrance of the Ancestors is not only particular to the deified members because that is what is being celebrated annually in "Egungun" festival as opposed the idea of Idowu (1966). Ige (2006) attests to this that "communal ceremonies are done in honour of the ancestor and to remind the people of the great deeds of their ancestors. Some of these festivals include 'Oro' and 'Egungun'". Apart from this, Ige continues "The ancestors have shrines where sacrifices and prayers are offered to them. Among the Yoruba it is called Igbo Igbale'. There are priests and priestesses attached to the shrines. The priests and priestesses are usually the most elderly men and women in the family. It is however not a woman married into the family. The above consequently establish the fact that human person continues to live here after. It implies that life is not end by death as Mbiti (1969) affirms "Death stands between the world of human beings and the world of the spirits, between the visible and the invisible."

Conclusion

An attempt had been made in this paper to discuss the understanding of human person in Yoruba culture and Philosophy. The physical element of a person is collectively known as ara (body), a creation of Orisanla (the Yoruba God of creation) who is charged by Olodumare (God of Heaven) with the responsibility of molding human beings out of clay, with Ogun

(god of iron) to beautify the body while Olodumare gives the breath "Eemi". In the analysis, "ara", (body) "Ori" (head), "Emi" (Spirit), and "Eemi' (Breath) form a human person. Prayer to one's *Ori- Orun* is important regularly as it produces an immediate sensation of joy. This must work directly with "ese" legs to bring to fulfillment all that one has been destined to achieve. It was equally established that the community in which one is part must have influence on human person from the beginning to the age of maturity for his good and the good of the community at large. However, even after death, a human person lives on in Yoruba land especially those who have lived well and they are regularly celebrated as ancestors. Finnally, in the Yoruba belief system, Olodumare has *ase* (Final say) over everything hence, it is considered supreme.

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SECTION 3

RELIGIOUS/SOCIO-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES AND HUMAN FORMATION

25

RELIGION AND HUMAN VALUES: AN INQUISITION OF THE AFRO-CENTRIC IMPERATIVE.

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Abstract
Contemporary debates by scholars on the relevance or otherwise of African values system and thought process had further opened the floodgate of the ambivalence between those scholars seeking to define African values and morality within the parameters of a conventionalized Western religious epistemological hegemony, thereby accentuating the superiority of Western values. On the other side of the debate are scholars pursuing an "Africanist" explanation which embraces an authentic mode of African knowledge construction of human values and morality. The objective of this paper is to examine the Afro-centric imperative of the African thought process in the current moral discourse, in order to extrapolate an endorsement which will grant space for a hybrid of moral reconstructions between Christianity and African indigenous religion and thought process. This study is cached within the theoretical framework of the Afro-centric Cultural Distinctive Paradigm (ACDP) which encapsulates African indigenous religion and human values. However, within the grindstone of spotlighting African human values, is the inevitable project of decolonization. This paper therefore explores the task of decolonizing African thought against the backdrop of the ontological normative dialectics of superiority and inferiority. This paper argues against the superiority of Western thought and values over African values. In order to argue for this conclusion, this discourse finds

it expedient to denude in more precise terms, some positive human values of African thought process; an investigation that leads to the interplay between the decolonization of African thought and the decolonization of the African intellectual landscape. This paper disturbs and unpacks the colonial project and calls to contestation Western hegemony and the continuous dominance of Western thought even amongst African scholars (theologians and philosophers). This paper concludes by asserting that the differences that exist between African religious human values and western values must not necessarily have normative consequences; as things can be different without having to be placed within a normative hierarchy. The contention that African values should be of less worth than Western values is therefore repudiated. The Paper advances the understanding of religion and human values from the perspective of African indigenous worldview. The recommendation is that there should be an integrated approach to resolving the current crises of human values.
Keywords: Religion, Human Values and Afrocentricism.

Introduction

The deadweight of accentuating African indigenous religious and human values in contemporary scholarship is fraught with many difficulties punctuated by fluctuations, oscillation, and occasional regressions. Although some progress is being made, this progression has not always been rectilinear but nonetheless exhibiting some level of advances. Vivaciously this process has been set in motion by the aspirations of many African intellectuals like Kwame Anthony Appiah, Kwasi Wiredu, Henry Odera Oruka, John Mbiti, Bolaji Idowu, Frantz Fanon, and Aimé Césaire; and many other African activists like Steve Biko and Nelson Mandela. Interestingly the project of decolonization of the African thought process has also been the preoccupation of non-African contemporary scholars like Björn Freter[1] and very few others. These antecedents should suggest that the crusade before African contemporary scholarship is the acceleration of the contention to decolonize African thought process, including the valuation and transvalution of indigenous religious and human values.

The crisis of values pervading contemporary Nigeria moral space is inexorable, which requires a high level of critical reflection in the search for ways through which the moral challenge posed by the agents of Western acculturation can be adequately addressed. The tremendous impact of Western acculturation on the nation and the speeding erosion of well enacted Afro-centric religious and human values are readily seen in the ways many African indigenous normative systems are being seriously undermined even by some African intellectuals and African

converts to non-indigenous religions. This situation has led to the waning away of African values system in the face of alien values.

Therefore the enterprise to underscore African religious and human values is one that must not be taken lightly, because every society has set of values covering the whole ramifications of the society, and these values apparently play regulating roles in human relationships and act as stabilizing factors of the society. As asserted by Kanu "value system is the cultural outlook of a people and the understanding of the value system of the people is the understanding of the belief system and cultural system of the people in question."[2]

In proffering solutions to the misadventure of the Nigerian project, the dominant tenor within the public space is the narrative that posits that the solution to the Nigerian question is at the narthex of formulating the right economic policies and fashioning a suitable political ideology. This line of thinking has reached a crescendo that any contrary opinion is often repudiated. While some level of truth resides in the above assertion: that economics and politics play undeniable importance in the development of any nation, public discourse tends however to discount the most fundamental aspect of the society: namely its ethical dimension. Therefore, an accurate design of economic policies and the adoption of the proper political ideology, without a corresponding attestation of an ethical value system are most unlikely to yield any meaning human development. Ethical behavior in every area of the public space should provide the fundamental philosophical foundation for authentic human development, because: "economic and political choices as a society are ultimately determined by moral values."[3] Plato said, "States are as men are; they grow out of human character." So the Nigerian state is a product of the Nigerian character as a nation cannot rise above the values of her citizens.

What is profoundly and eminently obvious is that there is a crisis of values in Nigeria, which has led to the agitation and clamour for invigorating and maintaining durable and lasting positive values in Nigeria. The draught of positive values is made manifest in all sphere of public life. There is the abuse and perversion of teachers-students relationship which is supposed to be a vital mentoring relationship. Religious institutions have fallen into moral disrepute owing to a number of high profile scandals with the attended disdained for the emissaries of organized religion. Religious leaders are increasingly vulnerable to the criticism that they are far more comfortable courting the rich and the powerful than speaking truth to power. The post-modern Nigeria society is increasingly being typified by instant gratification that feeds on short-termism, profiteering, fraud, sexual irresponsibility and perversion. Without making hasty and unsustainable

generalizations, the consensus is that the Nigeria public space is suffused by inordinately disproportionate returns on non- investments (which in popular palace is called corruption), cheating, predatory exploitation and feverish individualism at the expense of the common good.

Arriving at a broadly agreed upon set of values that will launch Nigeria into the path of moral rectitude is one of the most urgent tasks for Nigerian public intellectuals and social thinkers. The objective of this paper therefore is to examine the Afro-centric imperative in the enthronement of positive religious and human values in order to extrapolate an endorsement which will grant space for a hybrid of moral reconstructions.

Conceptual Clarity

Religion

Religion is a victim of definitional pluralism as there is no scholarly consensus over what precisely constitutes a religion. For the purpose clarity, the paper adopts Émile Durkheim definition of religion as a "unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things".[4] By sacred things Durkheim meant things set apart and forbidden, beliefs and practices and all those who adhere to them. Sacred things are not, however, limited to gods or spirits. On the contrary, a sacred thing can be a rock, a tree, a spring, a pebble, a piece of wood, a house. Religious beliefs, myths, dogmas and legends are the representations that express the nature of these sacred things, and the virtues and powers which are attributed to them. Antoine Vergote on his part defined religion as "… the entirety of the linguistic expressions, emotions and, actions and signs that refer to a supernatural being or supernatural beings."[5] Vergote took the term supernatural simply to mean whatever transcends the powers of nature or human agency.

Therefore religious values are ethical principles founded on religious traditions, texts and beliefs. These values are usually considered to be the high moral and ethical values that people of faith aspire to achieve. In contrast to human or personal values, religious-based values are based on the scriptures and or a religion's established norms. For example, Judaism has the Ten Commandments. Christianity has both the ten commandment and the teachings of Jesus Christ. Islam provides spiritual guidance through the Quran and Hadith, while African traditional religious values are expressed through the customs, culture, beliefs and practices of the Africans.

Christians and Muslims comprise the predominant religious groups in Nigeria. Christianity is more common in the southern region of the country, while Islam is the dominant religion in the north. Indigenous traditional religion accounts for about 10 percent of the population.

These traditional religions are specific to certain rural or indigenous areas and are usually intertwined with either Christianity or Islam. Each of these religious groups has various religious values which serve as a guide and control of human behavior, dictating right from wrong.

Human Values

Many social scientists have tried to give meaning to the word "value" by articulating many definitions. Among these are: Allport, Jones and Gerald, and Rokeach. Allport in his publication titled *Pattern and Growth in Personality* sees value as: "a belief upon which a man act by preference."[6] Jones and Gerald in their join text defined value as: "any singular state or object for which the individual strives or approaches, extols, embraces, voluntarily consumes, incur expenses to acquire as positive value."[7] According to these social scientists, values sensitize the person; they move him around his environment because they define his attractive and repelling nature and particular cognitive categories. Therefore a value offers a motivational force, defines, sustains and modifies attitude and behaviour.

Another attempt to create a more lucid meaning of the word "value" is found in the work of Rokeach titled *The Nature of Human Values*. Rokeach says "a value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end state of existence."[8]

Experts in the humanities have described human values as "our very core, the especial essence of who we are as human beings."[9] Human values are the virtues that guide us to take into account of the human element when we interact with other human beings. Human values are, for example, respect, acceptance, consideration, appreciation, listening, openness, affection, empathy and love towards other human beings. These are the demonstrable and authentic values on which any human society should be built upon. Some human values in traditional African society include honesty, morality, respect for elders, respect for fellow citizens, communality and family loyalty. One of the most significant values that traditional Africans hold to be of great importance is the wisdom of its elders. Age is a symbol of experience and intelligence, and the mistreatment of said elders is viewed as taboo.

Afrocentricism and Afro-centric Cultural Distinctive Theoretical Framework

Louis Gates and Anthony Appiah view Afrocentrism as a cultural ideology or worldview that focuses on the history of the people of African descent. It is a response to global Eurocentric attitudes about African people and their historical contributions; it revisits their history

with an African cultural and ideological focus.[10] In most studies, Afrocentrism is usually interchanged with Afrocentricity which deals primarily with Pan-African ideology in culture, philosophy, and history. Afrocentrism can be seen as an African inspired ideology that manifests an affirmation by conceptualizing a glorified heritage that is distinctly African. This is what defines the Afro-centric cultural distinctive theoretical framework. It often argues against or minimizes European cultural hegemony and influences, while accenting historical African civilizations that independently accomplished a significant level of cultural development. In general, the Afro-centric cultural distinctive paradigm is usually manifested in a focus on African culture and the history of Africa. It involves an African version of an African-centered view of history and culture to portray the achievements and development of African traditions which have been inferiorized by the West.[11] In his book, *The Afrocentric Idea*, Asante defines Afrocentricity as "the placing of African ideals at the center of any analysis that involves African culture and behavior."[12] It should be emphasized that this perspective is not an explicit argument for African superiority in culture and history, although some scholars have used it to that end. Rather, the Afro-centric cultural distinctive paradigm is a conceptual tool for seeing the history of African-descended peoples through their own lens, and not through the lens of Europe or the West. As a mode of analysis, Afrocentrism has remained remarkably durable over the past two hundred years; however, scholars have often reached radically different conclusions in their utilization of this analytical tool.

According to Asante, what is today broadly called Afrocentrism evolved out of the work of African intellectuals that flowered into its modern form due to the activism of African intellectuals in the civil rights movement and in the development of African studies programs in universities as a distinct academic ideology.[13] Proponents of Afrocentrism support the claim that the contributions of various Africans have been downplayed or discredited as part of the legacy of colonialism and slavery's pathology of "writing Africans out of history."[14] Afrocentrism argues that for centuries, Africans and other nonwhites have been dominated, through slavery and colonization, by Europeans, and that European culture is diametrically opposed to efforts by non-Europeans to achieve self-determination. For this reason, according to Afrocentrism, people of African descent need to develop an appreciation of the achievements of traditional African civilizations; indeed, they need to articulate their own history and their own system of values.[15] .

Afrocentrists assert that traditional African culture contrasts with European culture in being more informed by its history “circular” rather than “linear”; more cooperative; more intuitive; more humano-centric;

and more closely integrated with the spiritual world.[16] Renewed attention to this culture, they argue, can benefit Africans by reminding them that their own culture, which was long been devalued by Europeans, has a rich and ancient heritage. In addition to emphasizing the past, Afrocentrism encourages the preservation and elevation of contemporary African culture.[17]

Western Textualisation of African Values and Thought Process

Edem Kodjo, the author of '*Africa Tomorrow*' aptly describes the western textualization and colonization of African values and thought process as the condition of the African "torn away from his past, propelled into a universe fashioned from outside that suppresses his values, and dumbfounded by a cultural invasion that marginalizes him. The African ... is today the deformed image of others."[18] The westernization of African values is the perception of ethnic and cultural inferiority, a form of internalized oppression engrained in the contemporary African psyche. This disposition was supported by an educational system which drew the African away from his community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of the European society where he is not allowed to graze.[19] Western education introduced a western culture-transmitting process with an attitude that neither respects the core values of African culture, nor leads the present generation to acquire accumulated knowledge of African values with pride. The educational process directed the African thought process away from African values; equipping him with a type of education that is antagonistic to the African cultural values and thought patterns.[20] Onwubiko said:

Western system of education was very well calculated to teach the new Africans that in order to rise in the ladder of the new culture and acquire the status it promised; they must be alienated, ideologically and physically, from their root and their cultural past. The colonial agents presented themselves as symbols of human beings, in the image and likeness of whom all future generation Africans were to be created.[21]

This is the thinking that foreign values are always better and superior, while the indigenous are primitive, uncultured and barbaric. Therefore a colonized African thought is the acceptance, by the colonized, of the culture or doctrines of the colonizer, as intrinsically more worthy or superior. This is the mentality that still plagues Africa many years after independence, and despite all the knowledge and education. This is why Nyerere said: "of all the crimes of colonialism there is none worse than the attempt to make us believe that we had no indigenous culture of our own or that what we did have was worthless or something of which we should be ashamed, instead of being a source of pride."[22] Therefore the Western textualisation of African values is

responsible for the wholesale importation and adoption of Western values and the repudiation of African heritage, as if there was never anything good in Africa history and values.

African nationalists who worked so hard for the liberation of Africans from physical enslavement and actual colonization may not have realized that intellectual slavery and mental enslavement that works insidiously at the level of the mind was more pervasive, more vicious and even more cruel and exacting, than political colonization. Once people's mind is conquered and enslaved, the dominion and domination naturally extend to other domains such as politics, economics and even religion. This mental enslavement comprehensively dehumanized and stripped Africans of their humanity; a situation which makes the work of the conqueror easier. Thus, the colonization of African mind makes Africans tend to treat Europeans and their allies as demigods.

The effects of the colonized African mind also included the near extinction of African culture, which has greatly diluted or destroyed African heritage, including the destruction of African traditional institutions and religion. The Europeans forced the people to learn their language, taught them how to eat European food and dress like Europeans, abandoning their own traditional eating habits and dressing. From then on the Africans occupied only the inferior positions of the colonial administration and never had a say in the government of their own countries. Those employed by the colonial administration felt proud and more superior to the others. Even today Africans who are schooled in western ways of life feel more superior to other Africans. This deculturalization of Africa paved the way for the acceptance of the dominance of Europe and European values over African heritage, and the rejection African culture in exchange for the colonial culture.

A colonized African thought process is today a burden and barrier to the progress of Africa, as Africans now prefer foreign lifestyle, culture, music, literature and others. Today Africans conduct two (at times three) separate full-blown marriage ceremonies, because in our minds, until the "White Wedding" is done the marriage ceremony is not complete. Thus there is the traditional marriage (which is actually the proper marriage ceremony according to African heritage), then the marriage at the registry, and the third which is the "white wedding". In politics, the colonized African thought process seeks to implement democracy as defined by the western nations without regard to the fact the democracy as a system of government grew and evolved from the way of life of these nations with their own variant of democracy.

It is believed in most part of Africa that one will automatically become rich if he/she can travel to Europe or America, as many Africans believe there is no poor man in Europe because it is a whiteman's

country. This is why many young Africans: men and women are ready to cross the Sahara desert on foot upward to Europe through dangerous and unfathomable means through the sea. The colonized African mind believes that what makes a beautiful African man or woman is the whiteness or fairness of the skin. So that an individual is ready to bleach the skin to white as it is the belief that white skin is better than black skin.

Franz Fanon's book *Black skin, white masks"* provides some edification here. Fanon writes that "the juxtaposition of the black and white 'races' has resulted in a massive psycho-existential complex".[23] Fanon through his work sought to liberate the black man from the arsenal of complexes that germinated in the colonial situation. Fanon believes that it is necessary for the black person to overcome the psychological effects of colonialism.[24]

Freter avows that what is largely responsible for this state of affairs is the superiorization of Western thought over African thought. According to Freter:

Western thought is infused with a permanent tacit assumption of superiority of a metaphysical proportion, a diffuse conviction of being the one and only thought that truly counts. It is from this assumption of superiority, entirely in accordance with Western textbook dialectics, that the idea of inferiorisation directly and necessarily emanates. When one entity is considered superior, others must be considered inferior. Anyone who thinks in this manner has good conceptual reason to make the leap from one to the other. This movement of thought shows only that the plain and arbitrary positing of one's own greatness simultaneously means the positing of the other, i.e. the one which is not great. This positing, because it follows necessarily from an arbitrary act, is itself also arbitrary.[25]

The onslaught Christianity and Islam on African traditional religion is yet another sad narrative. While early missionaries condemned and forbid our forebears from venerating African ancestors; on the other hand, the missionaries introduced and propagated the veneration of the saints which most often were Eurocentric ancestors. On one hand the missionaries condemned our most revered masquerades, while in the same breath brought in Santa Claus. These missionaries saw nothing good in African indigenous religion including African theocentric names that conveyed more theocentric connotation to the African mind. Indeed the whole of African traditional religion was cached in derogatory terminologies. However due the consented pioneering efforts of Geoffrey Parrinder in 1954, later Bolaji Idowu and John Mbiti where to protest against a long history of derogatory elucidation of Africans, their culture and religion by outsiders. Interestedly African Traditional

Religion (ATR) is now widely taught in African universities and Seminaries, but its identity remains essentially negative. To the West, what was not Christian was non-religious and non-theocentric. What was African was inferior and what was Western was superior. The success of Christianity and Islam on the African continent in the last 100 years has been extraordinary, but it has been, unfortunately, at the detriment of African indigenous religion and culture.

Religion and Human Values: The Afrocentric Imperative

The African tradition consists of basic human values which are indispensable for authentic human development.[26] It is expedient to denude in more precise terms, some positive human values of African traditional thought process:

African Value for Human Life

The greatest arguments against African traditional religion and customs by Westerners and their apologists are the practices of human sacrifice and twin murder, which are usually evidenced as lack of regard for human dignity. The misleading slant arising from these practices eventuate in the colonial writers to describe Africans as primitive, dark, pagan, brutes, cannibalistic, crude and savages. While these writers can easily be forgiven for their epistemological deficiency, the point must be hurriedly made that African society has a very high regard for the human person and the preservation of human dignity.

The dignity of the human person is seen in African cosmology and human origins. Ikenga - Metuh asserted that: viewed from the standpoint of his origin and final destiny of man is best understood in relation to God, his creator. Man comes from God. He has a definite mission to fulfill in God's plan and will eventually go back to God.[27] The dignity of human person is seen in relationship of being created by God, the human complex nature which God imprinted in man is the crown of God's creation and provision for a continual interaction through rituals, despite human limitations.

The dignity of the human person is also identifiable in the African insatiable desire to worship. Mbiti has rightly observed that Africans do not know how to exist without religion.[28] Wherever the African is, there is religion and its morals. In pre-colonial Africa, the human person is a religious being, wherefrom follows his human dignity. The African concept of human dignity is not found in earthly riches and abundance, but in the nobility of his religious being. Therefore the relationship between individuals is based on the recognition of their intrinsic worth as human beings; not necessary only in what they possess or what they can do for each other.

African Sense of a good Life

In all African traditions, the idea that there is far more to life than vested self interest and the inordinate pursuit of riches is deeply ingrained in the African thought process. There is the African proverb that says: "a good name is better than riches". This is a timeless truth in African values system which seems to have been jettison in post-colonial Africa. It is indubitable that one of the greatest problems of today's Nigeria is within the ambience of self-centeredness and unbridled vested self interest. The Nigeria society today needs to re-evaluate and re-emphasize what it means to be rich. Certain questions beg for answers: is the frantic acquisition and primitive accumulation of wealth all that Nigerians have to live for, or should Nigerians be seeking intangible human values that cannot be subjected to monetary evaluation, but which nonetheless are the real basis for living a fulfilled life? What matters most is a good character. In African traditional society wealth will come to naught if one lacks good character. A life without moral rectitude is nothing but vanity. Interestingly contemporary social science researches are fast coming to the conclusion that inordinate pursuit of capitalism and the zero-sum competition for money and status in the developed world is a major source of unhappiness.[29]

There is abundant anecdotal evidence to suggest that people find new meaning and fulfillment in their lives when they free themselves from the acquisitive treadmill and begin to give of themselves. In other words, social science is now proving what African indigenous epistemology and axiology have always known through the wisdom of African ancestors that: generosity rather than consumption is the key to happiness. Current social researches are therefore reclining to the traditional African thought that what is truly require for happiness is nurturing healthy relationships, cultivating friendships, serving others, raising well-adjusted children, and being involved in a community.[30] Only a life that transcends the narrow goals of self-aggrandizement and self-gratification can be truly happy. A society of transcendent human values such as those found in African traditional society can be truly safe. A society in which all individuals are committed to nothing more than the single-minded pursuit of their self-gratification at the expense of everything else is a dangerously predatory society in which no one can ever be truly safe – sadly these are the operating parameters of most post-colonial African societies. This situation of self-centeredness is what is expressed in the Afemai proverb: *mokpaira rele ikhekhe le gbo* "I will eat all alone suffers constipation."

African Sense of Parenting

In African traditional values system, parenting takes a lot of forms which enables a child to develop into a responsible adult. Some of these forms of parenting are: through story telling (folktales), the extended family, traditional rites, and the mother's care, attention and love.[31] The uniqueness of this system with regards to parenting in traditional African communities is that the responsibility in taking care of the child is not only to the biological parents. This is shared by all in the extended family. This is buttressed by the African proverb on parenting which says that, "a single hand cannot nurse a child". This in Afemai would mean: *aro obokpa ro omo*. Yet again, another African proverb says "it takes a village to raise a child". This implies that although the mother has the responsibility of taking care of the child, the responsibility is being shared by all.

Arguably therefore, the most significant indicator of national instability is not found in politics or economics but in the ways in which children are raised and socialized. Parents, teachers, older relatives and friends must be good exemplars to young ones and should have lasting positive influences on our lives. These early influences define their identities and what they later understand to be acceptable standards of societal behaviour. The family, very broadly defined, is the premier learning environment. Research has shown that what happens to a child in the earliest years has a formative impact on the personality and character development which in turn affects the rest of his life.[32] It is within families that the critical standards of right and wrong are acquired. In African traditional society parents are the primary audience before whom children model a lifestyle of integrity, purpose and service to the common good.

The Lack of Monetization of Values

There is no gainsaying the fact that contrary to the African human values system that the monetization of values has broken down our traditional definitions of authority within the family system. Before now, the most respected were those who were reputed for their ethical constancy and moral authority. Just now, the most influential members of the family are those who have illicitly or otherwise earned wealth from stints in government or corporate enterprise.[33] Despite the knowledge of their crimes, we celebrate these men and women because of what we stand to gain from them financially. Those who are the real voices of reason within the family are marginalized, derided for their lack of financial heft and mocked for their insistence on values that are now consider irrelevant.

African Sense of Community-based Living

African value for community-based living and relationships are found in works of Davidson,[34] Mbiti,[35] Okere[36] and Ogbujah[37] and a lot more. The sense of community or communality refers to the awareness which identifies an individual not as a solitary being, but as an entity whose being and survival is consequent upon its union with other human beings within an identified locality. In traditional Africa for instance, a person is known and identified in, by and through his community. Individual lives, moves and revolves around the community. To a large extent, a man's achievements depend primarily on how much of his community's standards he accommodates: he sees as his community see, and acts as his community acts.[38] Communal life is among the cardinal values in Africa. Africans do not practice individualism like most Western nations. They live a life of community and solidarity. The African man's idea of security and its value depended on personal identification with and within the community.

However with the arrival of the colonial overlords, different ideologies and philosophies about human relations such as individualism came into play. Mbiti noted that for the Africans, to be human is to be in a community, participating in the beliefs, ceremonies, rituals and festivals of that community that gives them sense of belonging. Membership of the community is emphasized more than member's individuality; for a society is based more on obligations, than on individual rights and individuals assume their rights in exercise of the obligations, which makes a society a chain of inter-relationships. [39] The autonomy and rights of the individual person are enjoyed in relationship.[40]

Individuals are not regarded as complete until they have been identified with a community. "Each one must belong to kith and kin, to parents, brothers and sisters, who are immediate, and to a wider relationship within the extended family. There is nothing like individualism. A person belongs to an immediate family, hamlet, village, clan and town. This belonging enhances chances of survival and ensures security and growth."[41]

Sense of Brotherhood and Hospitality

Before the advent of Western civilization and culture to Africa, the sense of brotherhood and hospitality were some of the cardinal human values of African indigenous society. The Sense of hospitality is inherently indispensable in African tradition society. There was always spontaneous accommodation of strangers and visitors. Unlike the West, no appointment and special invitation are needed for one to visit a distant relation or neighbour. On arrival, one is treated kindly, just as one

would wish to be treated when visiting another home. This spontaneous acceptance is expressed in many symbolic ways like presentation of kola nuts, traditional gin, coconuts etc. These are given to show acceptance and safety.

Onimhawo and Adamu in their study: *An Afrocentric Perspective on Human Migration:*
The Nigerian Experience succinctly argued that the common membership of one universal human family constitutes a legitimate basis for the idea of universal human brotherhood in African conceptual thought. This idea is depicted for instance in Afemai maxim: *Oya lo khi iyokpa oya* "A human being's brother is another human being".[42] This maxim asserts unmistakably that a human being is related only to another human being, not to a beast. Implicit in the African perception of humanity is the recognition of all persons, irrespective of their racial or ethnic backgrounds, as brothers. This is the reason why in African cultures the word 'brother' is used to cover various and complex family relationships linked by blood ties.[43] But the word is also used, significantly, by persons between whom there are no blood ties; thus, the word is used comprehensively. The comprehensive meaning given to the word 'brother' in African culture is intended, indeed, to lift people up from the purely biologically determined blood relation level onto the human level, the level where the essence of humanity is held as transcending the contingencies of human biology, race, ethnicity, or culture.[44]

African Sense of Solidarity

The traditional African community attitude to work is one factor that explains the African sense of solidarity. In African cultural context duties such: building of a hut or a house for a kinsman especially of someone that is old or a person that is not well to do in the material sense, is often seen as a collective responsibility that calls for the contributions of many.[45] This African concept of solidarity is aptly captured in Afemai proverb: *Obokpa ovue akh' uno* "one hand cannot cover the mouth of a pot." Yet another Afemai proverb says *Orokpe okio gwa*, "one tree cannot make a forest". Furthermore, kinsmen can mobilize a workforce to the farm of a dead relative or someone who is bereaved to help out in maintaining the farm and keep the bereaved family going.[46]

Everywhere in Africa society there is the spirit of *Ubuntu* (I am because we are) which Barbara Nussbaum says "is the capacity in African culture to express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity in the interests of building and maintaining community with justice and mutual caring."[47]

Sense of Respect for Elders

Africans generally have deep and ingrained respect for old age. Grey hairs earn an individual the right to courtesy and politeness. The elders are respected first because they are believed to be the teachers and directors of the young. They are the repository of truth as their words and instructions are heeded to for the promotion of good behaviour among the young. The elders are also taken to be the custodian of communal wisdom and therefore they are conceded leadership in the affairs of the people. One of the reasons for this, is the nearness of the elders to the ancestors. The respect given to the elders has its practical effect in the maintenance of custom and tradition. The young are always looking forward to being elders and they are often told that if a child respects an elder, he would be respected by the young when he becomes an elder. This is the fundamental principle behind human relations in African cultural milieu

The idea of Old People's Homes is an aberration in traditional African society and a promotion of a careless assumption that a man is deserving of respect only, and only if the man is virile and productive. To entrust the welfare of the elderly to institutional caregivers is an abomination to the African mind. The care of the aged is situated within the family. It is so cherished and so organized that there is no need, in the African setting, for the cheerless nursing homes for the aged as it exist today in Europe and America[48] and speedily taking roots in Africa.

African Sense of Extended Family

According to Pantaleon Iroegbu "African languages generally have no words for uncles, aunts cousins and nieces. All these are part of the one family. The family is one, but extended".[49] Marriage is a means of family extension especially between two families. The extended family system is very much alive in contemporary African societies as a community of brothers and sisters, which is the basis of, and the expression of, the extended family system in Africa.

African Sense of Religiosity

Africans are everywhere and always profoundly religious. African spirituality simply acknowledges that beliefs and practices touch on and inform every facet of human life, and therefore African religion cannot be separated from everyday living. For many Africans, religion can never be separated from life. Unlike the West, religion is a way of life, and it can never be separated from the public sphere. Religion informs everything in the traditional African society, including marriage, health, diet, dress, economics, birth and death. The Africans eat religiously, drink religiously and bath religiously. African spirituality is truly holistic.

For example, sickness in the indigenous African worldview is not only an imbalance of the body, but also an imbalance in one's social life, which can be linked to a breakdown in one's kinship and family relations or even to one's relationship with one's ancestors.[50]

Africans are deeply religious, for the African, life is religion and religion is life. The attachment to and worship of God, form a dominating part of their world view. All they do or say and permit is impregnated with a vision of the divine, and all natural reality is explainable in function of the supernatural. African social values rest on the moral values which in turn rest on religious values.[51]

To many people it is perverse and perhaps sacrilegious to separate the moral and the religious values. It is the presence of religion that lends meaning and authority to values. Religious or spiritual element in the African man characterizes his relationship with the divine, with God and/or the gods. And it is an indubitable fact that this sense of religion is the promotion of moral excellence.[52]

A conscientious inquisition of the preceding prefatory would indeed reveal the imperativeness of adopting the Afro-centric cultural distinctive paradigm. Namely, that the African values system contains positive human values that can provide the ontological foundation for a moral reconstruction, even between Christianity and African thought process inclusive of indigenous religion. The note of caution is that care must be taken to excogitate certain aspects of African traditional values that might not be wholly in *tandem* with contemporary realities. This should not come as a surprise because every culture consists of both the counterintuitive and the perdurable.

Conclusion

This discourse established the importance of accentuating African indigenous religious and human values in contemporary scholarship. The role of human values was exhaustively discussed and denoted because of the understanding that the value system of a people is consequent upon the understanding of the beliefs and cultural system of the people. The paper examined the Afro-centric imperative of the African thought process in the current moral discourse, and concluded that the Afro-centric cultural distinctive paradigm encapsulates African indigenous human values. It was expedient to denude in more precise terms, some positive human values of the African thought process which included an investigation into the African value on human life, African sense of a good life, African sense of responsible parenthood, the lack of monetization of values, African sense of community-based Living, African sense of brotherhood and hospitality , African sense of

solidarity, sense of respect for authority and the elders, African sense of extended family and African sense of religiosity.

Given that no one values system is error proof, African religious and human values must be carefully examined in order to extrapolate the very best of African traditional values systems which continuous to reverberate their usefulness in our contemporary era. The paper asserted that the differences that exist between African religious human values and western values must not necessarily have a normative consequence; as things can be different without having to be placed within a normative hierarchy. The contention that African values should be of less worth than Western values is therefore repudiated.

Recommendations

This paper makes the following recommendations:

a. that African institutes of human character formation like seminaries should faithfully study and seriously promote African traditional values system, including African indigenous religion;
b. that African converts to non-African religions should have a rethink and revaluation of their disposition to African traditional religion, namely to change their attitude from condemnation to commendation and understanding;
c. that policy makers should be aware of the importance of the Afrocentric imperative in the enthronement of positive human values in Nigeria;
d. that African scholarship should be at the vanguard in the promotion of African human values both within and outside Africa;
e. that the negative clout presently beclouding African Indigenous religion should be removed through proper enlightenment.

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HUMAN FORMATION, RELIGION, AND VIOLENCE: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE.

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Precis
As our world continues to evolve and grow, we recognize a spike and an upward curve of violence across the world. Within the complexities of our common humanity which has made remarkable advancement in scientific and technological developments we find an intricate and hydra headed space of unbridled capacity for carnage, terror and violence. In this essay, I seek to explore the idea of human formation, which ought to lead to wholesomeness and the creation of good citizens. I place the ideal especially against the idea of 'religion' and religious violence, which has become volatile and prevalent in various regions of our world. In this paper, I simply lay out a format, which challenges assumptions, and hopefully provokes further reflections and seeks to question the contradiction of religion(s) and why they breed violence. In addition, I will explore the ontological assumptions about human formation and the intersections of the nature of this unholy alliance.

Introduction
We live in a complex world of multi dimensions and inter-dependence with many aspects of our existence constantly intersecting with or without our conscious awareness. In this essay, I intend to explore the varied levels of intersections between religion, the wholesome and moral formation of the human person in the society and how violence is yet a reality between human formation and religious beliefs. Naturally, religion, among other factors is observed to be one of the fundamental bedrock of the formation of an ethically upright person and citizen. It is therefore a conundrum worth exploring, when religion itself becomes

violent and when religious persons embrace violence. To proceed, there is a necessity to clarify a subtle yet quintessential shift in terms used in the title of this paper. In my research, specialists in the area of life coaching in modern psychology and studies in human behavioral sciences have brought me up to speed that they no longer speak only of human formation; rather, there is a deeper reflection on the totality of the formation of the human person. The distinction between these two ideas will be explored further in the next section. For this essay, the term 'religion' will be employed essentially in reference to the Abrahamic and monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Remarks will be made briefly about other religions only to buttress points and support arguments. Even though many scripts have been written specifically looking at religion and violence, this paper adds a new dimension as it relates the formation of persons with all its implications and the propensity for the same religious persons and their religious beliefs to become agents of violence.

The Idea of Human Formation and the Formation of the Human Person

Lou Vallone is a leading figure among life coaching experts of the Human Formation Coalition (HFC). They focus on helping individuals particularly people preparing or already in ministry within the Catholic and Protestant denominations. Vallone makes the distinction between human formation and the formation of the human person understood from the perspective of development. He asserts that while human formation is viewed broadly as one aspect, the formation of the human person encompasses some aspects that comes together to build an integral whole. Within the newer approach, the formation of the human person includes intellectual, spiritual, pastoral formation (or relational formation), and human formation. Vallone and other coalition members insists that the program of the formation of the human person is more all embracing than the outdated model of a broad human formation approach. Within the intellectual formation, the person undergoing formation is helped to understand their intellectual abilities/capabilities. They are intellectually reinforced to be successful in their ministry by their insertion into the appropriate intellectual traditions of where they belong and will function. Here you build the mind. For an integral formation to take place, the spirituality of the tradition remains paramount with the hope that this formation leads to the development of a personalized spirituality. Here you build the soul. Within pastoral formation, Vallone and the coalitionists speak of relational or professional formation, which creates a matured person who is able to interact with others in a healthy and balanced manner. Here you train a

person, mind and body to re-engage and interact in the field. It is the combination of these various aspects of the human person when properly annexed that can produce a balanced citizen or a person who carries out a specific role within the society. Finally, this is the kind of human formation that is geared towards behavioral and psychosomatic development of the individual, now approached under the title of the "Formation of the Human Person."[1]

The Nature of Religion

Religions broadly are a set of belief system, which forms a pattern of practices, behaviors, worldviews, morals that relates to the connection between the human and supernatural world. Religions of the world, according to leading scholars cannot be classed, categorized or defined under one simple category. Generally, religions have sacred stories, rites, rituals, symbols, holy places, and doctrines, which often times are preserved or transmitted by sacred texts. Fundamental to the practice of religion is an attempt to understand the origins of human existence, the origin of our universe (and sometimes, its impending dissolution), and the notion of a transcendental being often referred to as God. In classic antiquity, particularly deriving from its Latin etymological roots, *religio* is understood as a sense of moral rectitude, ethical obligation or duty towards others, nature and even God. At this stage, *religio* did not reference the idea of doctrine or ritual practices. Religious beliefs and practices are many and varied around the world the usual common trends include the belief in the supernatural, omnipotent being/deity who is responsible for the creation of the world. This supernatural being expects a specific moral rectitude in this world as to earn a reward either in this world, in the next or in both.

Organized religions has been traced back by anthropologists to the Neanderthal age, and religious speculations goes even further back to the earliest dawns of human history. Religions remain relevant because it has the power, through symbols, texts, rituals, liturgies to evoke a sense of mystery that 'legislate' order in existence. According to Raymond Scupin and Christopher DeCorse, "A religious worldview helps people to discern the meaning of pain and suffering in the world. Sacred myths help people make sense of the world and also explain and justify cultural values and social roles."[2] While some claim that religion as faith contradicts reason, others argue that faith and reason are interlinked, so that when they are properly annexed religion tends to bring forth a properly mannered individual. Religions of the world could almost be marked out distinctly by regions, however, the majority of self-professed practitioners of religion in the world belong to the three monotheistic and Abrahamic faith of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Hinduism and

Buddhism closely follow these. In recent times, a certain demographic known as religiously unaffiliated, who are either self-acclaimed atheists or agnostics are yet found to have some religious beliefs or tend to some spirituality especially of the Eastern types. In the United States for instance, while many Americans no longer go to the Christian Churches, many are found to be attracted by various Eastern religious philosophies like yoga or meditation.

While ontologically, religion should be the ideal space for an alternate world of peace, justice, truth and non-violence, historically, religion has been known to be the harbinger for violence. Tikva Frymer-Kensky sums it up thus,

Religions find themselves actively engaged in violence. Islam confronts the rise of militant extremism and the world's perception of Islam as a violent religion. Judaism is coping with the challenges of having military power and with the national struggle with the Palestinians and the immediate threat of suicide bombing. Hinduism faces the issue of the violent confrontations between Hindus and Muslims in North India. Buddhism must deal with the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka and the genocide in Cambodia and its aftermath. Even Christianity, which has a past of violent conflict, now must reevaluate its concepts of just war, now that technology makes limited war very difficult and the issue arises of whether to intervene militarily in order to prevent genocide or other atrocities.[3]

It is important to note that from a purely historical perspective, when religions become violent, at the very root of that violence usually is found people who manipulate and hijack religion for personal purposes. It could be for political gain, economic gain, the oppression of minorities or for cultural gains. Therefore, we can establish that innately, religion is not per se violent but it can be used to perpetrate violence.

There are various reasons why religions may turn violent, and these reasons will be explored carefully later on in this paper. For now, it suffices to point out an underlying theological problem that is often not identified when there is a conversation about religions. Most religions require faith, a strong belief based on personal spirituality and conviction, without physical proof, in the existence of a benevolent higher being known as God. Religion can exist epistemologically but the true act of religiosity is faith. Therefore, it is possible for an individual to be religious but the same individual is not a person of faith. Religion can be likened to a container, and its content is faith. Relying primarily on the Abrahamic and monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and even though we can trace a history of violence among them in gargantuan proportions, yet we can find littered all through history, great men and women whose goodness and positive

contributions continues to inspire humanity even today. The relations between religions and violence or in a more specific manner the relationship between practitioners of religions and the religions they practice are quite diffused; in proximity, religions, persons and their environment can be violent and can be kind. I argue that most people are introduced to religion but never quite make the next step; a personal growth into faith. It is my position that it is within the various camps of religionists that the world has produced extremists thereby giving birth to religious violence.

Some argue that violence is embedded deep in the DNA of every human person. And given the right conditions, motivations or even provocation, the beast in everyone can come to the surface. There are also those who opine that there is a natural cosmic evil, an eternal battle between light and darkness, between good and evil, and more succinctly when couched in religious language; it is the eternal battle between God and the devil for the human soul. J. Harold Ellens debunks these assumptions by arguing, "The notion that evil is cosmic and that reality is split, from the transcendental level down to our empirical experience, is profoundly untrue. There is no evidence on the basis of which to conclude that there is such a thing as cosmic evil or that some grand warfare between good and evil, God and the devil, rages in the universe or in our personal world."[4] Ellens continues, "…the suffering of this world arises from our actions or our failure to act, either from inadequate or bad will, or from inadequate or bad information, or from inadequate or inefficient effort, or from lack of power or ability to do better or indifferently."[5] Ellens submits that religious violence is born out of the nature of humanity still grappling with understanding the power of nature and the complexities of the world around us. Outside of the erroneous belief in ontological evil or cosmic conflict between good and evil, Ellens avers that violence by humans broadly "…are just communities of inadequate, ignorant, and sick humans trying to find their way to meaning in a world of radical freedom, constant growth, the perpetual change attendant upon growth, and the pervasive pain that accommodating change always brings."[6] Ellens surmise that humanity is naturally capable of devising violence, "without metaphoric prodding or genetic pathogenesis. The Palestinians and Israelis have no mortgage on violence; al Qaeda is not unique, but typical, of the universal human pathology; we need only to look within our own psyches or souls."[7]

Faith is personal, dynamic and specific that requires a commitment of the will to something abstract and otherworldly. When religion leads to faith, it requires a certain kind of clarity and self-understanding that makes one commit to justice, equity and not perpetuating hate and violence. Conversely, religion without faith creates fundamentalism of

the negative type. It believes narrowly and exclusively, insisting that he or she possesses a monopoly of God and true religion.

The Definition of 'Violence'

Violence has become commonplace in society that many people have become inured to its effect. We encounter violence on our streets on daily basis; in the beatings meted out by the police or the army to protesters, to the pickpocket who is caught and summarily condemned by mass hysteria and set on fire on our streets. The simple acts of jostling to get on a public transport is violent in nature but accepted as the norm. When a worker eventually makes it home and settles into the sanctity of his home, he encounters violence on the TV news, violence from a spouse bitter for lack of adequate funds to run the house. When eventually he attempts to sleep, he is confronted with the violence of high temperatures without electrical power to combat it by the use of any kind of cooling device, and sometimes, the singsong of mosquitoes who remind you of how poor you really are.

All of these may be perceived as a collage of separate actions, however, violence of all sorts are interconnected, "by a web of actions and behaviors, ideas, perceptions, and justifications. While the individual and situational dynamics of violent behavior may vary somewhat, they all share a number of essential characteristics that bind them together into what we can call the unity of human aggression."[8]

One must not presume definitionally or otherwise that violence is limited only to physical aggression, bodily harm or injury; violence can also be emotional or psychological. In this light, I find Leonard Berkowitz's definition of violence apt, "any form of behavior that is intended to injure someone physically or psychologically."[9] An attempt to trace the continuum of violence exemplifies the depth and range of how violence subtly has become a subculture in modern times. Within the spectrum of violence, we can include, physical assault, murder, serial, mass, spree killings, domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, crime of passion, street crimes, hate crimes, mob violence, genocide, verbal and psychological abuse, terrorism, kidnapping, gang violence, ethnic violence and religious violence.

Religious violence are usually born out of delusions that subjectivises and personalizes truth. Harold Ellens encapsulates religious violence very succinctly thus,

Violence is always the product of such worldviews. Whether it is violation of the truth, or violation of persons, property, and appropriate procedures for human social and juridical order, it is violence. Whether it destroys persons, the necessary conditions of healthy human existence, or useful understandings of the real world, it is violence. Whether it

corrupts freedom, constraints legitimate liberty, or fouls the human nest with mayhem and bestiality, it is violence. Whether it oppresses persons or peoples with the force and power of empire building, represses hope and the resilience of the human spirit with mass-casualty fear and intimidation, or terrorizes the tranquility of children with media reports of those kinds of mayhem, it is phenomenally destructive violence.[10]

Religious violence therefore is a creation of a person or persons whose ethical formation is flawed and thriving on absolutists' and fundamentalistic positions degenerates into psychosis. This is a dangerous psychosis because wherever it is found it is usually dogmatic, ideological and exclusivist in nature. It cannot be reasoned with, it cannot be reviewed or critiqued, it is rigid, unchanging and cannot tolerate any other truths outside of its own, neither can this position accept amendments or new insights. Whenever the absolutist feels cornered or threatened by an opposing idea, in their demented mind, to defend their own truth is to result into violence.

When Religion Become Violent: From Fundamentalism to Extremism

Core to religious violence is the conflict between orthodoxy, liberalism and modernism at crossroads for the modern person in contemporary times. Overtime, religious violence has been fomented by those who claim orthodoxy, be it the Catholic crusades, the never ending Jihads of radical Islam and the Jewish- Palestinian conflict; they are grounded on orthodoxy. However, it has become even more problematic when it is re-translated as orthodoxy against liberal post modernity. Events of 9/11 remain a poster child and watershed for an outrage incomprehensible or imaginable to the normal human psyche until it happened. Beyond perhaps, political and economic reasons, this act of brazen terrorism is primarily an ideological one. In one act of savage violence, the world experienced the collision of extreme Islamic orthodoxy against a perceived extreme Western liberalism and the 'waywardness of Western modernism.' Sadly, and according to Ellens, "The tragedy of that terrorism is severe enough at the physical and material level to gain global attention and concern."[11] This writer states that the real tragedy of this violence lies in the fact that "it is a state of the soul or psyche, conditioned and twisted by specific religious archetypes. Those terrorists apparently really believed that their action was an execution of the will and intentions of God and for it they would have 'exceedingly great reward'."[12]

Conversely, we must consider what Andrea Riccardi refers to as 'The Decline of Religion'; a situation where postmodern liberalism has jettisoned the idea of religion and twentieth century industrial and

technological civilization has found a new god. Some contend that modernity with its new humanism has sounded the death toll for religious belief. Within modernity is the evolution and creation of the new political order, the state. Riccardi states, "The state's view has been a secular one, and the secular view has even been an ethic that has become as it were a lay religion, with its own social rites… Society has ceased to identify itself with religion."[13] In this view, summarily,

The twentieth century continued with the idea that modernity was sweeping religion away from its role as a protagonist in history… religion came to be associated with fanaticism or with the memory of the wars of religion which had stained Europe with blood or which had been fought between the Christian world and the Muslim world. The elimination of religion from social life was regarded as a factor of progress and stability.[14]

Subliminally we must also reflect on the relationship between the origins of the political state and religions. While Islam and Judaism can lay claim to a religion that is embedded strongly in the culture and nationhood of the environs in which it originated, Christianity does not share the same history. In fact, for the first three centuries of its infancy, Christianity was persecuted by the state and its political machinery. In contemporary times, the infractions of the state against religion, albeit, Christianity as a religion in the separation of Church and state is worthy of evaluation in another paper. It suffices to say that religions can become violent depending on how the political state impinges on religious liberties or how it favors one religion against the other in a multi-religious space.

Emmanuel Ojeifo in a newspaper piece written and published by This Day newspaper on March 19, 2020, while reflecting on religion and violence argues that when people become entrapped in what he calls "mental and theological prisons of sectarianism", they become blind and unable to perceive what is valuable due to globalization and how it impacts the religious sphere. Ojeifo states, "They think to welcome this good [of globalization] is to put their faith at risk of extinction. The reaction to this is therefore, one of intolerance to difference, which finds expression in the rhetoric of 'We' vs 'Them' or 'The Chosen vs. The Rest.' When this intolerance is pushed to the extreme, it leads to the vilification and demonization of the other."[15] And in the classic Wole Soyinka saying, we then move quickly from "I am right, you are wrong,' to 'I am right; you are dead'! It is within this scope that poorly formed individuals turn into a menace to society. While religious formation, formal education, societal education, peer education all fail to produce a worthwhile citizen, you end up with a maniac, closed minded absolutist ready to cause mayhem if his way is not the only way.

Edward Schillebeeckx extrapolates on two claims made by religious adherents, which quickly devolves into violence; first, he points out the claim made that one religion is the only true religion. According to him, "Here the right of the other religion to exist is consistently denied. In a multicolored society such a negation is in itself a virtual declaration of war."[16] Second, is what he calls the established guarantee of the wellbeing of human society based on 'my God alone' syndrome. He avers, "This second foundation for religious violence is the conviction… on the basis of its claim that the god whom they confess is the direct guarantee of the wellbeing of human society."[17] Schillebeeckx, submits that "Even if a religion recognizes itself as one alongside many other religions, it can incite violence because of all kinds of alliances or presumptions, hidden or open, which are in fact bound up with it and therefore because of an implied distorted picture of God."[18] In his final summation, Schillebeeckx states,

> …the whole of human kind is the elect people of God. All historical forms of belief in a religious election must be at the service of and subject to the criticism of universal election; otherwise the self-understanding of election in individuals, peoples, or faith communities also pose a threat, involves danger and violence, to those of other faiths or none at all. This can prove a breeding ground of violence.[19]

Religions therefore, to remain through to its classical definition and foundational authority remains true in so far as it does not make absolutists claims to truths about God-even when there are doctrines or scared texts that make these claims. No government or persons can legitimize this sort of claim without leaving the back door open for violence. Anyone can choose to believe in what they believe in, but no one can impose their beliefs on others even when it implies an eternal or temporal damnation of body or soul.

Fundamentalism usually is born of orthodoxy and it is not limited to the religious sphere alone. According to J. Harold Ellens, "Fundamentalism is a psychopathology that drives its proponents to the construction of orthodoxies in whatever field it is in which those proponents live or work."[20] Ellens is of the opinion that "Today we would certainly be forced to include in that category of most dangerous movements both Islamic religious fundamentalism and fundamentalistic Israeli politics. All three of the great Western religions that derive from ancient Israelite religion of the Hebrew Bible are plagued by the presence of this sick psychology and its heretical products."[21]

Most dangerous of all is the danger of misinterpreting sacred texts. Religions mostly approach their sacred text as revealed or divine.

As such, the message of sacred texts are taking seriously. History has shown that many times, religious violence erupts because of the interpretations without context, without an understanding of history, worse still, without education in the field. D. Andrew Kille opines that, "To understand the role of sacred scriptures in shaping violent attitudes and behavior we must recognize that texts do not do anything in themselves. It is only in the dynamic encounter between the text and a specific reader, in a specific community, in a particular historical and cultural context that individuals engage, interpret, internalize and ultimately act on these texts.[22]

It is therefore easy for individuals to take a text out of context and run with it. The sacred texts can be approached from proper exegesis or simply from the point of eisegesis. The combination of wrong interpretation of sacred texts coupled with fanatical extremism is the most dangerous recipe that can quickly result into religious violence.

Proposals

Even though religions may have been used historically as a tool to back up violence, to maintain power, to subjugate others and often times to disenfranchise the less powerful, religions remain essential to the equilibrium of persons and the society. Religion wields its own power over people's minds and lives. It affects how many relate peacefully or otherwise in a largely pluralistic society. Religion can be used to form cooperation between nations and it can be used to cause wars among sovereignties. No matter how much contemporary culture lays claim to civility, the litmus test is found often in how we employ religious tenets to build or tear down communities. In Olusegun Okedairo's work, titled *Africanism,* he asserts,

> …a country may have all the means of modern technology but should it lack the necessary properties… then rather than be said to be civilized is uncivilized. A country's constitution that features the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion among other rights is a civilized one. In the same vein, one of the indices of a country's holy writ that is uncivil or a man's incivility or lack of culture is the absence of these fundamental rights. Hence anybody who discriminates, ridicules, attacks, maligns, maims or kills another on account of religion is not only wicked…but strictly speaking, he is not civilized, he is a pagan, bush man or ill mannered. Call him a zombie, you will not be wrong, because you would have beyond this planet to find a more striking example of mechanical religionists, blind adherent to a verbal

> formula without any regard for conscience or common sense.[23]

Politicians, religious leaders and all who hold positions of authority over others must turn away from the seduction of using religion to illegitimately maintain and perpetuate personal gain and power. Rather, leaders ought to explore means by which religions can be a tool for ameliorating all sorts of class misunderstandings. Helena Cobbans is right when she avers, "At their very best, religious ideals and precepts can, when confronted with the chaos and the bottomless tragedy and perversion of the natural order that are induced by war, be used in ways that provide succor to afflicted and healing at all levels of society from the individual person through the group to the nation."[24]. If bad people can manipulate religion for personal gain, then good people must work tirelessly to make sure religion is a veritable tool for development and growth.

In recapitulating as part of a few proposal, we can result to a simple antithesis of the problems already enumerated. Namely, we need to pay attention to the fundamentals of the formation of the human person; rounded and wholesome. Anything else creates the conducive atmosphere for the breeding of anarchists and extremists. The interpretative approach to the reading of sacred texts in all religions, when not attended to respectfully and intellectually will continue to be the ontological basis for religious violence. Sacred texts are powerful and portends possibilities for peace or violence. The proliferation of religions around the world into conservative, moderate, liberal, ultra-modern, etc, and the re-interpretation of scriptural texts under these varying traditions remains an underlying factor for religious violence. Unfortunately, very little can be done in correcting this error. It is important also to study and come to an agreement of the interaction between 'Church and State.' There is a need for an anthropology particular to a place and its people to know the degree of separation. Traditionally, some cultures are very religious and their civil codes derive from their religious worldview. In some other climes, this is not so, especially as it can be found in most of western democracies. Most importantly, religions should not be used as a political advantage against other religions within a body politic or as a leverage for the maintenance of power. For religion not to turn violent, it must not be used to give undue advantage to adherents either for jobs, appointments or admissions. Finally, wholistic human formation should create citizens whose altruism is not based on indices like religion, ethnicity or political alliances rather, these citizens must be focused on the thriving of the commonwealth, peace building and non-violence.

Conclusion

As part of our efforts as religious people or civil society to engage in attempts at proper formation of the human person, we must keep in mind that the world will never embrace one faith or one religion. In living the reality of pluralism of religions, all citizens must accept the task of learning the maxim, 'live and let live.' On this Andrea Riccardi states, "Reality and the religious traditions have constantly given rise to a demand for dialogue and understanding between the different religious worlds. This orientation contrasts with the tendency to retreat into narrow identity and to engage in conflict, and with the use of the religions for nationalistic or bellicose ends."[25] It is for this reason that many countries now create channels to engage differing religious groups within their enclave in constructive dialogues.

In contemporary times, the monotheistic religions must take the lead in a new re-orientation of its adherents towards peace building through more ecumenical and dialogical relationships. Hermann Haring sums it up as a need for "a revitalization of communication, a democratic attitude and an appropriate differentiation of functions."[26] Haring goes further to state that religions for modern man will be less violent if dissidents are not suppressed or condemned as *kafirs* or heretics but engaged and taken seriously as dialogue partners, violence then can be averted. According to Haring, "Those who want to overcome violence credibly must overcome its legitimization, whether manifest or concealed, in their own communities… That makes the chances for the future all the better, the less Christianity and Islam succumb to the seduction of worldly power."[27] We know from history that none of the great religions of the world can be exonerated of the complicity in violent conducts. It is the duty of religion in the modern context to oppose violence in all its forms and overcome its productivity. Yet this nonviolence must not become passivity especially in reaction to political and class oppression of the masses. Religion necessarily must be at the forefront of forming the human person in consciousness, social responsibility and when necessary civil disobedience and active resistance.

More than at any other time in history, religion must become more a synonym for peace in practical ways. For instance, the gathering of world religions and their leaders in Assisi to pray for peace at the invitation of the Pope. We cannot but recall the role of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee in post independent South Africa and the same work done after the Rwandan genocide. The work groups in Islam, even though overshadowed by mainline political Islam must be encouraged and given a spotlight. Groups such as Muslim Peace Fellowship, Muslim Civil Rights Protection Center, and an emerging

number of Muslim intellectuals and authors who all seek nonviolence and means of peaceful resolutions to conflicts. The Eastern religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Brahmanism and so forth, already notionally have the idea of nonviolence within their believe system. Like the West, they have not always fared well in keeping peace. But they also have a chance to reclaim their own history and antecedents to do no evil to anyone.

It is a duty binding on anyone involved in the formation and educating of others to seek to open the minds of those educated that the world does have grey lines, and so it is never directly black or white. For religious violence to be overcome we need a new generation devoid of the psychopathology of religious extremism of all sorts. The greatest challenge of all is to educate people who understand that responding to violence-by-violence will never yield any meaningful or positive results. True religion that has transited to faith will always seek the paths of grace, of peace and work for the welfare of the human family. True religion must abhor violence and imposition of its own creed on non-adherents. True religion must always be committed to the work of healing a broken world and uniting a fragmented people. Outside of these, it is no longer a religion; it is a mechanism of oppression and suppression disguised by those who stand to gain by it as religion.

Endnotes

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[24] Helena Cobbans. "Religion and Violence." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. Dec., 2005, Vol. 73, Number 4, P.1125
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[27] Ibid. P. 91

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FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN YOUTH AND ITS IMPLICATION ON INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NIGERIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract
The place of the youth in the growth and development of any nation cannot be overemphasized and Nigeria is not an exception. Many today on the African continent have blamed the West for the underdevelopment of Africa as a people and as a continent because of the transatlantic slave trade that devastated the continent for some centuries. The t**ransatlantic slave trade** was a segment of the global slave trade that transported between 10 million and 12 million enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas from the 16th to the 19th century. It was the second of three stages of the so-called triangular trade, in which arms, textiles, and wine were shipped from Europe to Africa, slaves from Africa to the Americas, and sugar and coffee from the Americas to Europe. However, though such African youths who were part of the slave trade saga rather than being formed in Africa were exported to the Western world, this paper aims at assessing critically the formation of the Christian youth in Nigeria today with the intent of looking at its implication for the development of Nigeria. How are the youths being formed in Nigeria? Who are the formators? Are such formators utilizing the right tools of formation in our time and age? Are the youths being formed aware of their roles in their training? Why are the Nigerian Christian youths always so eager to migrate to any country in the world? Why are so many Christian youths involved in all kinds of criminality in Nigeria and abroad today? What is the way forward at

curbing the challenges facing the Christian youths in contemporary Nigeria? What indeed is the problem with Nigeria, is it the youths or the system? These questions would form the basis of this paper. This work utilizes the socio-historical method.

Keywords: Christian, Youth, Formation, Development, Nigeria

Introduction

Formation of the human person has continued to receive attention globally and Nigeria is not left out in the whole enterprise. Whenever we hear of the word "formation" especially in Roman Catholic parlance, our minds quickly swing to and fro like the pendulum to formation in our seminaries. But far from it, formation is not only for those intending to be priests or religious, monks or nuns, but for all human persons.

The concept "formation" is one that should not be undermined in our world that is fast going through all kinds of transformation, a transformation that suggests that we need to be cautious in our relationship with people of different mentality, ethnic/tribal affiliations, religious and ideological differences. It has often be said by all and sundry that the world has become a global village with each unit of that village having its own ideologies and models.

In defining the concept "youth" in Nigeria,, the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development on May 24, 2019 launched the Revised National Youth Policy, 2019 with youth stakeholders in Akure, Ondo State. The review which was long overdue – the 2009 Policy states that it should be reviewed periodically (every five years) – was due for review in 2014. However, due to various challenges, the policy review process was not completed till 2019 (an additional five years after the last review was to have taken place).

In the 2019 Policy Foreword, the Minister of Youth and Sports Development, Solomon Dalung, quickly points out that, 'A major thrust of the current review is regarding the age bracket for the classification of youth from existing grading of 18 – 35 years to 15 – 29 years. The review is informed by practical empirical analysis and the need to promote the appropriate targeting of desired beneficiaries of intervention programmes for the youth rather than adults masquerading as youth.' Internet source (May 28, 2019)

However, this paper focuses on formation of the Christian youth and its implication on integral development in the Nigerian society. The act of forming people is quite onerous and challenging. It therefore demands all the time and attention one can possibly give in seeing to the realization of that goal of making impact on the human persons and in this case the youth, so as to assist in the integral development of the

Nigerian society. This paper shall adopt the socio-historic approach in its research methodology.

Integral Formation of the Christian Youth in Nigeria

The formation of the Christian youth in Nigeria starts from birth. One born into a Christian family as a child automatically shares from the table of other Christians at home, in the school and up to his/her work place. As a Christian such a child displays the traits of Christianity inherited from his/her parents and live with that until he/she begins to live on his/her own. This brings us to the idea of what a name truly means. There is nothing like a good name, it is often said. It endures forever and never dies. A good image means a good name, a positive reputation, a respectable noble, self-comportment among the members of one's community. Iroegbu (2000, p.186)

Often the fraudulent and wicked though rich, end up as *persona non grata* (undesired persons) in the long run. They build on the vanishing, and sooner or later they vanish with it. An old English primary school poem has it:

> The loss of gold is much,
> The loss of time is more,
> The loss of honour is such a loss
> That no man can restore. Iroegbu (2000, p.187)

To loss one's name, one's honour and reputation is a disaster that is unhealable, unrecuperable. It can practically not be restored. The human person and in this case the youth, has an image, that of divinity. The divine is being in goodness, perfection and love. It is therefore a great value to be one who mirrors goodness, excellence and love. What makes a good name is for one to be good and not wicked to others; to be excellent in performance in your trained and talented area; and to have loving-kindness, a caring, understanding and tolerant heart. Therein lies the good image of a person. These are the values that last forever. Iroegbu (2000, p.187)

The place of the family in formation the young people in the society cannot be overemphasized. In all societies North and South, changes appear to be under way, as a result of which individuals and social groups are subjecting their relationships with the family, politics, the economy and religion to a critical review, albeit at varying speeds. By so doing the traditional concept of society is being stood on its head. Indeed, there is talk of 'a crisis of social cohesion'. Several authors, including Hervieu-Leger believe the emergence of new models of family will bring about 'institutional deregulation' or 'deinstitutionalisation'. Roussel even alludes to a dual form of deinstitutionalisation within the family affecting

both the rules and laws which governs it and the normative framework to which it adheres. Guiblehon (2017, pp.71- 72)

It is important to mention here with regards to formation of the Christian youth in Nigeria just as elsewhere around the world how certain practices by the male folks in our society can affect the psychic of both the young girl and boy. In many cultural and religious traditions the woman's body is conceived in such a way that the autonomy of her will and wishes is completely denied. She is often seen as an object for unlimited access. It is not uncommon to find that in many cases of rape, the tendency is to blame the woman rather than the man. A particular fashionable example is the reference to the so –called "provocative dress" of women as if this is a good excuse for violating their persons in cases of rape. Another typical example is what is portrayed in John 8:3-5a "The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women" But the law as stipulate in the book of Leviticus required that both the adulterer and the adulteress should be stoned to death (Lev. 20:10). In the case cited in the passage quoted above, the rule is bent and the woman alone was condemned to be stoned to death. This is a case where rules and regulations are used to control the body of the woman. Amoah (1996, p.80) With this kind of orientation, young men often believe that the world is theirs and therefore see women as tools only for their pleasure not minding women's disposition to such act. This kind of orientation need to be moderated, whereby women should perceive themselves as the image and likeness of God and men are to see them as such and show them all the respect they truly deserve.

There is also the existence of mental and spiritual violence as well as the fact that physical violence can harm and destroy not only the body but also the human spirit. There is the need to transform ourselves and our world; we need to foster. And gather empowering resources of strength for new cultural creation and transformation. That is why we need new forms of spirituality: spirituality for life which helps and sustain us in choosing life, to affirm, increase, and trust life, and to recognize the energy and power of God's spirit in all the movements of life. Spirituality is quite imperative in formation of the Christian youth. For many people, spirituality is a soft word, something idealistic and dreamy, even sugary, like the icing of a cake, or it is understood merely as something inward, personal, private, or escapist. Spirituality must not be considered as something abstract, divorced from life, as a far-flung saintly ideal for the devout and few; on the contrary, it is something very

concrete, strong, physical and material, embodied, something we can really touch and be in touch with. Ursula (1996, p.152)

There exists a strong tradition in spiritual teaching about the necessity for a discernment of spirits: what is good and what is bad, what is debilitating, distorting spirituality, and what is a strengthening, nourishing one which can bring about growth, lead us to the fullness of life, and endow us with the strength of wisdom. Spirituality is deeply grounded in human experience, but it is also linked to the belief that there is a greater, fuller reality which surrounds, beckons, and calls us. Christians speak of the call to holiness and perfection implicit in the gospel, which says, "You must be perfect as your (parent) in heaven is perfect" (Mt. 5:48). From the beginning of Christianity the search for spiritual perfection, of life lived in the spirit of God, has led to new forms of life, to asceticism, monasticism, and mysticism. Countless Christian writers, from the desert fathers and mothers to medieval and modern saints and mystics, have written about their spiritual quests and struggles, left instructions and teachings, and provided us with models of Christian discipleship and holiness. Ursula (1996, p.152)

As An interpretative, existential tool, Ursula (1996) opines that spirituality is the attitude and interpretation we adopt towards our own experiences to give them meaning, to make sense of them. We can do this by drawing on the resources of a religious faith, on a programme for action relating to justice and peace, on an ideal of being fully human, on a relationship of love and forgiveness. There is the need to discover the ever transcendent and yet so near horizon which surrounds us, envelops and cradles us. In this sense spirituality as the struggle for life is quite literally the immense effort, labour, and pain to produce and bring into life into this world, as women in collaboration with men always do, but also to attend to all details of growth, to nurture it with love and care, and struggle to live and survive against all odds, to make ends meet, to produce the food needed for so many mouths, to calm down fights and quarrels. It is more than merely struggling to survive; it is also the tremendous effort to live a fuller, more abundant, richer, and more meaningful human life. Understood in this sense, spirituality which is a great tool in formation of the Christian youth is the breath and blessing of life; it is the very bread of life. (154)

The Nigerian Christian Youth and Interface with other Religions

The Christian youth in Nigeria is faced with so many challenges as he/she strives to live out his/her live in a country that is passing through a difficult face in its history. Many observers today see Nigeria as one of the most religious nations on this planet. One can adduce that religion is the Nigerian culture as it permeates all aspects of the average life of a

Nigerian from birth to death. In every city, town and village, the most imposing structures are religious houses. With such religiosity, one would readily have expected sanity in every area of life of every Nigerian. If Nigeria must become a peaceful nation and attain holistic development, there must be a better approach to the issue of how the Nigerian Christian youth is trained. I choose to lay emphasis on the Nigerian Christian youth, because he/she is the focus or target of this paper. (Otonko (2018, p.1)

Religion is a worldwide phenomenon which has played a part in all human cultures. It is an aspect of human experience that may intersect, incorporate or transcend other aspects of life and society. Nigeria is clearly a religiously pluralized society. Three religions, however, stand out very clearly. These are African Traditional Religion (ATR), Islam and Christianity. Islam entered Nigeria by the eleventh century and Christianity set roots in about the early 15th century. Since inception, the two religions have grown steadily on the Nigerian soil. One would ordinarily expect that the country should be reaping the good fruits of these two religions presently. Sadly, however, in Nigeria, especially in recent years, the pages of several newspapers, news items and comments on the radio and television, articles in journals and magazines, and also the social media, fall over themselves identifying and reporting the periodic religious upheavals in the country and the adverse effects these have had on the citizenry. Thus, religious crises have become a ready tool for all forms of national disagreements and conflicts. Because the North-South dichotomy is coterminous with Muslim-Christian entities, every argument in the land is more often than not very readily given religious interpretation. This orientation or perception of national issues has become a lethal threat to the corporate existence of the nation. (Otonko (2018, pp. 7-8)

Extremism has been extolled in the practice of religion in the contemporary Nigerian society. Various provocative seminal topics are often on the lips of preachers, and these often make people of divergent religious inclinations live in awe of one another. This tide has persisted, thereby helping to widen and deepen the dichotomy that exists among adherents of different religions in Nigeria. Thus religions which ought to preach peace, and which should be harbingers of this peace, have become avenues leading to riots, clashes and cold wars between citizens of the country. This certainly looks like an outrageous clash of paradigms. (Otonko (2018, p.8)

One may wonder why this analysis of the Nigerian Christian youth and the interface with other religions. It is for the simple reason that in forming the Christian youth, first by the parents who constitute the first church the youth ever knew while growing up, the church and the

school, especially Christian schools must educate the youth to be tolerant towards other religions and adherents of other religions.

The Family as Agent of Youth Formation

Hervieu-Leger in her analysis of the anthropology of the Church asserts that it favours the biblical model of marriage and the family on the grounds that the norm-the one true married family, following biblical norms, established by God consists of a father (male), a mother (female) and the children they conceive together and that the family is the only natural institution capable of laying the ground for the establishment of a bond between spouses, parents and children. Guiblehon (2017,p.77)

Assessing Hervieu-Leger this form of anthropology which makes marriage the unique, sole and unequivocal benchmark of all human conjugality, leans too heavily on the 'divine will which, it is assumed, is expressed by a natural order explicitly linking a union with procreation and preserving the principle of submission by women to men.' She however concludes that this model fails to give recognition to the fact that the creation of an ideal couple is based on the virtue of love. For this reason, she regards it as rather discriminatory. Also, there have been increasing calls, even among the Church faithful urging respect for individual choices and for the 'menu of options'. It is quite a challenge to talk of specifically African concepts of marriage and the family, since the influence of Western models and practices is extensive. However, to be docile and not proactive would be tantamount to suicide for the Church, which might be forced to accept a model it feels intense dislike or disgust for. It would appear, therefore, that the Church in Nigeria just as in many parts of Africa has little choice but to formulate its own model of the family which remains true to the Church as well as the rich African heritage and its ideas on the family, which include a strong feeling for relationships, kinship and brotherhood, a sense of the importance of solidarity, hospitality, respect for elders and traditions, and a sense of honour for and attachment to ancestors, all of which help to maintain group equilibrium (pp.78-80)

Christian parents should aim at raising children who love and serve the Lord. Perhaps, this is their most important goal. They need to tell their children about the Lord and teach them about his love, so that they come to know the Lord on a personal basis. It is not strange to see children today who do not want to attend Church services. Often, Christian parents feel baffled because their efforts at trying to raise their children in the knowledge of God does not seem to be working, especially as their efforts run up against indifference or resistance in the children. Some children do not want to hear about the Lord. They do not want any part in family devotions. Often times, it is easy for parents

to lose faith and decide that their children really do not have any desire for the Lord or his life. Ralph (1978, p.139)

We have it often said that 'it is the habit a child forms at home that he exhibits outside and the manners that a girl-child learnt at home that accompany her to her husband's house'. It is not what the child learnt in school that is mentioned here. When many today refer to education as the greatest legacy parents can bequeath to their children, such persons seem to undermine informal education which encompasses the rudiments of moral and religious formation. For those who have the means, the services of house helps would do in place of their parental responsibility. This is rather an ill-disposition towards the formation of the young ones since as the saying goes, "blood is thicker than water". It is a valid submission that no nanny or house help will ever satisfactorily fulfill the duties of parents with regard to the raising of children. Parents need to perform their role as parents for the proper formation of their children and for the good of our society. Onoise (2013, p.38)

The Church and Formation of the Christian Youth in Nigeria

Christians comprise of the clergy and the laity and their task involves evangelism and proselytism. The general activities in the Church are presided over by the religious leaders who are mandated to perform due to their special positions. Religious leaders are persons who are trained and set apart to carry out spiritual rites and ceremonies, offer sacrifices to God sp as to obtain graces, favours and spiritual harmony. Hence, the clergy are symbols and representatives, spiritual and moral guardians of God's love to and for humanity. They are personal representatives, mouth – pieces of the divine will, teachers and interpreters of the sacred mysteries and spiritual counselors in their communities. Muyomi (2011, p.505) This indicates that the church has an important role in the formation of the Christian youth in Nigeria.

The traditional position of the mission of the Church heavily emphasized the spiritual perspective. This stand needs to be modified, when we take into consideration the increasing crises in society such as population explosion, famine, poverty, wars, political oppression, muzzling of freedoms of expression, worship. Movement and association, corruption at all levels, increase in refugees and lack of provision of medical care, education and other services. (p.505) The proliferation of street children and street dwellers can be associated not only to poverty but also the break up of the marriage and family structures, as well as a clear indication of the failure of the leaders to ensure socio-economic parity. These groups of people lead a dehumanizing, destitute and desperate lifestyle.(p.507)

The School and the Task of Formation

Christian schools are quite germane in the all round formation of the youth. It does not matter if such youth are Christians or Muslims as exemplified in the fact that most of the early nationalists in Nigeria who were at the forefront of clamouring for Nigeria's political independence went through Christian schools, especially Catholic schools. The Catholic school forms part of the saving mission of the Church, especially for education in the faith. Remembering that 'the simultaneous development of man's psychological and moral consciousness is demanded by Christ almost as a precondition for the reception of the appropriate divine gifts of truth and grace', the Church fulfills her obligation to foster in her children a full awareness of their rebirth to a new life. It is precisely in the Gospel of Christ, taking root in the minds and lives of the faithful, that the Catholic school finds its definition as it comes to terms with the cultural conditions of the times. Flannery (2002, p.608)

While policies and opportunities differ from place to place, the Catholic school has its place in any national school system. By offering such an alternative the Church wishes to respond to the obvious need for cooperation in a society characterized by cultural pluralism. By so doing, she assists in promoting that freedom of conscience and the parental right to choose the school best suited to parents' educational objectives. There is a sort of conviction that the Catholic schools, with their educational objectives, perform a vital service for the Church in today's world. The Church takes part in cultural dialogue through schools, making her own positive contribution to the cause of the integral formation of man. There is the belief that the absence of the Catholic school would be a great loss for civilization and for the natural and supernatural destiny of man. (p.609)

Self as Agent of Formation

While agents such as the family, the school, the church and society are all key players in the the process of formation of the Christian youth; however the major actor in the formation drama is the youth. Self – mastery for self-giving is the solid principle of relating to others with success. Only a fine disciplined mind in a well ordered body can create and achieve something worthwhile for himself and for others. Scholars of literary and historical tell us that the greatest victor on earth is not he who conquers kingdoms and nations. For these are only temporary and external. The greatest victor is he who conquers himself. It is one who has perfect control over his unruly emotions, wild desires and bad tempers. The body and mind are by nature wild. They wander away and get scattered thereby scattering the productive energies of the person, if

left uncontrolled. In some persons this trait is more dramatic than in others, yet all have a battle- against-self to win. Iroegbu (2000, p.186)

The value of self-mastery is fundamental. It is to train oneself in self-control and good character formation. This is through the formation of contrary habits that bring to order the areas most prone to unruliness. Form good habits. Practice good behavior. Educate the senses. Train the faculties in the right direction. It makes one a perfect gentleman or woman. Many also utilize the spiritual methods, others athletic, and some other still normal human practices of self-restraint and self-containment. For instance if your problem is that you talk like a parrot without control, you can choose to practice restraining your tongue by using your hand to shut your mouth or using your teeth to hold your tongue because the urge to talk break loose in the nervous system. If one sees himself as a lazy person, the best and proper thing to do is to follow hard working people or group, not to draw them to his lazy-cushion, but to be inspired by them to wake up from one's laziness-slumber. As a rule of thumb, constant systematic practice will bring about self-mastery and self-development in the desired context. Self-mastery helps in fidelity to one's life commitments, to nobility of life and to general good comportment. It makes one a gentle and good person. By so doing, the persons acquires peace and joy of life. It is a great value (p.186).

Food for Thought

Formation is an ongoing process in our journey in life. Formation does not end till death. We need to realize that the fact that formation exists means that one would continue to get formed from the time one is conceived in his or her mother's womb with the collaboration of God and of one's father. That is why it seems out of place for any person to feel that whoever is not receptive to integral formation is doomed in life and should be sent out from such a society or community.

Those involved in the formation of the youth have a herculean task in their hands. Such persons first and foremost must bear in mind that they have a difficult project ahead of them and must work assiduously to achieve good results. Backing out of the project is a sign of failure or weakness or both. Formation involves the physical and the spiritual aspects. The formator must understand the physical and spiritually dimensions of training if they are to come up with great impact and excellent results.

When there are problems or challenges in the forming of any human person and in this regard, the youth, there are indicators to put into very serious consideration which includes that if there is failure or successes recorded, the person being formed and the formator has his/her share in whatever went wrong or right in the training process. This means that

the right approach or strategy must be adopted and the youth being formed need to be receptive to training.

It is not longer news that many young people in Nigeria today including Christian youths have the mindset to acquire wealth at all cost even if it means stealing from others. This attitude possibly is an offshoot of the corrupt and immodest life style not only by the Nigerian political elites and others who the youth often look up to, but also sometimes by key players in Nigerian Christianity.. Many youths in Nigeria in trying to imitate the much older people end up being corrupt by acquiring those traits which are not in the best interest of Nigeria as a nation.

In the twenty first century, there is the need for policy and decision makers; including formators in all areas of life in Nigeria to encourage the youths to be job creators rather than job seekers. This means that entrepreneurship should be encouraged in our school curriculum. Presently, though entrepreneurship is being taught in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, it is however not yet fully understood clearly by the students. Many youths simply see the act of entrepreneurship as only important in passing examinations. Formators need to do more in educating the young people of its importance in the growth and development of Nigeria.

Also, formators including the government and the Church need to look critically at those indicators which make the youth in Nigeria to be rebellious against the system. In Nigeria for instance the issue of unemployment has become a major challenge. The lack of good living condition of the young people and their inability to raise their profile to the level they would have expected have turned the youths into all forms of unruly behaviour and criminality. This aspect need to be seriously addressed. The youth should be made to realize that migrating to other countries in search of greener pasture is not necessarily the solution to their problems. The solution may just be to look inward and take their destinies in their own hands by believing in their ability to stand firm even in the midst of what may look at insurmountable challenges.

The government has a big role to play in the attitude and development of the Nigerian youth irrespective of the religious affiliation of such youth. The problem of insecurity needs serious attention. There is the need to tackle the problem of insecurity emanating from the Fulani herdsmen who constantly terrorize people on our highways, farms and even residential areas. There are also the constant threats posed by the *Boko Haram* in their reckless bombing and killing of innocent and harmless Nigerians including the youth force. If the youths are to be well formed, security in all areas is key to unlocking the numerous potentials in our youths.

Concluding Remarks

The youth constitute the bedrock of the future in any given society, and this makes it imperative that genuine and serious effort be made so as to assist in his formation. Any society or group that neglects the training of young people is gradually losing its relevance and future in our world. For this reason, the Church must continue to strive for the proper and all round formation of her youth because in the youth lies the continuous growth and development of the Church in our society that is gradually heading towards secularism and all forms of anti Christian tendencies. If the Nigerian society is to grow and develop, the young people need to be made to channel their energy towards making themselves available for the right kind of formation that befits a follower of Christ.

However, those involved in formation of the Christian youth must never give up in their effort at getting the right result in their effort at formation of the youth in meeting the numerous challenges of the 21st century. They need to have the right spirituality which should aim at attracting the youth to the things of God and the Church. A genuine formator should not be someone who would always display the attitude which seems to portray that the youth should only do what he the formator says and not imitate his actions.

The family, the school, the Church and the society should continue to actively participate in the training and re-training of our young people for the purpose of developing the Nigerian society positively; but for formation to be total, is the will and responsibility of the young person being formed. Often times, punishment of the person being trained is not only the best solution, and also sending the young person out of a particular system or institution is not only the best method of formation, except it is very apparent that such a youth has become a real danger to others within the system. Extra effort is required from all those involved in formation so as to achieve the desired goal of integral formation. Giving up on the young person being trained so easily no matter the challenges encountered is the easiest way of neglecting one's responsibility as a true formator.

A great thinker was asked about the meaning of life. He replied, LIFE itself has no meaning, it is an opportunity to create a meaning..! "Be honest when in trouble and be simple when in wealth. Be polite when in authority and be silent when in anger" "This is called "The life management." Let us all join hands in the act of formation of the Christian youth so as to bring about the integral development of the Nigerian society in this twenty first century.

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THE CONCEPT OF SACRIFICE IN YORUBA RELIGION AND CULTURE

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Abstract
Sacrifice occupies a fundamental place in the practice of African traditional religion. It is through sacrifices that the African relates to the spiritual beings, both good and bad, that surround him. His offerings of thanksgiving to the gods are offered through the making of sacrifices. When the time comes for the appeasement of the gods and other spiritual beings, it is through sacrifice that is done. However, this paper is concerned about sacrifice among the Yoruba people. In the traditional Yoruba religion and culture, sacrifice is referred to as (Ebo). It connotes offering something to a particular deity or cult in other to be in communion with them or to seek favours. It was very common and regular because sacrifices have both positive and negative effects. It is believed that Olodumare-God in Yoruba belief has deities that are mediators between him and human beings. It is then very important to offer sacrifices to these gods in other to represent them well in the presence of Olodumare. Items for sacrifices are regularly prescribed by the Ifa priests and how to carry out the approved sacrifice. This paper therefore gives explanation about the meaning and importance of sacrifice in the traditional Yoruba culture. It, however, observed that civilization has reduced the frequency of this practice, not making an

emphatic statement that they are no longer in practice but that they are done most of the time in secret. For the purpose of this study, the phenomenological method of inquiry would be employed.

Key words: Sacrifice, Concept, Yoruba, Deities, Gods, *Olodumare, Ifa, Ebo and* Appeasement.

Introduction

Sacrifice is a way of offering something to gain another thing. It has meaning when someone renounces or gives up something to be rewarded with another object. The concept of sacrifice sounds like trade by barter- making exchange for something. Sacrifice is to give away something valuable for the possibility of gaining something of a great value in return. This can come in form of self-respect, trust, love, freedom, favours and prosperity. It may even be for the purpose of avoiding greater loss, which means, retaining what is of value to someone. "The giving up or foregoing of some valued thing for the sake of something of greater value or having a more pressing claim" Nu (2013). It can also be the offering of food, objects or the lives of animals to a higher purpose, in particular divine beings, as an act of propitiation or worship. Therefore, sacrifice is made for the purpose of worship and appeasement, for avoiding loss and for attaining a better thing. When it comes to worship in Africa however, sacrifice is the most primary and basic form of ritual and Nu (2013) upholds that "The Africans believe that verbalization is not enough in one's relationship with the supernatural. Ifa divination serves as a preamble to prayer. Via Ifa divination we can ascertain how to pray, to whom to pray and for what."

Sacrifice in African religion according to Awolalu and Dopamu (1979) is the act of offering the life of animal, person or object to the divine power or powers. Nu (2013) is of the opinion that For the Yoruba, divining (Ifa) serves as an approach to prayer and shows one why they need to pray and shows one the best procedure for elevating one's prayer via some form of sacrifice. In this world of many choices, this complex and varied approach is still miraculously accurate and effective. In this world of choices, this complex and varied approach is necessary.The write up on Ifaglobal network in (2018) presents this definition to sacrifice (ebo) in Yoruba culture. "Ebo means sacrifice. Ebo is a ritual. Ebo is the prescription that is given within the IFA divination. It is the medicine used to solve problems. Ebo is a combination of materials that symbolically has meaning to a person' situation."

This is very important in every religious celebration and worship. Sacrifice is mainly for the purpose of contact or communion between the divine and man and to maintain relationship. Man has always employed

this means to pay dues to divinity, to ask for favours and to influence the divinity to be interested in the affairs of man. Africans hold sacrifice in high esteem because it is being directed to God. Blood sacrifice is the most important and efficacious of all sacrifices in the understanding of African rituals. This is evident in the offering of animal and human beings.

Human sacrifice is also predominant in Yoruba culture and religion. "This is a practice found in every race and culture throughout the world" Awolalu and Dopamu (1979).

It has its relevance in offering the best to the divine to satisfy him, especially in difficult times like the loom of epidemic, drought, war, flood, earthquakes or calamity. Human sacrifice was also done to accompany the dedication of a new temple or bridge, upon the death of a king, high priest and great leader. The sacrificed were supposed to serve or accompany the deceased leader in the next life. The story of *Moremi*, a Yoruba woman is relevant here. *Moremi* was a very brave and beautiful woman who, in order to deal with the problem facing her people, pledged a great sacrifice to the Spirit of the river *Esimirin* so that she could discover the strength of her nation's enemies. *Moremi*, following the war she returned to her first husband, King Oramiyan of Ife (and later Oyo), who immediately had her re-instated as his queen. In order to fulfil the pledge she made to *Esimirin* before embarking on her mission, her son *Oluorogbo* was given in sacrifice to the Spirit because this is what it asked her for when she returned to its shrine.

Who are the Yoruba?

Yoruba people according to Atanda (1989) one of the major ethnic groups in modern Nigeria and they effectively occupy the whole of Ogun, Ondo, Oyo and Lagos State and a substantial part of Kwara State. A considerable number of Yoruba people also inhabit the South- Eastern part of Republic of Benin (formal Dahomey). In the same vain, Ogunyemi (2015) affirms that Yoruba, one of the three largest ethnic groups of Nigeria, concentrated in the southwestern part of that country. Much smaller, scattered groups live in Benin and Northern Togo. The Yoruba numbered more than 20 million at the turn of the 21st century. Yoruba people have shared a common language and culture for centuries.

Most Yoruba men are farmers, growing yams, corn (maize), and millet as staples and plantains, peanuts (groundnuts), beans, and peas as subsidiary crops; cocoa is a major cash crop. Others are traders or craftsmen. Women do little farm work but most of them sell produce from their husband's farm and they also do other trades like weaving, dyeing and midwives. Each community has leaders generally known as

Oba or Kabiyesi with his chiefs. These people are held in highest honour and in some cases, they are ritual leaders.

Yoruba as a group dwell in a world of myths, metaphors, poetry, and they strongly belief in *Ifa* divination system, which guides their steps and decisions. "Yoruba philosophy is best understood as a folk philosophy, a set of narratives and cultural practices that attempt to explain the causes and the nature of things affecting the corporeal and the spiritual universe.' Ogunyemi (2015) .Yoruba people are community people; this is visible in their interaction with others especially during celebrations. Their communal life is also visible in their mode of dressing uniformly and sharing of common diets. Ogunyemi (2015) explains their communal life thus "the Yoruba also have several kinds of voluntary associations, including the *egbe*, a male recreational association; the *aaro*, a mutual-aid association of farmers; and the *esusu*, whose members contribute a fixed amount of money and from which they can receive loans." *Iwofa* was also a practice among Yoruba people where a son or daughter is used as collateral until loan is paid. They also value honesty, humility, respect for others and diligence. All these are transmitted from generation to generation through oral traditions.

Yoruba Concept of Sacrifice

Sacrifice known as *Ebo* is very common in indigenous Yoruba culture. Indeed, is it part of their daily activities and likely items like: sheep, goat, food, fruits, eggs and any other prescribed stuff by the priest of the particular god to offer sacrifice to are used for sacrifices. After all, the write up on Ifaglobal network in (2018) shows that "all of the *ebo* materials come from the *Odu Ifa* that was cast, each condiment represent an important part of solving the clients problems, there is no condiment that should be left out. Basic condiments that are always present during any ebo i.e Cool water (omi tutu), honey (oyin), and gin (oti). Each one of these condiments are agents that supports the ebo, each condiments has its roll that it plays in the ebo ritual."

These sacrifices are either exposed in the shrines, cross-roads, market places, some may even been buried, at times Yoruba eat or share sacrifices together with friends or community. However, how to go about the presentation of a particular sacrifice depends on the prescription of the diviner. These gods have their taste and taboos as well. Sacrifice is offered everyday by individual families so as to be in communion with the divinity. Community sacrifices are equally preformed regularly.

It is part of the belief of Yoruba that one's a sacrifice is offered for a given purpose, through the consultation with *Ifa* that the solution is provided for the problem in question. Sacrifice must be offered regularly

both in good and bad times. Akíntúndé and Fálọlá (2016) carefully explain this as follows: "In a culture with strong beliefs in fairies and mystical causation, protective rituals and sacrifices are regularly performed. People must be protected from the wrath of fairies, and fairy-human social relationships must be harmonized. Therefore, whenever any misfortune occurs in Yorùbá society and the source remains unknown, both humans and invisible spirits are subjects of divination by the people concerned. To complete any divination process, there is always a prescribed sacrifice. Whether the prediction of the divination is good or bad, the client must always offer a sacrifice. If the prediction is good, a sacrifice will quicken a positive outcome; if the prediction is evil, a sacrifice will help dispel the ill effects."

In addition to this, Obara-meji (2014) affirms that "It is important that the sacrifice be given on time, as a matter of fact immediately, as it is prescribed. Ifa says, "There is no difference between the person that refuses to offer sacrifice on time and the one that did not offer at all". The write up on Ifaglobal network in (2018), settle for this in attempt to respond to what happens if Ebo is not done after consultation with the oracle? "Then you run the chances of making another problem occur stronger than your first problem you started with. It is not advisable to delay your ebo process especially when the *odu* has appeared. You should follow the guidance and wisdom of IFA and your IFA Priest who did the consultation. Once you have done IFA Divination you must always know that you have to do *ebo,* they both work hand in hand together. The *ebo* helps to shift one' circumstance to a balanced outcome."

Types or Categories of Sacrifice

There are seven types or categories of sacrifice in Yoruba culture as Idowu (1969) affirms, this was later re-echoed by Awolalu and Dopamu (1979) as follows: Meal and Drink sacrifice is offered daily by individual and families to continue to appreciate the deity or divinity and to be in communion with the god. The head of the family is responsible for coordinating this sacrifice which can be termed as Morning Prayer for a particular household. Libation is poured here and prayers are offered. Individual present or interested members may be asked to add some intentions while all in attendance respond in resounding amen. This is equally done at feast days where food and drinks are prepared for sharing; all present must partake in it. There is no prearranged food; it depends on whatever the community can afford.

The second type is thanks –offering. This is done whenever a favour is received, like at the arrival of a new baby or one escaped from a misfortune or danger. This type of sacrifice can also be performed when one is asking for a particular blessing. Items like animal, fruits, vegetables

or articles that may be useful in the shrine are presented for sacrifice. At annual festival however, this is important as everybody would be encouraged to come with voluntary items for sacrifice.

The third one is votive offering. In the process of making a request, one may make a vow. This vow is an agreement between the god and the receiver of gift. In Yoruba culture, any vow made must be paid, if not the receiver may not be able to cope with the consequences. The case of *Oluronbi* can be applicable here, who in the process of asking for a child promised to return this child to *Iroko* tree after a while. Her request was eventually granted with the gift of a handsome baby boy which she did not want to release as promised. One day according to this story, as she was returning from the market in the company of this boy, passing under *Iroko* tree, the boy disappeared and was nowhere to be found. It was latter interpreted that *Iroko* tree claimed what was its own and *Oluronbi* went home sorrowful.

Another category of sacrifice is propitiation or expiation. This is done when the fury of the divinity is at its peak. Sacrifice here is offered to appease the god in pacification. Asking for forgiveness of past sins and promising to live a better life. It has its purpose in gaining back the favour of the deity. Sacrifices offered here are not shared! It is mainly for the divinity and must be treated as the divinity instructs. After the sacrifice has been duly offered, the person in question is relieved from the anger or chastisement of the divinity.

The fifth category of sacrifice is substitutionary sacrifice or offering. This is done as soon as a person is marked to die or there is a revelation that a particular person will die. An animal is used to substitute for the person. Other agreed items may be added. The items are rubbed against the body of the person in this situation and parked like a corpse for burial. This takes the place of the person that this type of sacrifice is prescribed for. It is then understood that the person is dead as pronounced. Obara meji (2014) gives a beautiful analysis of this type of sacrifice using his personal example thus: "When I did my initiation to Ifa (*Itefa*) I was told that my father would die, this was many years ago, this came out on the seventh day of my initiation which is called *Ije,* this is when all the Babalawos gather around and each of them tell you something from the *Odu*, your destiny, which comes out for you during initiation, I was told that in order for the death to be removed from my father, a female Goat had to be given as sacrifice to *Orunmila* otherwise known as *Ifa*. It was given and accepted. The life of the Goat was given instead of the life of my father. I would say that was a fair exchange."

In the preventive sacrifice, it is done to avert sudden attack on a person or a community. An oracle may predict this beforehand or it may come through a consultation with the oracle when there is a problem like

epidemic or a chain of adversities. A preventive sacrifice is performed to stop it. The last is foundation sacrifice. This is done at the start of any important step or stage in one's life, for example, at birth, at puberty, during weeding, starting a building, settling down in a new town or when a new object has just been purchased. This type of sacrifice is to request for peace and progress in this new phase of life.

Although Nu (2013) states in contrary to the above that "The variety of sacrifice includes time, song, dance, money, change and life force offerings." This may not be totally acceptable in Yoruba context in the mind of the researcher. Nu's ideas are more of actions that accompany worship and celebrations rather than what sacrifice *(Ebo)* means in Yoruba perspective. Except if **variety** in his definition does not denote types and categories. Considering the write up of *Ifaglobal* network in (2018), it has been concluded that types of *Ebo* has no perimeter as against the assertion of Idowu (1969), Awolalu and Dopamu (1979) above that agree on seven types or categories. "There are *ebo* for long life, prosperity, wealth, victory, health, money, peace of mind, honour, and respect and so on; there is no limit to *ebo."*

In general, sacrifices are means of existence for Yoruba people. It is part of their belief that some spirits control the world. They must constantly and regularly connect to these spirits so that the world will be a peaceful place for human beings to stay. Regarding this, Akíntúndé and Fálọlá (2016) remark that "Broadly speaking, four forces are at play in Yorùbá ritual: gods, ancestors, witches and other supernatural powers, and human beings. The function of sacrifice is to enlist the support of these four forces to achieve the desired ends and to ensure that none of the forces work against one's purpose." Human beings must be part of it because most of the food prepared for sacrifices will be consumed by them and they must be rewarded for being witnesses at the shrine.

At whatever time a sacrifice is prescribed by a deity through the priest or priestess, how to carry it out and items to be used will be recommended as well. This is particular to individual situation or in relation to those concerned. At times, *ifa* priest may carry out the sacrifice himself while the person drops money or items. It may be that the person should carry the sacrifice to a particular place to be accompanied by the priest. It could be the mother or friend of the person in question that would be asked to do it. There is no fixed person for this. *Ifa* must guide and the priest or priestess who is interpreting the mind of the deity must lead and see that it comes to a success.

Conclusion

This paper on sacrifice in Yoruba culture gives the meaning, types and importance of sacrifice *(ebo)* to the people and community. It is very

important to offer sacrifice since the world is being ruled by spirits and gods according to their belief and these spirits and gods must be regularly appeased so as to gain favour from *Olodumare*. Within the traditional African worldview in general, you are mainly responsible for your own self-improvement. If you want to change your condition you must make sacrifice. Since the deities guide the steps of the indigenous Yoruba people, they must make consultations before taking any decisions. After consultation with *ifa*, the next step is to prescribe a type of sacrifice that will march the request of the one in quest of insight. This sacrifice must be performed to avoid calamities.

Worship in Yoruba culture attracts a lot of, singing, drumming, and dancing especially during festivities. Worship can be a private affair whereby an individual venerates his or her personal deity, or it can be a public one, which was very common. Blood sacrifice was considered to be the uppermost hence the need to offer human beings and animals in the past. People would be ritually killed in a manner that was supposed to please or appease a god or spirit. Nowadays, human sacrifice is not very common since civilization has considered it as a murder. This has been replaced by animal sacrifice. Sacrifice is not celebrated as before either, this not to say that it is no longer in practice, but that it is not as popular as ever. We still have cases of seeing *Ebo* at cross roads and in front of some shines that are not hidden, without seen the person that put them there. Diviners are even consulted in secrets today; unlike before that it was done as a life style. In this age of civilization, *ebo* in Yoruba culture is done in secret.

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THE RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY OF AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION IN THE THEOLOGICAL FORMATION OF SEMINARIANS TODAY

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Abstract
Speaking on the revision of ecclesiastical studies, Vatican II recommended among other theological courses that seminarians "should also be introduced to a knowledge of other religions which are more widely spread through individual areas" (*Optatam Totius* 16). She reasoned that this will help them better understand the elements of goodness and truth such religions possess and learn how to disprove the errors in them in the process of sharing the full light of the truth with those who lack it. Both Mbiti and Gyekye have noted that religion influences in a comprehensive way thoughts and actions of African life, fully determining practically every aspect of life including moral behaviour. The African lives in a religious universe in which all actions and thought have religious meaning and are inspired or influenced by a religious point of view. With African Traditional Religion (ATR), Christianity and Islam as Nigeria's three main religions, Nigeria is a typical religious plural society. Each of these religions has their values. These values have served as a guide and control of human behaviour, dictating right from wrong and this is the most important aspect of religion, that is, its capacity to shape honorable human personality and values being in accord with human society. Some of the human and religious values in traditional society include honesty, education, morality, brotherhood tie, respect for elders and fellow citizens, good name, community living and family loyalty. One of the most significant values that traditional Nigerians hold to be of great importance is the wisdom of its elders which manifests in proverbs-speaking. This paper

examines the relevance of the study of African Traditional Religion in contemporary Catholic theological formation houses. The method adopted is multi-dimensional - analytical, historical, phenomenological and theological. Our findings highlight the main reasons or benefits of the study, the traditional values to be integrated in theological formation; that our contextualization of the Christian faith has to be based on a good knowledge of pre-Christian traditional heritage or the knowledge of earlier religious tradition in our local environment; and that African Christian theology must be diverse based on different cultural background, social-economic and political diversity and the diverse strands of Christian missionaries that evangelized Africa. Our conclusion is that the African Christian theologian must engage in a serious dialogue with African traditional religion. He / She can longer lay claim to exclusive truth and condemn the non-Christian religion as a mere worship of idols as some Pentecostals would do.

Keywords: African Traditional Religion, Traditional Values, African Christian Theology, Theological Formation

Introduction

In this new era of evangelization advocated by the Catholic Church today, one of the basic questions that have to be addressed is: "How have the African seminaries, in general, and the Nigerian ones in particular, faced the challenges and adjusted to the inevitable changes in the formation of their priests?" (Ekwunife, 2011). According to him, the primary goal of formation in Catholic seminaries is to produce men who will be intellectually, socially and spiritually equipped to be effective instruments of evangelization after their ordination. The seminary is expected to train capable priests, who in response to God's grace, can collaborate with their Bishops and superiors in serving God's people throughout the world. The importance of formation was recently stressed by Pope Paul II in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation to the Bishops, Clergy and the faithful so that the end products of Catholic priestly formation may become with the sacrament of Orders, "a living image of Jesus Christ, Head and Shepherd of the Church" (*Pastores Da Vobis* 42).

Speaking earlier on the revision of ecclesiastical studies, Vatican II recommended among other theological courses that seminarians "should be introduced to a knowledge of other religions which are widely spread through individual areas" (*Optatam Totius* 16). She reasoned that this will help them better understand the elements of goodness and truth such religions possess and learn how to disprove the errors in them in the process of sharing the full light of the truth with those who lack them. In

addition Alexander Carter in his introduction to *Optatam Totius* has observed that the pastoral preparation must take into consideration the specific environment in which the young priest will begin his ministry (Abbot 1972, p. 436). Both J. Mbiti (1969) and B. Gyekye (1996) have noted that religion influences in a comprehensive way thoughts and actions of African life, fully determining practically every aspect of life including moral behaviour. The African lives in a religious universe in which all actions and thoughts have religious meaning and are inspired or influenced by a religious point of view (Obi 2013, p. 442).

With African Traditional Religion (ATR), Islam and Christianity as Nigeria's three main religions, Nigeria is a typical plural religious society. Each of these religions has its values. These values have served as a guide and control of human behaviour, dictating right from wrong and this is the most important aspect of religion – its capacity to shape honourable human personality and values being in accord with human society. Some of the human and religious values in traditional society include: honesty, education, morality, brotherhood tie, respect for elders and fellow citizens, good name, community living and family loyalty (Ebhomielen 2011, p. 131). One of the most significant values that traditional Nigerians cherish is the wisdom of its elders which manifests in proverb – speaking (Onimhawo &Adamu 2011, p. 25; Obi 2013, p. 443).

This paper examined the relevance of the study of African Traditional Religion in Catholic theological formation houses in lieu of Vatican II's earlier advice that Episcopal Conferences of each region are to adjust ecclesiastical courses to the pastoral requirement of a particular region. The method adopted is multidimensional – historical, analytic, phenomenological and theological.

Religions in Nigeria

Historically, before the advent of Islam and Christianity the main religion was ATR. African Religion can be defined as "institutionalized patterns of beliefs and worship practiced by various African societies from time immemorial" (Metuh 1987, p. 51). The main tenet of this religion, based on the principle of hierarchy of beings, is made of five elements, namely, belief in God, belief in divinities, belief in ancestors, belief in spirits and the practice to magic and medicine (Idowu 1991, p. 137-202; Kanu 2015, p. 92-127). The African universe has physical and spiritual dimension. This means all beings can be said to belong to either two worlds- the visible world and the invisible world. There is no wall of demarcation between the two worlds as the two realms shade into each other (Metuh 1987, p. 51). Thus, there is no clear-cut distinction or opposition between the visible and invisible, the material and spiritual, the temporal and non-temporal, the sacred and the profane unlike the

dichotomy which is characteristic of Graeco-Christian worldview (Metuh 1987, p. 5). In spite of this sense of cosmic oneness that is essential to African religion, there are slight variations between West African worldview (made up of five elements), the worldview of Nilotic societies (in so far as their Supreme Being has prophets) and the worldview of the Bantu areas (who have three categories of spiritual beings instead of five). The implications of these variations for African Christology/African Theology ought to be noted and their import for priestly formation not to be disregarded.

However, with the introduction to Nigeria of Islam in the 11th and 14th centuries through Kanem – Borno in the North East and the medieval empire of Mali in the South West and Christianity in the South, the centre could no longer hold, that is, the social order hitherto maintained through traditional religion caved in. Islam's emphasis on Allah's absoluteness, Sharia law, judgment day, its code of crime and punishment as well as its universalism, introduced elements of value confusion among the adherents of the old order in the rural communities of pre-colonial social institutions of the Hausa and Kanuri polities. For example, the *bori* or spirit possession cult of the Hausa, was one of the institutions of traditional social system that struggled for survival in the face of threatened extinction when it lost male converts to Islam and retained the support of women generally (Tamuno 1994,p.32). Though Islam accepted polygamy and its Sufi inspired tolerance of ritual, charms and magic, and some bits of syncretism, ancestor worship and reverence for associated spirits did not command acceptance by Islamic fundamentalists in attempts to accommodate spirits and *jinns*. In these and other respects the theocracy of the traditional social order differed significantly from the concept associated with Islam, more so after the Jihad of 1864 led by Uthman dan Fodiye whose success established the Sokoto Caliphate. Thereafter, Islam's mission of purification was actively pursued by its clerics in the Fulani Hausa States (Obi 2013, p.444; Tamuno 1994, p. 33). The above instances portray the issue of contextualization in the history of Islam in Nigeria.

On its part, Christianity came to Nigeria in mid 19th century through the coastal areas of Badagry, Bonny, Calabar and the hinterland at Abeokuta, Onitsha and Warri after earlier attempts by the Portuguese failed to take root. The familiar Christian practices – Trinity, Salvation through Jesus Christ, the ten Commandments, forgiveness, judgment day, monogamy, abhorrence of idol worship and the like challenged the social order and its buttresses for group solidarity and crime control. The principle of individualism which Christianity directly encouraged also threatened the durability on social control systems and values built on traditional collective or communal approach (Tamuno 1994, p. 30; Obi

2013 p. 445). Besides, the notion of individual responsibility and accountability challenged the traditional belief and fear that serious crimes like abominations against earth goddess, would pollute an entire community if not expiated, began to be eroded seriously. Above all, other notions of the certainty of punishment prevalent under the traditional corpus belief system stood in danger of disintegration with the increasing pressure of Christian doctrine and practice. In short, the combined forces of Christianity, Islam and Western education, if not also the wide logic of colonization weakened the belief in the traditional social order, as E. B. Idowu acknowledged with regard to the Yoruba in 1962 (Tamuno 1994, p. 31; Idowu *Olodumare* 1996, p. 227-228; Obi 2013, 445). This experience found literary expression in literary works such as Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *No Longer at Ease (*1969*)*. This analysis provides a sufficient background on the stress on the relevance of study of ATR in the formation of priests in Nigeria today.

Seminary Formation in Nigeria in Perspective

In his brief history of Seminary formation in Eastern Nigeria written some 20 years ago, Ekwunife opined that seminary formation in Nigeria can be divided into the following three epochs: (i) the early beginning (1930-1960), (ii) the post independence period (1960-1980), and (iii) Modern period 1980 and beyond (Ekwunife 2011). Among the deficiencies he pointed out over the periods include: seminarians were isolated from their people, their traditional cultures and institutions; they were imbued with foreign cultures and manners; bias of the formators against anything African; seminarians were trained to be fluent in English and Latin but inarticulate in their own native language, ready to imitate their formators' foreign cultures and manners but unable to study their own culture where they were to work after ordination and lack of contextual orientation because the formators failed to take into consideration the cultural environment of the seminarians. Among the weaknesses in the second period of which the writer is a victim is the over emphasis on English and Latin as the official language of church and even teaching of philosophy in Latin using *Di Napoli* as the main text and wrong approach to cultural values. The 1970 Bigard Curriculum of Studies lists some 13 courses in philosophy and 13 in theology in addition to auxiliary subjects (Oburoto 2001, pp.75-76). With one course in *Igbo* philosophy and one course in comparative religion the deficiency in ATR is easily discernible (and had to be rectified later).

Even in the 1980s the negative attitude of both formators and seminarians towards the traditional religion and culture that sustained it was still rampart. Even though the formators were indigenous clergy men, "the quality of formation still lacked deep cultural orientation

which would encourage dialogue with African Traditional Religion and Culture" (Ekwunife 2011).

It is noteworthy that prior to Vatican II the Christian church had a rather negative attitude towards other religions and expected them to disappear with the introduction of Christianity in the places where they were practiced. But as the religions have continued to exist side by side with Christianity, the attitude of much of the Christian world towards them has changed from that of confrontation to that of dialogue. It is no longer theologically acceptable today, at least in the non-radical evangelical circles to look on other religions as satanic. Positive evaluations of religions vis-à-vis Christianity are being put forward by scholars who studied them (Ukpong 1989, p. 422; Pannikar 1999). The official Catholic position is reflected in the guidelines issued by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) which encourages the study of ATR, Islam and Interreligious Dialogue in the Seminaries and Houses of Formation in Sub-Saharan Africa (PCID 2004). But the question to be addressed is: "How far has this instruction been implemented in Seminaries throughout the country? It is still doubtful whether the study of ATR has found its way into the curriculum of junior seminaries in Nigeria or any other African country" (Ekwunife 2011).

In this regard the response to a survey in Africa of the content of what is taught in 61 major seminaries and 6 Catholic Universities and Institutes of Higher Learning with reference to ATR, Islam and Interreligious Dialogue by the PCID as of 2001 is apropos (instructive).A summary of the replies received from 47 major seminaries show that:

In 36 major Seminaries, ATR is taught as a course. In the rest of 11 Seminaries, ATR is taught under various titles – Inculturation, African thought, African spirituality, African philosophy etc.

In 35 major Seminaries, Islam is taught as a course. For others, no information has been given (it is presumed that it is not taught).

In 20 major seminaries some form of information is given in interreligious dialogue (PCID 2004, p. 10).

Of 6 the Catholic Universities and Institutes of Higher Learning consulted, four replied they have courses in ATR. In two of them Islam is taught as a course. None has a programme for teaching interreligious dialogue.

Based on the result of this survey, PCID tried to provide a common programme subject to local adaptations for teaching the courses provided and it is to the credit of the authorities of Seminary of All Saints, Uhiele, Ekpoma that ATR has been mounted for those in year 600 and 700 level theology. However, it is disheartening that over the years some students do not take the course serious. It is embarrassing that some students are

unable to explain why the derogatory terms used by western investigators to describe our fore-fathers' religion are inappropriate. One is however, encouraged by the positive attitude displayed by the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Uromi, Most Rev. Dr Donatus Ogun who recently organized a Diocesan Delegate Assembly with focus on Burial Practices in Esanland which held Monday, 15th February to Thursday 13th February, 2020 at Brother Roman Catechetical and Renewal Centre, Ekpoma. It is hoped that such discourse will help understand and douse tensions on the burial rites in Esanland. This particularly shows the need to adjust academic curricula to the needs of the environment.

Rationale for the Study of ATR

The students of any department of Religious Studies in Nigerian Universities have always met the embarrassing question from colleagues: "why are you studying religion? Are you preparing to be a pastor?" In like manner, some Christians in Africa may ask, "why study ATR? We have forsaken our old religion and have embraced the Christian faith. Jesus Christ is now our Lord and Saviour. What further need do we have to research ATR?" (Gehman, 1989, p.15).

Several scholars have taken up this challenge. According to Aderibigbe and Ayegboyin (2001) the all embracing reason why religion should be studied is its importance, significance and hold on human life. First, there is currency of religion as a human phenomenon. Secondly, the dominating presence, and existence and functions in society have come to be accepted so that there is no apology for its acceptance. Third, is its universal relevance. Religion has universal application that transcends demarcations of place, race, colour and time. Fourth, is the fear that it is impossible to find a replacing value for or to fill the vacum of its absence (pp.20-31). Other reasons include the benefits of the study such as emancipation from ignorance, information and skill since one is exposed to the proper methods of data collection in the study of religion, and appreciation of one's and other peoples' religion.

For Gary Kessler so much of human history and culture remains a mystery if we cannot comprehend the role religion has played and continues to play in the development of human institutions, values and behaviour. In addition, study of religion especially religions of others helps us overcome our all-too-comfortable ethnocentric attitudes and achieve a more comparative perspective (Kessler 2006, p. 12). Moreover, the study of religion opens up a space in our busy lives where we can pause and reflect on the meaning and purpose of our lives. It provides an occasion for us to think, in a comparative setting about what constitutes a good life. Finally, the study would prepare for a career in the field of

religious studies and other fields and to satisfy the requirement for general or liberal education (Kessler 2006, p. 13).

Similarly, different scholars have given reasons why African Traditional Religion should be studied. For example, Gehman offers six reasons, namely, we ought to study the traditional religion in Africa because it is one of the world's religions of a great people with a great past. ATR was formerly embraced by a whole continent. Second, ATR is the religious background of African people whom Christians seek to evangelize today. Therefore, in order to build bridges of communication with them, we must study the beliefs and practices of the traditional African. Thirdly, many professing Christians rely on ATR in times of crisis, particularly those looking for the fruit of the womb, power and money. Fourth, the Christian church in African needs to contextualize her faith so that it becomes truly rooted in the life of the people. The just concluded Catholic Diocese of Uromi Delegate Conference on funeral rites in Esanland is apropos here. The rise of African Independent Churches (AICS) owes its origin to failure of earlier 'missionary Christianity' in this regard. In the same token, the church of North Africa that produced famous theologians as Saints Augustine and Cyprian was wiped out, due in part to its non rootedness in the life of the indigenous people. Fifth, the revival of ATR in Ethiopianism brings a sense of urgency to the study. Sixth.ATR should be studied for its own sake (Gehman 1987, p. 15-22).

On his part, T. Quarcoopome gives some fundamental reasons for studying West African Traditional Religion (WATR). He asks the question: "Of what relevance then is the study of WATR on the contemporary scene?" In his view the objectives for the study of ATR or WATR are as follows:

to help the African to reconstruct his past in order to understand the present and effectively plan for the future: to help the African in his search for self determination and self-assertion; to make known the world view of the Africans so that non-Africans can understand the social and moral behaviour of the African; to make scientific comparison with other religions and finally to correct misconceptions about the Traditional Religion by Western Investigators and educated Africans (Quarcoopome 1987, pp.9-10).

Thus the basic aim of the study is not to glorify the African past but to present the truth with regard to what Africans authentically believe and authentically think about God and the supersensible world (Idowu 1973, p. 106). This will induce sympathetic understanding for the traditional faith.

Finally the PCID document earlier mentioned highlights the aims of the course on ATR as: (a) to awaken the interest of participants in

African traditional religion; (b) to prepare and dispose them for interreligious dialogue; (c) to help them appreciate the lasting values of this religion which are relevant to modern African quest for nation building; and (d) to reinforce their appreciation of the urgency of the Church's constant call for inculturation of the Christian faith in Africa (PCID 2004, p.10). Consequently it designed a programme that suits long term (two semesters) and short term (one semester) option depending on the local need. Hitherto Seminary of All Saints, Uhiele has chosen the two semester option.

While emphasizing the manifold reasons and relevance of the study, the difficulties besetting the study ought to be noted. These include the vast geography of Africa with the corresponding mistaken generalization about Africa, the influence of direct or indirect colonial indoctrination by the British and French colonial masters, the factor of death of custodians of the cultural and religious traditions; the myriads of language and dialectics in Africa. Nigeria alone has over 250 ethnic groups. Last but not the least, is the influence of other cultures and religions, western education and modernity. What this means is that the interpreter has to note that Africa is a continent of multitudes of nations, myriads of people, countless languages or dialectics and peoples at various levels of culture (Idowu 1973, p. 78-83).

African Values and Priestly Formation

There are many African values of ATR which could be integrated in the holistic formation of Catholic priests. Among them could be: (i) the sense of the scared, (ii) corporate existence, (iii) a sense of justice, (iv) sincerity in ones' commitment to a cause, and (v) good leadership (Ekwunife 2011). Others are the concept of *omenala*, respect for elders, use of language and traditional concept of mediation. We will illustrate with some of the lasting values of ATR for a modern nation building/priestly formation.

In ATR the sense of the sacred is very strong and important. Rudolf Otto (1958) did mention two dimensions of the sacred, the *mysterium tremendum:* it attracts and repels. In order to safeguard the distance we have taboos. We have already mentioned that there is no dichotomy between the sacred and profane, the invisible and the visible since the two shade into each other in African worldview. Consequently, whenever the harmony in one is destabilized, it affects the other and the services of the diviner are needed to restore the harmony. There are varieties of the sacred – God, divinities, ancestors, persons, places and objects based on their relationship to God and the world. For example, a masked person is sacred because it is related to the invisible reality, the ancestor. To unmask a masquerade is a taboo, an abomination that requires a ritual cleansing because we are expected to preserve the

respectful distance from the sacred without severing the relationship. In Africa the sacred is not only associated with power, it is affiliated with the highest values in human life such as honesty, justice, gentleness, patience and sincerity. A sacred person is expected to mirror these values. This is depicted in the Igbo concept and practice of *Ozo* title–taking in which the initiate is addressed as *Nze* – an epithet of truthfulness and justice. In the words of Ekei:

> Initiation into *Ozo* makes the recipient "sacred" *Nze*. The group of *Ozo* titled men are therefore called 'sacred group' (*Ndi Nze)*. The concept '*Nze*' has both ethical and religious significance for the Igbo. Etymologically, '*Nze'* is an abridged term of *Nze'-le'*, that is, 'separation' or 'apartness' or sacrosanct. These concepts convey a mystical meaning to the recipient. In other words, he is by this title, ethically aloof, and ritually separated from 'commoners' or from 'pollutions' and 'defilements' (Ekei 2001, p. 4).

It is this symbol of justice that makes *Ozo* initiation to be linked with sense of Igbo morality.

The emphasis on the African sense of the sacred has far reaching effects in the formation of Catholic seminarians. It will create in them an attitude of deep respect for the things of God and anything associated with God. Among the sacred things is the human person. Hence crimes like murder, abortion, uprooting seed yams are *nso nla* abomination that can only be cleansed by Nri priests. Worship, covenant with divinities and others, oath-taking, sacrifice and prayer are among the means used to internalize the sense of the sacred and sacredness of the human person. Therefore stimulating the sense of the sacred in seminary formation will help respect the sacred of non-Christian religions.

Africans recognize life as life-in-community. There is the conviction that humankind of the past, present and future generations forms one community. The concept of individual success or failure is secondary. The ethnic group, the village, the locality, the family are crucial in one's estimation of oneself. Our nature as being-in-relation is a two-way relation with God and with our fellow human beings. Catholic seminarians in Africa need to emphasize the sense of community-living and values to cut across ethnic and social boundaries. The sense of life-in-community will help douse the tensions that sadly manifest between the parish priest and his curates/priests in residence.

However, this community living cannot thrive without a sense of justice. ATR is so concerned about justice such that anyone who negates the principle of justice will be severely punished not only by society but also the gods. This is of expressed in the Igbo proverb *Egbe belu, ugo belu*

(live and let live). Again this is also aptly depicted in Igbo religion through the *Ofo- na- ogu* concept. The *Ofo* concept has been exposed by Clement Ejizu (1986) and the *Ogu* is aptly exposed by Stephen Egwin (2005). *Ofo* is the guarantor of truth, just judgement, just living and authority to rule as well as pray to the gods for onesself and others. *Ogu* stands for moral uprightness and innocence. The concept is well utilized in the dynamics of Igbo litigation. *Ofo* represents ancestral authority, sacred tradition and community and enforces justice while *Ogu* ascertains the innocence of the individual and determines whose side justice takes. The judicial system is based on the traditional moral code which is considered to be sacred tradition. The ancestral power to dispense justice is determined by innocence (*Ogu*) and judgement (*Ofo)* and operates in the form of punishing the guilty and vindicating the innocent (Egwim 2005, p. 195). A sense of justice has to be instilled in the formators and seminarians in the seminaries throughout Africa.

Among the good leadership qualities Arinze advocated that has to be inculcated in seminarians six African values stand out: "sense of the sacred, respect for life, sense of community, family spiritual vision of life, authority as sacred and symbolism in worship". Idowu associated many of these African values with the Yoruba concept of *'Iwa'*, character. Indeed there is hardly any good textbook on ATR that does not reflect on some African moral values (Ekwunife 2011).

One of the most valuable culture of the African society is the concept of respect for elders and those in authority. Africans generally have deep and ingrained respect for old age: the old man's gray hairs earn him right to courtesy and politeness. Hence the dictum, "the words of the elders are words of wisdom" because of the experience they garnered over the years. Hence elders in Africa are respected for many reasons. An Igbo adage has it: "He who listens to an elder is like one who consults an oracle". The oracles are believed to give the infallible truths; these elders are believed to say the truth and their words and instructions are heeded to for the promotion of good behaviour among the youth. The church like the society and African traditional value teaches respect for elders and those in authority. This is because this group of individuals has been given the authority of leadership.

The African culture values language and proverbs, because in them they communicate and in them wisdom is passed in the process; the importance of both cannot just be overemphasized in the African cultural heritage. Moreover, for the African, if the individual is not able to communicate with the native language the individual ideologically, puts himself outside the community. Speaking a language in the African sense does not depend on the peripheral knowledge of the language but on the ability to express oneself adequately in the proverbs and idioms of the

language community. One is therefore happy that Seminary of All Saints, Uhiele academic curriculum allots some space for the vernacular.

Diagnosing the causes of affliction is a central preoccupation of African Religion (Magesa 2008, p. 190). There are people who have the power to "sniff out hidden sources of disorder", who can advice on procedures to correct the situation. They are generally known as diviners. Laurenti Magesa (2008) mentions some of the values of divination. Since divination systems are "ways of knowing", ATR presumes that true reasons for all events can be known although sufficient knowledge is seldom available through mundane means of inquiry (Magesa 2008, p. 192). Divination assists in knowing true reasons for events. Events are either positive or negative. In ATR when calamities befall a community, diviners are consulted to know the true reason behind the cause, and possible measures taking to avert the calamity are also sought. Divination ensures that decisions are made or the right course of action is carried out to address certain events or situations. Thus, divination helps Africans to gather the necessary information about events, the causes and possible solution (193). It aids right decision making in addressing calamity in a community.

Divination also helps to protect and secure the future. Hence at the beginning of the year, or at birth, diviners are consulted to ascertain what the year or destiny of a child holds. Such diviners will expose the good and bad aspects of the coming year and proffer ways to sustain the good ones and other ways of averting the bad ones usually by appeasing the gods through sacrifices as the case may be. This provides the background why today at the beginning of the year, prophecies are awaited from insightful men of God. The implication of this traditional value for seminary formation is that the equivalent gift of prophecy, of Davidic practice of inquiring from the Lord, ought to be paramount in the training of seminarians. Prayer of inquiry (*Iga na ajuju in divinatory* terms) is a major aspect of Davidic and prophetic spirituality as manifested in the life of prophet Josiah Oshitelu and Apostle Ayo Babalola (Oshitelu 2007, p. 71) and seminarians ought to imbibe this. In this regard we ought to note the challenge which traditional African concept of mediation poses to modern African Christianity. For, the traditional agents of mediation are twofold: invisible agents (divinities, ancestors, spirits) and visible agents (priests, diviners, medicine men, mediums, magicians, seers, kings, queens and elders). This shows a diversity of ministry and religious roles of religious specialists or cultic functionaries in traditional setting which has to be taken into consideration in the process of contextualizing the gospel. None of these religious specialists claim monopoly in religious affairs but collaborate with others (Obi

2006, p. 290). Thus collaborative ministry which is advocated today was already in vogue in traditional religion.

Implication of ATR for African Christian Theology

In African Christianity, one of the main thrusts in the area of contextualization in which ATR has played a dominant part is in the area of Christology. J. Onaiyekan (2016) writing on the main trends in African Christology mentions four sources to include the Bible, the theological patrimony of the church, African traditional religious concepts and modern African situation (pp.54-58). Many African theologians have borrowed from the thought world of ATR to explicate the person of Christ. Such attempts include the East African theologian C. Nyamiti, who presents Jesus as the greatest of all ancestors taking a clue from East Africa where the veneration of ancestors plays a key role in the traditional life. Because of their kinship with their descendants, they are concerned about their welfare. Jesus fulfills all the Bantu expects of his ancestors in an eminent degree and can therefore be considered as an Ancestor, or more precisely "our Brother Ancestor" (Nyamiti 1985, p.33). B. Bujo toes the same line, from an ethical perspective. He describes Christ as a Proto-Ancestor (1981, p. 143; Onaiyekan 2016, p. 55). Kabasele adds to the concept of ancestor that of 'Elder' (Onaiyekan 1991.p.20). The famous healer and former Archbishop of Lusaka, Emmanuel Milingo also expressed similar thought about "Jesus the Ancestor" (Milingo 1984, p. 78).

Other African traditional concepts have been used to explicate the person of Christ such as the concept of "Kinsman", the concept of "Chief" by Kabasele, the "Healer" by C. Kolier and K. Enang as we see also in Nigerian Pentecostal Charismatic circles. An unusual portrait of Jesus is that of the 'Master of Initiation' espoused by Bishop Sanon of Burkina Faso who takes us into the sacred groves of Burkinabe initiation ceremonies. He explains what it means to say that Jesus is 'Master of initiation', that is, the elder who guides towards perfection those who have been at the initiation rites. This symbolic approach is not completely new as some of the Greek Fathers such as Gregory of Nazianzen already spoke of Jesus as a m*ystagogus,* a title derived from Greek religions and refers to the 'leader of initiation rites. From a Yoruba religious perspective, J. Onaiyekan adds 'Christ the Great *Orisha'* because Yoruba traditional religion is almost exclusively concerned with the cult of the divinities called *Orisha* who act as agents and servants of the Supreme Being. *Orisha* is so much a characteristic of Yoruba religion that its followers are called *Aberisa, "*worshipers" of *Orisha.* Yoruba converts to Christianity often speak of giving up *Orisha* in order to accept Jesus

(Onaiyekan 1991, p.22; Onaiyekan 2016, pp. 39-40). On his part, Chris Manus (1993) also exposed a Christology of Christ as "the African King".

Each of these portraits of Christ within an African setting and colour has its limits of application. For example, Christ is more than an Ancestor. His relationship with the Father is unique and different from that of any *Orisha* with the Supreme Being. Consequently our images cannot say it all although they do say something (Onaiyekan 2016, p.58). At least they do give us inkling as to the benefits of ATR in the study of African Christian Theology.

Conclusion

The primary goal of formation in Catholic seminaries is to produce men who will be intellectually, socially and spiritually equipped to be effective instruments of evangelization after ordination. This pastoral preparation requires that seminarians be acquainted with religions practiced in their specific environment where they would work according to Vatican II. Since religion influences in a comprehensive way the thoughts and actions of African life, seminarians ought to be grafted in the tenets of African Religion which is one of the three religions practiced in the multiethnic culture of Nigeria.

This paper examined the relevance of ATR for future African priests. The reasons for studying religion in general and ATR in particular were highlighted using the views of different scholars. The difficulties besetting the study were also noted. Many African values which could be integrated in the holistic formation of Catholic priests include the sense of the sacred, community living, sense of justice, sincerity in one's commitment to a cause, good leadership, respect for elders, and concept of traditional mediation which involves collaborative ministry. Finally, the implication of ATR as a source for African Christian Theology particularly with the understanding of the person of Christ in African setting were broached, such as "Christ as Ancestor", "Chief", "*Orisha"* and "Kinsman". The limitations of some of these images notwithstanding, they do give us inkling as to the benefits of studying ATR in the exposition of Christian revelation. The study of both philosophy and theology in major seminaries in Africa needs to be culture bound. African traditional religion and culture ought to be the springboard of philosophical and theological studies in Africa. Perhaps one may not be far from the truth in saying that the deficiencies in most seminaries in Africa in the past are largely caused by the non-inclusion of timeless African traditional values in the curriculum of seminary formation.

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ISLAM AND THE FORMATION OF CATHOLIC PRIEST IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
The Nigeria society is dynamic and distinct in its pluralistic nature. Multiplicity defines the features and elements that make up the Nigerian State. The choice of becoming a vanguard of religious tradition by an individual in such a nation with plural political, cultural, social and religious belief systems demand rigorous formation processes. This paper examines Islam, one of the religious and cultural traditions most assertive and influential in Nigeria's religio-political space against the training of Catholic priest of the Christian religious belief system. The work employs the historical, analytical and evaluative methods to examine the transformative stages of Islam from its inception and the challenges its poses to the Christian evangelical mission in Nigeria. The work hinges on the Geothe's paradox theoretical framework "he who knows one knows none" adapted by Max Muller (1823-1900) in his comparative study of religion. The findings reveal that Islam which came through commercial activities has become a powerful influence in Nigeria society and the knowledge of its dynamic influences is of essence in the formation of Catholic priest as it enhances the strategies of priestly mission of evangelization and re-construction of a better society for peace and harmony with members of other religious groups. The enforcement the law of freedom of religious participation by political authority of the society is part of the recommendations of the paper which concludes that the commitment to interreligious dialogue and cooperation in a diverse society as Nigeria by the Catholic church will continuously be effective if the elements of knowing the dynamics of Islam are embedded within the context of the training of seminarians who hold the posterity of the Catholic mission.

Key Words: Islam, Catholic priest, Formation and Nigeria.

Introduction

The Nigerian society is a complex society. There are multiple and diverse elements in the various systems that make up the entity. The religious space is characterized with several religious traditions three of which are dominantly subscribed namely; the Indigenous Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam. The peoples that answer the corporate name called Nigeria share diverse ethnic nationalities numbering no less than 250 ethnic groups with diverse socio-cultural heritages. History has it that each of these ethnic groups of which three are predominant (Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo) had and operated different political and legal systems before the 1914 Amalgamation that brought the differing groups together.

Religion as an inevitable phenomenon in human activity has a function of unifying people together and giving meaning to their existence on earth and assurance of what is to come in the afterlife. The diversities in the practices of religion in Nigeria with the presence of multiple religious traditions and the ethnic and cultural variations of the people influence the general administration of the Nigeria State creating numerous issues that threaten collective peace and harmony needed for the nation's optimum growth and development. Islam and Christianity stand as the most influential and assertive religions in Nigeria's religio-political space. The events of struggles, rivalry and competition visible in Nigeria's political engineering more often than not received interpretation along the line of these religions (Islam and Christianity) (Odey, 2014). There are inconsistencies in the population figure of religious affiliation census in Nigeria. Though the 2006 Nigeria population census did not censor religious affiliations but the World Fact Book (2003) cited in Wotogbe (2012) reveals Muslims population in Nigeria to be 50%, Christians 40% while the followers of the Indigenous Traditional Religion 10%. Another source, the Religious Freedom Nation Profile puts it that Christians in Nigeria are approximately 46%, Muslims 44% and members of the African Indigenous Religion 10% (Imaekhai, 2010:56).

The polarization of the society along the two major religious divides has earned the Nation series of religious crises that had resulted in great fatality both human and property. Islam with its political dynamism appears to be more influential and assertive than the Christian counterpart in Nigeria's religio-political space. Many of the religious crises that have occurred in Nigeria have been attributed to Islam (Ukpebor, 2018). This made Islam to be commonly referred as a religion of violence. However, there is more to be known and understood about

the Islamic religion and the Muslims besides the common view about them especially by the members and the upcoming leaders of the counterpart Christian faith.

Denominationalism characterizes the Christian faith in Nigeria. The Roman Catholic Church is the largest Christian denomination in Nigeria. It has about 39 million worshippers from the over 140 million population of Nigeria closely followed by the Anglican Church with over 18 million members (Imaekhai, 2010:56). The Catholic Church with this status has represented the Christian voice in the maintenance of peace and harmony through its engagement with other religions in dialogue. The positive results of this engagement by the leading Catholic clerics create the need for its sustenance by the Church's successive ministers. It is on this note that this paper looks into the formation of Catholic priest with the aim of exposing the religious and political dynamics of Islam in Nigeria with the view to arm the intending Catholic priest with a balanced knowledge that would aid the Church effective mission of evangelization in Nigeria society.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts the Geothe's paradox: "he who knows one knows none" as the framework that guides the study. The Geothe's paradox was first used by the students of comparative philology in the study of language. Max Muller adopted this paradox "he who knows one knows none" in the new discipline of science of religion otherwise called comparative study of religion which he developed in late 19th century (Muller, 1873). The import of the paradox lies in the fact that one has a balanced knowledge, when one has knowledge of more than one religion or religious traditions in the society and the process of achieving this is known as the comparative study of religions. Thus, comparative study of religion in essence is the inquiry into the religious traditions of man. It is a study that takes into account the fact that there are in the world of men various religious traditions each of which makes sense to the adherents or the believers of the faith (Wotogbe, 2005:7). Although, this paradox received criticism when it was first used for the study of comparative language on the premise that learning too many languages may lead to the risk of losing firm grasp of one's own language. But Muller explained that the result in doing comparative study of languages leads to a higher level of order, knowledge and wisdom which in a similar vein extend to the comparative study of religion. He thus concluded that contrary to the position of the critics of comparative languages, inquiries in comparative study of religion besides the benefits of higher order, knowledge and wisdom attainment, lead one to more firm grasp on one's own religious tradition (Muller, 1897). The theory is apposite as it justifies the aim of

this paper which is geared towards exposing the dynamics of Islam, a different religious tradition to the Catholic tradition which would enhance the acquisition of higher and balanced knowledge in the formative processes of priesthood vocation.

Conceptualizing Priest and Priesthood

The word priest is an English word derived from the Greek word *presbyterous* (elder) but in usage and meaning it is the equivalent of the Greek *hiereus*, latin *sacerdos* and Hebrew *kohen* meaning the offerer of sacrifice and revealer of oracles (Tasie and Okinedo, 2005:124). This translate that a priest is a channel of divine communication that makes the wishes of the deity known to men and in turn offers to the deity the worship and sacrifices of men. Priesthood as a terminology is an institution referring to a body of persons who perform religious functions and mediate between men and the Supersensible Being.

In Catholic tradition, priesthood refers to the sacrament of Holy orders through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time (CCC, 1536). The seminary formation is the process the Catholic Church instituted to ensure the continuation of the apostolic ministry. As the priests are to be taken among men to live with other men as brothers (Vatican II no.3), it is expedient to arm them with the dynamic nature of the society especially one with plural features.

Defining Islam

Islam is one of the Semitic and prophetic religious traditions that share an uncompromising monotheism and belief in God's revelation, his prophets, ethical responsibility and accountability, and the Day of Judgment (Esposito, 2005:1). The word Islam is from the Arabic root "*SILM"* which means peace and submission. It is a term use in Arabic language to designate surrender when one wants to submits to his opponent in a battle field during the pre Islamic days. It was adopted to describe the religion brought by Prophet Muhammad and that is why in religious context the word (Islam) came to mean submission to the will of Allah and obedience to His law. Kilani describes it as a noun formed from the infinitive of a verb *asalama* meaning "to accept ", "to submit", "to commit oneself" which invariably means to submit or surrender to Allah (18). The Qur'an in chapter 3 verse 85 jealously distinguishes Islam when it says, "if anyone desires a religion other than Islam (submission to Allah), never will it be accepted of him; and in the hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good)". By implication this means that it is through submission to the Will of Allah and by obedience to His law can one achieves true peace

and enjoys lasting purity. A Muslim from this understanding becomes one who submits to the will of Allah.

Islamic Incursion in Nigeria

Islam entered the territory now known as Nigeria from two directions; the north and south. In both directions, the opening of trans-Saharan trade facilitated the penetration of the religion in the area. Raiding, a legitimate and legal act in Arabia before the revelation that gave birth to Islam came to Muhammad was still been carried out by the Arabs that had converted to Islam. One of such Arabs was Uqba ibn-Nafi whose raiding venture in 667 AD into the central Sahara opened the route to Kanem and Borno in Northern Nigeria and it lasted till the end of the 19th century (Kenny, 2001). In each of the towns Uqba raided, he imposed a tribute of 360 slaves and that made the central African trade route to be known and specialized in slaves taken from the hinterland of Borno. The business was later extended to Western Sudan where gold was discovered. This precious commodity attracted the interest of the Umayyad governor who sought for ways to enhance the continuous supply of the commodity from West Africa (Kilani & Ukpebor, 2016). The trans-Saharan trade routes were then developed to serve a secure and efficient link with the Western Sahara. The settlement established by the Arab Muslims' merchant along the trade routes which made them stayed with their indigenous customers to the extent of contracting marriage with them provided the stimulus for the Islamization of West Africa in general (Kilani, 2008). The free mixing of Muslim merchants with West African people created the avenue to organize African trading agents and associates which the Muslims traders needed to facilitate their trade. This led to the emergence of a community of African Muslims around the Arab Muslim merchants. Thus, the trans-Saharan trade stimulated the beginning of the formation of "State in Islam" in sub-Saharan African.

African Kings welcomed the presence of Muslim traders in their communities as they saw the economic benefits the long-distance trade had to offered and which stood higher if they (the kings) embraced Islam. Their compliance would also provide them the status of citizenship in the larger Muslim *umma* (community) with equality and brotherhood with the far away Arab Miuslims in Saudi Arabia. As Islam gained ground, large scale marketing and transportation became Muslim monopoly and this put pressure on traders to join Islam to become part of the club.

The presence of Muslim scholars who provided the written communication in Arabic, a vital element in the infrastructure of long-distance trade also appealed to the people of West Africa. It is interesting

to note that the Arabic language was the only international language of West Africa before the arrival of the Portuguese on the coast in the 15th century and French and English in the 19th century (Kenny, 2001:3). Muslims clerics that were present during the trans-Saharan trade had several religions medicine to offer which somewhat stood superior in it efficacy to that of the Indigenous traditional religion. The medication is in form of specific prescriptions for every conceivable disease and any other issue of life and the dosage is taken by drinking the ink washed from a slate with Quranic writing. There is talisman to be put on and prayers to be said. The Islamic rites of worship in its entirety were of high attraction as it were commonly performed in an opened environment, dramatic and with all seriousness of minds.

The spirit of brotherhood brought by Islam to those who accept it provided a sense of security to them as it gave them legal immunity from attack by other Muslims. This became another strong motivation for the African King to become a Muslim as it served a pre-emptory defense against attack (Kenny, 2001). The Kings therefore found Islam a convenient support to their imperial authority as it was a unifying ideology bridging many tribes and presenting to them a wider brotherhood, citizenship and nationality. This was how the phenomenon of "State Islam" emerged. The religion from its inception in West Africa was controlled and used to promote the interest of the rulers.

Islamic Reformation and the Spread of Islam in Nigeria

Another prominent factor in the spread of Islam in Nigeria is the military factor. Beginning from the long-distance trade, Islam spread peacefully through Muslim clerics and traders until the reformation carried out by Usman dan Fodio in early 19th century among the Hausa/Fulani nation. Reformation as a concept is derived from the Arabic word *Tajdid* meaning to reform or revive. It is an ideology derived from the prophetic tradition which states that "the Muslims community will be assisted by those who will renew its faith for it". The objective is to recreate or recapture the ideal sunni Islamic society by mobilizing the people along the paradigms of the Quran and prophetic tradition (Ukpebor, 2018:42). It is popularly referred as the Jihad of the sword.

Thus, the Jihad of Fodio was conceived to revive and purify Islam in Hausa land, to eliminate all syncretistic beliefs and rituals, jettison all innovations that are contrary to the Quran and Sharia, and bring the Muslims backsliders back to orthodox and pure Islam (Umejesi, 1992:87). However, the religious motive turned out to be a political revolution. All the Hausa dynasties were overthrown and the Fulani were installed as Emirs with Sokoto chosen as the Caliphal centre. Islamic caliphate system replaced the traditional political system and

Islam thereafter became firmly established in places where it had not had a stronghold before in northern Nigeria. The all-inclusiveness of Islam is justified by this holistic revolution. Islam does not separate the political from the religious and this makes Muslims expect that the establishment of Islam in the society will bring a better and more prosperous society as well as a greater enjoyment of the goods of this life and that of the hereafter. This is the notion of State in Islam. It is contrary to the Christian teaching to render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's. In Islam, Caesar and what he owns belong to God, the One (Al-Qaradawi, 1998:3).

Colonial Phase Islam

The violent intolerance tendency of Islam that stares at the non-Muslims especially the Christians and their evangelical mission today was stimulated during colonial rule in Nigeria. Although, the militant tendency of the Jihadists stopped before the colonial era, the spread of Islam continues during the colonial period but in a peaceful mode of dissemination like as it was during the trans-Saharan trade. If the British had swept away the Caliphal system of Islam they met as their French counterpart did in their territory the tale of Nigeria would have been different. But the British propped and increased their authority through what Umejesi (1992) refers to as "a symbiotic arrangement" otherwise known as the "principle of Indirect Rule".

In addition, the British introduced the *Pax Brittanica* which permitted Muslims and everyone to move freely throughout the country in pursuit of trade or livelihood (Kenny, 2001:8). This enable Muslims to build Mosque and interact with local people throughout the country while the Christian though were still free to move around the country as well but restricted in building churches in Muslims areas and their priests were forbidden to evangelize the Muslims. This was enunciated by the British who feared that the policy of indirect rule might not succeed if the trapping of Islam was not preserved. Takaya (1987) quoted in Umejesi (1992) averred:

> Lugard assured them that their religion and customs would not be interfered with and that all structures would remain except that power was now effectively in the hands of the British. On their part, the Muslim leaders, nay the Jihadists, promised to put an end to the Jihad of the sword and stop slave raiding, human mutilation and other acts antithetical to the interests of the British economy as pursued through the lugardian philosophy of dual mandate in Africa (Umejesi, 1992:89).

This confessional neutrality adopted by the British in the north gave way to partiality as the latent import was the recognition of Islam as the State religion and the entire north regarded as Muslim land while the south considered a Christian area. This impression was far from the reality.

However, the Lugardian partiality and politicized view of religion were attributed to various reasons: respect for Islam, fear of a general Muslim uprising against the government and a strict cum conservative interpretation of the indirect rule system. The Christian missionaries themselves equally added to the negative attitude that stared at them from the northern/Islamic leaders. The negative attitude resulted from the missionary strategy of acting as liberators of the oppressed Hausa from the perceived Fulani hegemony and it imperiled the attempt to penetrate the Muslim stronghold. This cardinal mistake as Anyanwu and Nwanaju (2014: viii) put it, hardened the attitude of the rulers and their loyalists against the missionaries whose activities were seen as subversive to the established system and order.

Islam in Independent Nigeria

At independence in 1960s, Islam became a reckoning force in Nigeria politics. The British colonizers not only promoted Islam during the colonial period but equally set the stage for the supremacy of Muslims and Islam in the infrastructural elements of Nigeria's government. They did this through the schools they established to train young members of the ruling stratum in the skills necessary for native administration under the indirect rule system (Umejesi, 1992). Katsina Teacher's Training College was one of such schools that produced Ahmadu Bello, the erstwhile Sardauna of Sokoto. The college was an exclusive training ground that produced most of the Nigerian Muslim political leaders of the north. In addition, the British ensured as a form of compensation to the north for their cooperation and compliance that the heirs of the Sokoto caliphate controlled the northern region (Kenny, 2001).

Consequently the First Republic was headed by Tafawa Balewa, a Northern Muslim. But the real power rested on Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto and Premier of the Northern Region. The political party, Northern People's Congress (NPC) that brought them to power overtly and covertly bears the touch of Islam. Scholars describe the features of this political party in various ways. Duddley (1968:143) affirmed that the NPC represented the consensus of the Muslim Society- the *Ijma* and that any iota of its rejection by any member of the society signified a sinful Islamic act. Falola (1998) described it according to the meaning given to symbols in the logo of the party. He reported that the 'one raised finger' in the logo of the party represents the Unity

of God of the Islamic monotheistic faith which in the same way passed a message to its people that the 'two fingered V' for victory symbol of its opponent in the south portrays polytheism which Islam prohibits out rightly.

In the bid to gain upper hand, Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna embarked on the policy of northernization informing the people in his campaign tours that the north was in danger of coastal colonization when the British left. He made this assertion because many skilled southerners had occupied some of the best position in the north. As such to avert this tragedy, the north should come together under one umbrella against the south. Besides, this northernization policy, Ahmadu bello second agenda was to completely Islamized the entire north. He was fully committed to this as the great-grandson of Usman dan Fodio. He wanted to perfect the work of his ancestors and he dip the Quran into the sea with the intent of total Islamization of Nigeria. The Sardauna's assassination in the coup of 1966 successfully brought to an end his Islamization agenda of the north and by extension the entire Nigeria.

Leadership is a vital substance in Islam and Muslims are under obligation to participate in the societal business of leadership. For the fortunes of Islam to continue especially as it is believed that Islam is a complete way of life, there is need to perpetually hold on to power so that any perceived anomaly could easily be addressed at any point in time. Thus, northern Muslims have continued to struggle to hold on to power in the reign of government in Nigeria. Coup after coup continues to feature in post independent Nigeria with prominent Islamic figures.

The 1970s saw the promulgation of the Public Education Edict by the military administrators announcing the takeover of primary and secondary schools run by voluntary agencies. The Catholic Church was most hit by that edict as she had invested much in those institutions. Initially, the policy was not seen as an attempt to foster any religious affiliation but with key positions in the National Education planning been held by Muslims, it became clear that the education policies were designed to protect and foster Muslims' interests. The words of a Muslim scholar Doi (1978) is an attestation:

The policy has given freedom to Islam to foster its cause, and in a way it has imposed restrictions on Christianity, which had so far dominated the educational and social scene of the country. Some of the Muslim organizations laid down in their constitution that their aim was to remove the educational imbalance between Muslims and Christians (Doi, 1978:342-343).

The political well-being of the Muslim community is a matter of supreme importance (Amstrong, 2000:xi). This assertion was demonstrated in the 1970s and 1980s as Muslim intellectuals that had

developed in Nigeria began to seek a new identity for Islam in order to give Islam a better and beneficial status in the Muslim world, and to balance the perceived religious imbalance in Nigeria's religio-political space.

Thus, there emerged the Shariah debates with the advancement by the protagonists that the Islamic law (Shariah) be incorporated in the constitution. They hinged their argument on the notion that of the three laws in Nigeria: (the Islamic law, English law and the Native law), the Shariah has not been given due consideration in the constitution (Ebhomienlen and Ukpebor, 2013: 168). The provisions of Sharia on the draft constitution were:

1. There shall be a Federal Sharia Court of Appeal which shall be an intermediate Court of Appeal between the States' Sharia Courts of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Nigeria.
2. The Court shall be composed of the Grand Mufti and such a member of Muftis (not less than three) as the National Assembly may prescribe.
3. In each State of the Federation that so desires, there shall be a Sharia Court of Appeal to be established by the Constitution of the State (Kukah, 2011:118).

The background of these political events was the fundamentalist tendency of reverting to prestine Islam taught and practice by the Prophet enunciated by Abubakar Gumi, the influential spiritual heir of the Sardauna. He mentored the Izala Society group (*Jama'a Izala al-bida wa-iqama as-sunna* meaning, movement for the removal of innovations in Islam and a return to Prophetic tradition). They espoused the Saudi Wahhabism and spread intolerant views and actions which were principally against the traditional Muslims who belong to the Sufi brotherhood, the Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya (Kenny, 2001), but their actions later extended to the non-Muslims especially the Christians. They were for the full establishment of Sharia not as enacted by a Nigeria government but as the supreme and only law of the Islamic *umma* which they considered as their authentic nationality. Subsequent Islamic groups later emerged with full impacts in Nigeria religio-politico space such as the Shiite movement, the Maitatsine and the Boko Haram with a host of others.

The perfection of Nigeria's Islamic status was carried out by the later military dictatorships of General Ibrahim Babagida and General Sani Abacha with total disregard to the secularity of the Nigeria State. Babagida in 1986 registered Nigeria as a full member of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) while Abacha signed a secret pact that smuggled Nigeria into another Islamic group made up of eight developing countries known as the D-8 in 1997.

Evaluation and Conclusion

The discussion so far has shown the dynamic nature of Islam, a religious tradition in the social, economic and political settings of Nigeria. Beginning from the trans-Saharan trade through which Islam penetrated Nigeria, its influence has revolutionized commerce and trade. Its military transformed the traditional socio-political organization of the north and south west to Emirate system and paved way for the triumph of Muslims' hegemonic control of power. The colonial masters did nothing but promoted Islam with their policies which consolidated the political well-being of the Muslims over the non-Muslims in the geographical entity of plurality they formed as Nigeria State. Finally, Nigeria's independence opened the chapter of perpetual struggle for supremacy between Muslims and non-Muslims in the direction of leadership and general administration of the country with attendant rivalry between the adherence of the two religious divides (Islam and Christianity). The relevance of this analysis to the formative processes of the Catholic clerics is the need for understanding of Islam physical processes on Muslims in Nigeria by the seminarians and the logical background behind the complex numerous issues which confront the peoples of the contemporary Nigeria society they are to serve. This is important as the way out is not to continue in the supremetic struggle but to engage in dialogue no matter the cost so that the mission of the Church's evangelization will continue to flourish in the society.

It is the recommendation of this paper that the non-violent attitude of Christ during his redemptive mission on earth be the guiding principle of Christians especially the would-be Catholic priest as the Catholic Church to a great extent represents the Christian faith in Nigeria. Also, the Government authorities should be engaged in modalities that promote freedom and impartiality in service delivery to the people including the provision of effective strategy that will ensure safety and security of lives and property for all citizens.

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IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN

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Abstract
This paper provides a thematic discourse on the impact of migration on women and children. The study aims to contribute to deepening the understanding of migration as a gendered phenomenon and its impact on women and children and human rights in general. Women comprise slightly less than half of the international migrant population. While women and men decide to migrate for similar reasons, gender-specific social and cultural norms also play decisive roles in the migration process and therefore, affect the experience of migrant women and children. Furthermore, the paper juxtaposes that a greater understanding of migration as a gendered phenomenon can enable States to better protect migrant women and children from gender based discrimination, abuse and violations at all stages of migration, and fulfill their human rights. The study focuses on the impact of migration on women and children, especially girls, given that they are uniquely and disproportionately affected by gender-based discrimination, abuse and violence. The paper

concludes by submitting that migrant women, who comprise half of the total migrant population in the world, provide important social and economic contributions to their countries of origin and destination. For many women and children, migration provides opportunities for their economic and social development. Indeed, migration experiences can contribute to the empowerment of women and children by increasing their self-confidence, autonomy and control over their lives. Finally, the paper notes, their exposure to different gender norms may contribute to the achievement of gender equality in their societies of origin.

Keywords: Migration, Women, Children, Human Rights, Gender norms, Socio- Cultural norms

Introduction

The number of migrant women is said to have doubled between 1960 and 2015. In 2017, women comprised slightly less than half, or 48 per cent, of the international migrant population. Interestingly, they outnumbered men in all regions except Africa and Asia.[1] Data indicate that the rate of female migration is growing faster than male migration in many receiving countries

While migration has moved up in the international policy agenda, its wide-ranging implications for children have received little attention. Children are affected by migration when they are left behind by one or both migrating parents, migrating with parents (or born abroad), or migrating alone.[2] The impact of migration on children and adolescents must be seen in the broader context of poverty and conflict, and within the perspectives of vulnerability and resilience, gender relations and children's rights.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) protects every child, regardless of nationality or immigration status. States have obligations to respect the provisions of the Convention in their policies and actions toward each and every child within their jurisdiction. These provisions include the right to citizenship, physical integrity, health and education as well as the right to be free from discrimination, exploitation, and abuse. The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers reaffirms these rights set forth in the CRC.[3]

Policies should protect children's rights by enhancing access to the potential benefits created by migration, while also providing protection for those who are vulnerable to its negative consequences. Effective migration policies need to be accompanied by additional investments in health, education and social protection to address the risks faced by children and adolescents who are migrating or left behind.[4]

Definitions of Terms

Children: According to international standards, children are defined as "individuals below the age of 18" (CRC, Article1). However, it is important to note that only some of the documents included in this paper provide information disaggregated to specify the 0-18 age group.[5] In most of the research examined children are defined by the age group 0-15, and youth by the age group 16-24.[6]

Migration: The United Nations defines a migrant as "any person who changes his or her country of usual residence".[7] Identifying who is a migrant can be difficult due to the dynamic nature of migration, which in turn implies defining and assessing temporal and spatial criteria. Migration can be permanent, if a person never return to his or her place of origin, or long term if a person moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

A short-term migrant is defined as a person moving to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least 3 months but less than a year (12 months), and often is the status of a person who moves from one region to another in accordance to the seasons. However, if a person moves to a new country for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment, or religious pilgrimages, he or she is not considered a migrant.[8] In terms of space patterns, migration can imply the movement from one country to another (international migration), or movement within a country (internal migration, particularly between rural and urban areas), or movement transnationally if migrants "forge and sustain multi-stranded relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement".[9]

The Conventions on:

The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women: Under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, discrimination against women is prohibited and States are obliged to eliminate discrimination against women. There are 189 States parties to the Convention, which includes obligations to suppress trafficking in women (art. 6); grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain nationality (art. 9); eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment (art. 11); eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care and ensure access to health-care services, including those related to family planning and maternal care (art. 12); and accord to men and women the

same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile (art. 15 (4).[10]

The Rights of the Child: The principle of non-discrimination is codified in article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In joint general comment No. 3 (2017) of the Committee on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families and No. 22 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the general principles regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration, both Committees gave their interpretation of the application of the non-discrimination principle in the context of international migration. The non-discrimination principle in the Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates that States parties should respect and ensure the rights set forth in the Convention for all children, whether they are considered, inter alia, migrants in regular or irregular situations, asylum seekers, refugees, stateless or victims of trafficking, including in situations of return or deportation to their country of origin, irrespective of their or their parents' or legal guardians' nationality, migration status or statelessness.[11]

Migration Channels and Specific Challenges while Migrating

Until recently, women were thought to migrate primarily to join a partner or for family reunification. Today, an increasing number of women are moving on their own,[12] notably to find work, which is leading to a so-called feminization of migration. While the way in which women are migrating is changing, more women are also likely to be the lead migrant, that is, the first member of the family to migrate. Highly skilled women are more likely to migrate on their own than low-skilled women.[13]Some women, however, still face difficulties in leaving their countries because of prohibitive, gender-specific discriminatory laws or restrictive social norms. Those measures can push them to migrate through irregular channels[14] which is more common when coupled with institutional failures to address the obstacles, as well as insufficient information on the migration process and a low level of education. It should be noted here that a network of migrant women in their countries of origin, or previous experience of women's migration, can help to stimulate migration. Social networks, as a set of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin, transit and destination countries through kinship, friendship or a shared community of origin, can prompt rural women to migrate across borders.

In countries of destination, regardless of their migratory status, migrant women encounter multiple and intersecting forms of

discrimination, not only as women and as migrants, but also on other grounds, including age, race and ethnicity, nationality, religion, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity. As a result, they are at risk of abuse and exploitation. It is well documented that migrant women in general struggle in many countries to have their credentials recognized, which leads to "deskilling" as a result of being underemployed.[15]

Migration and Socio-Cultural Gender Norms

The migration of women may amend the social and gender norms both for migrants themselves and for their home communities. It may influence their home communities to adopt more equitable norms with regard to education, reproductive rights, marriage and the organization of families and communities.[16]The migration of women has the potential to contribute to a reformulation of gender roles and cultural norms, and may improve women's autonomy, self-esteem and social standing.[17] For example, in one study, South Asian migrant women reportedly used their increased decision-making power to direct their remittances to health care and education for their families.[18]

Migration and Economic Empowerment of Women

In his opening remarks at the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the Secretary-General emphasized how important migration was for the functioning of economies, as migrants performed vital roles, such as in health care and care for elderly persons.[19] Migration can fill critical gaps in labour markets in countries of destination, with a positive impact on employment, production and the country's gross domestic product. It is important to note that the migration of women also leaves gaps in their countries of origin. In 2011, the World Bank pointed out that physicians and nurses were the professionals that migrated most often than other classes of professionals.[20]It is therefore not surprising that according to one study; sub-Saharan countries are experiencing a shortage of 600,000 nurses. It was found in another study that from 1999 to 2001, 60 per cent of registered nurses left tertiary hospitals in Malawi, likely to migrate. As a result, 64 per cent of nursing positions (heavily dominated by women) remain unfilled, with medical centres operating with no nurses or with employees who have as little as 10 weeks of medical training.[21]

The Impact of Migration on:

Children in general: In order to formulate policy recommendations that enhance children's welfare, there is a need for reliable data that allow the assessment of positive and negative effects of migration. UNICEF, in

collaboration with UNDP and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation (SU-SSC), has initiated policy research and operational work in six countries (Ecuador, Albania, Moldova, Philippines, Mexico, Morocco) on the impact of migration on women and children left behind. Some preliminary results from country-level studies and a review of current literature highlight the magnitude of the impact of migration on families.

According to a report by (Save the Children, 2006), around 1 million Sri Lankan children are left behind by their mothers, who migrate in search of work. In the Philippines, it is estimated that between 8.8 and 9 million children, or around 27% of all minors in the country, live separated from one or both parents. In Moldova, a study estimated that 31% of children aged 0-14 have been left behind by one parent and 5.4% by both parents.[22] In 2002, 13% of Mexican and almost 22% of Salvadoran immigrants living in the U.S had children left behind in their home countries.[23]

Children Left Behind: The social cost of migration can be very high, particularly due to the lack of parental care. Children left behind inevitably grow up in single-headed families (if only one parent is migrating), or with grandparents and other relatives (if both of the parents are migrating), filling the vacuum left by migrant parents. Negative effects can be exacerbated if long term migration of one of the parents may lead to permanent disruption of family unity. Absence of men can create material and psychological insecurity, leading mothers (or children when both the parents are migrating) to pressures and negotiations with wider family members. Migrants may start having "dual families" relationships: one in the country of origin and one in the country of destination; this phenomenon may actually reduce the amount of remittances sent home.[24] However it is important to stress the fact that children left behind are not orphans and most of them do keep some sort of contact with their migrant parents.

The impact of the absence of one of the parents on children can be mediated by an extended family safety net, which is an effective response to economic and social crises, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. For this reason, children in left-behind households do not appear to suffer greater social or economic problems than their peers in non-remittance-receiving households, with the exception of younger children.[25] However, care by the extended family, or community or institutional care, often does not provide as much protection from abuse and exploitation as parental care.

Children's Health: The effects of migration on child health are contested and complex. Whereas on the one hand, migration itself poses significant hazards to children and their health, movement to a destination country also can increase access to health care. Moving to countries or regions with better health services will have a positive impact on children. Migrant children moving from a rural area to the urban area are more likely to survive due to a greater number of hospitals and doctors, improved infrastructure including potable water, flush toilets, and refrigeration, and better health information (prompting cleaner food preparation and storage and improved hygiene practices).

Health benefits of migration, due to access to better health services and information, are sharply contrasted with the inherent health risks to moving in the first place. According to Whitehead and Hashim, child health is often directly associated with the type of work child migrants find, whether it be abusive work, sex work, hazardous work in the informal economy, or physically beyond the child's capacities.[26] The working conditions, if illegal (i.e. prostitution) may also prevent child access to health care if there is a fear of raid, discovery, or deportation.

Finally migrant may face serious difficulties in accessing health services if based on a registered residence system. In China, for example, migrants may face a lack of adequate health care for a variety of reasons: caretaker lack of knowledge, both in terms of prevention and access to care; passive attention to disease; poor economic situations. These factors lead to higher child mortality rates among migrants.[27]

Education and Economic Activity of Migrant Children

Migration may also have a negative impact on education attainment of children. Children of migrant workers and children migrating alone face serious exclusion from education due to social and cultural isolation, strenuous and hazardous work, extreme poverty, poor health conditions and language barriers. Children may leave the household of origin with the objective of performing economic activities that may keep them out of school. Comparing education achievement between migrants and non-migrant children in a given country may be misleading in assessing the impact of migration on migrant children. In order to measure how and whether the decision to migrate has increased school attainment, it will be necessary to compare levels with children of the same age group in the country of origin, and not the population of children in the country of destination.[28]

Children who migrate may end up in being involved in economic activities as a specific decision (work migration) or as a result of the conditions, need and opportunities in destination countries. Regardless of the extensive literature on child work, disproportionately

focused on children who work in the worst form of child labour (i.e. trafficked jobs, prostitution), there is a lack of quantitative research looking specifically at economic activity patterns of migrant children. Child migrant workers have a variety of experiences due to a complex set of factors, and often one child will have a mixture of positive and negative experiences.[29] Negative effects may include exploitation, poor working conditions, physical, verbal, or sexual abuse from employers and foregone access to school.

Psycho-Social: Migration may have psycho-social impacts on children due to the experience moving from the country of origin to the country of destination, and also due to exclusion and marginalization in countries of destination. Leaving their communities, migrant children lose contact with their family and friends, as well as lose customs and traditions. At the same time, coming into a new community, they may be required to become accustomed to new language, culture and lifestyle.[30] Even if children may adapt to new contexts more quickly than adults, this may generate conflict with parent or other members of same migrant group. As in the cases of health and education, the psycho-social impact of migration varied greatly depending on specific characteristics of the migrant group and its receiving country, as well as other methodological factors such as variance in data collection.

Children in Host Countries: Children of migrants face challenges in adapting to host societies. They stand a greater risk of dropping out of school, teenage pregnancy and juvenile crime; they get exposed to incomplete citizenship rights and therefore, may have difficult access to social services which may also lead to the danger of social exclusion.

Ensure Respect for the Rights of Migrant Women and Children

In order to ensure the rights of migrant women and children, the following steps should be aggressively taken:

(a) Promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and children in efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(b) Ensure that the implementation, review and follow-up of the Global Compact for Migration is human rights-based, gender-responsive and child-sensitive;

(c) Formulate human rights-based, gender-responsive and child-sensitive policies to govern migration that promote gender equality and non-discrimination;

(d) Increase avenues for regular migration, where migrants, including women and children, can make informed choices and have access to legal protection, services and social networks in countries of origin, transit and destination;

(e) Revise national laws and regulations governing migration to make them more gender-responsive by including provisions on anti-discrimination, equality between men and women, mandatory health insurance for migrant workers at all levels and special protection for vulnerable categories of workers, including domestic workers;

(f) Take measures to ensure that family reunion policies are applicable to women migrant workers at all levels, including domestic workers, in order to enable their spouses and children to join them in their country of destination;

(g) Involve migrant women and relevant civil society organizations in the formulation, implementation and review of policies and regulations governing migration to ensure that the specific needs of migrant women and children are addressed;

(h) Provide pre-departure orientation training specific to migrant women, which should include information on their human rights, potential methods of exploitation and available complaint mechanisms; and make financial literacy programmes available to migrant women to enable them to better manage their earnings;

(i) Ensure the provision of basic services as enshrined in international human rights law, so that citizens do not have to rely on remittances to compensate for the absence of affordable, accessible, publicly funded services and social protection;

(j) Ensure the provision of human rights-based, gender-responsive and child-sensitive reintegration programmes for migrants who return to their countries of origin, and more specifically, ensure that economic, sociocultural and psychosocial support is provided to returnee migrants and communities in their countries of origin prior, during and after their return;

(k) Provide gender-sensitive human rights training to immigration officials, border police, social workers, health-care providers, educators, judicial officers and media workers to raise their awareness of the human rights of migrant women and children;

(l) Take all measures necessary to prevent, investigate, prosecute and sanction human rights violations and abuse against migrant women and children, whether perpetrated by public officials or private individuals;

(m) Guarantee adequate recognition of foreign qualifications and skills to ensure that migrant women do not become underemployed or "deskilled", and to ensure that their professional experience and skills are fully recognized;

(n) Lift sex-specific bans and discriminatory restrictions on the migration of women, whether they are based on age, pregnancy or marital or maternity status, and particularly restrictions that require women or children to obtain permission from male family members in order to travel;

(o) Strengthen State oversight and monitoring of private recruitment agencies and brokers to ensure that overseas employment programmes and work permits are administered in a manner that respects gender equality and the rights of migrant women;

(p) Ensure that migrant women have equal access to legal remedies and complaint mechanisms, and provide legal, vocational, medical and psychological assistance to victims of trafficking, particularly female victims;

(q) Ensure that migrant women and children have access to education, social protection, health care, including reproductive health care, and other basic services;

(r) Establish firewalls between public service providers and immigration authorities to allow access to justice for migrant women and girls without fear of being reported, detained or deported;

(s) Invest in and support the capacity of national agencies to collect and use sex- and age-disaggregated data on migrants regardless of their

migratory status, and support research initiatives to better understand the impact of migration on women and children;

(t) Conduct awareness-raising campaigns to better uphold the dignity of migrant women and children, and to highlight their social and economic contributions to society;

(u) Include the protection of the rights of migrant women and children on the agenda of intergovernmental dialogues on migration-related issues at the global, regional and bilateral levels.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Migrant women, who comprise half of the total migrant population in the world, provide important social and economic contributions to their countries of origin and destination. For many women and children, migration provides opportunities for their economic and social development. Migration experiences can contribute to the empowerment of women and girls by increasing their self-confidence, autonomy and control over their lives. Their exposure to different gender norms may contribute to the achievement of gender equality in their societies of origin. However, circumstances such as discriminatory social and cultural norms and policies have contributed to the specific vulnerabilities of migrant women and children. Many are disproportionately affected by gender-based discrimination, abuse and violations of their rights during migration. A limited understanding of the realities faced by migrant women and children affects the ability of States to formulate and implement gender-responsive migration laws, policies and programmes, and ensure that women and children can enjoy their human rights throughout their migration journey.

We conclude this discourse on the impacts of migration on women and children with the following recommendations:

1. Children and adolescents must matter in migration policies and debates. Children and adolescents affected by migration are particularly vulnerable and should receive special protection.
2. To increase the visibility of children in policy agendas, more research and comparable global data on how children are affected by migration are needed. *f*
3. Policy and programme interventions should aim at maximizing the benefits of remittances and limiting the negative effects of migration on children and families left behind.
4. Governments, international organizations, and civil society stakeholders must collaborate (a) to advocate for the rights of children and women affected by migration, (b) to monitor and

gather information on the well-being of children in migrant communities and (c) to promote awareness in sending migrants to host societies so that the risks of discrimination and social exclusion are reduced.

Endnotes

1. International Migration Report 2017 (Highlights), United Nations publication, Sales No. E.18.XIII.4)
2. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
3. International Migration Policy Programme, Meeting the Challenges of Migration: Progress since the ICPD (2004), p. 13.
4. The impact of migration on migrant women and girls: a gender perspective: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants (A/HRC/41/38) (EN/AR/RU)
5. The lack of disaggregated data specifying 0-18 as an age group includes international statistics that should follow the definition in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
6. *Ibid*.
7. In the 1976 recommendation, a migrant was defined as person who has entered a country with the intention of remaining for more than one year and who either must never have been in that country continuously for more than one year or, having been in the country at least once continuously for more than one year, must have been away continuously for more than one year since the last stay of more than one involved (United Nations, 1998)
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19. Camilla Spadavecchia, "Migration of women from sub-Saharan Africa to Europe", p. 108.
20. *Ibid*.
21. UNICEF Moldova / SU-SSC, 2006)
22. Cortina & de la Garza, 2004)
23. Nyiri and Saveliev 2002
24. In the available policy literature on development, the term "children left behind" is sometime also used to refer to children orphans due to HIV/AIDS.
25. Whitehead and Hashim (2005)
26. Beijing Health Bureau's (2007).
27. The effect of a lack of parental care on children has been addressed in detail in a series of recent studies looking at the conditions of the large number of children orphans due to HIV/AIDS, and some of the policy concerns and interventions are similar to the ones developed for of abandoned children or orphans.
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FORMATION OF THE YOUTH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
It is often said that today's youth are tomorrows' leaders. The youths are the pillars upon which the success, progress and prosperity of a nations' future are built. When their strengths and potentials and creativity are properly harnessed, they are great assets to any nation. Youths are the major human capital (resources) hence the need to channel their energies accordingly and dissipate it appropriately for the benefit of the nation and humanity as a whole. Today's youths are faced with the challenge of coping with an ever broadening spectrum of influences on decision making and behavior. These influences stem from the home, peer pressure, the media, technological advancement and the society and they have negative effects on their growth and development. The youth cannot be who they ought to be without the gentle and loving guidance of everyone charged with the responsibility of molding their lives. The manifestations of uncivilized acts among the youths are as result of the missing link in the execution of these responsibilities. This paper is an attempt to provide a philosophical investigation into the formation of the youth with a view of emphasizing the need to harness the potentials of these youths for national development. The paper argues that everyone charged with the responsibility of contributing to the formation of the youth are stakeholders in this onerous task and it is justifiable and rational for all hands to be on deck. The paper adopted an expository method of philosophical inquiry

Keywords*:* Youth, Youth formation, Development, National development, Human capital, Stakeholders.

Introduction

It is often said that 'today's youth are tomorrows' leaders. They are our future leaders because they will outlive today's leaders. Historically, this is essentially true. They are the pillars upon which the success, progress and prosperity of a nations' future are built. When their strength, potentials and creativity are properly harnessed, they are great assets to any nation. But when their abilities are not properly channeled, they can become a great danger to themselves and the society. This is the reason every nation that hopes to remain relevant in future must give priority to the formation, development and training of its youths. There will be no success without a successor.

However, it is imperative that the cliché that youths are the leaders of tomorrow go beyond mere platitudes and words to action. Efforts must be made to ensure that it actually become a reality because the youths are special breeds with unique abilities to drive positive and lasting change in every facet of life. But in order for them to maximize their potentials and get to the peak of their abilities, they need to be adequately equipped today.

The older generation has the responsibility to prepare the younger ones for their future relevance, first by their examples and then by helping the youths understand their calling and future responsibilities. Parents, schools, religious organizations, the society and the government are the stakeholders who have special tasks in making the youths ready for the future; to equip them with skills, knowledge and support needed to take advantage of the opportunities of the modern world and make their societies a better place to the benefit of humanity.

Parents are the primary care givers of their children, the training and development of the youths should begin at home. It is the home that morals are first inculcated and characters moulded. The Holy Bible for Christians stated that "**Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it**" (Proverbs 22:6). This places enormous responsibilities on parents because parental care and guidance are major cornerstones in the formation process of every child. The school should also help in preparing the youth for the future by preparing them mentally and intellectually so that they can adequately meet the challenge of this century. Education remains an essential key to ensuring a brighter future. Therefore, the government should make the education of the youth a priority. Beyond this, it should also create an enabling environment for young people to actualize their dreams through its policies and programmes.

It is axiomatic therefore to posit that there is a linkage between youth formation and national development. This intercourse is not only symbiotically connected; but, one depends on the other for its sustenance. Therefore, the role of youth on national development cannot be over emphasized. The wheel of development of any country lies on the shoulder of how productive and creative the youthful populations are. The youth in any society are the engine of growth and development; because, they provide the labour force for production of goods and service to take effect. And also, are the critical masses of people, whose action and inaction can develop or destroy the hegemonies/fabrics of their society. The thrust of this paper is to expose the role of various stakeholders in the formation of the youths using a simple analytical survey, this paper tries to examine how youths could be helped to develop skills that can enhance their abilities and also achieve a promising future for themselves.

Conceptual Clarifications

Who is a Youth?

The word "youth" has a relatively clear connotation but for the purpose of this article, it is important we proceed with a clarification of the notion of a youth. There is no universal definition of the youth population. "Youths" is traditionally defined as a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. According to Chambers Dictionary, a youth is a person between childhood/adolescents and maturity, from this, it could be deduced that a youth is a young person still going through the process of formation or development. This starts right from conception through childhood and adolescence to maturity, if this is ever fully achieved.

In the African Youths Report 2009 (UNECA 2009), "youths" are defined as people between 15 and 39 years of age. However, several African countries define their youth population differently. For example, Ghana, Tanzania and South Africa define the youth population as those between 15 and 35 years of age; Nigeria and Swaziland define it as those between 12 and 30 years; and Botswana and Mauritius define it as those between 14 and 25 years.[1] These varying definitions of the youth population make it difficult to effectively discuss issues affecting youths in Africa generally and to compare information across countries. The age band used in the AYR is too wide because it is generally agreed that people in their 30s are adults, and hence not part of those youths who are in transition to adulthood.

For statistical purposes, the United Nations (2011d) defines youths as "those aged 15 to 24 years."[2] Although arbitrary, this is the age group that has been recognized internationally as "Youths." Though generally acceptable and preferable, its implementation often poses

problems because the data for different countries are not provided using this definition. For example, population data are commonly presented in five-year age bands or presented for children (below 15 years) and for adults (15 years and above). Similarly, labor market data are typically presented for adults (16–64 years).[3]

A problem with this attempt at defining a youth however is that while we are reasonably sure that the process of formation, employed to define who a youth is, begins right from childhood, we are not sure if and when this process stops and maturity is fully attained. Indeed, there are two important questions we need to address in this regard. It relates to when childhood starts. Is it from conception, from birth or a certain point after birth? At least, it is obvious that development characterizes the life of each individual right from conception. Without unnecessarily belabouring the issue of when childhood commences we may safely put this at immediately after conception. A reason for this position is that we observe in individual persons marked signs of growth, especially physical growth, right from birth with manifestations of other forms of growth (intellectual, emotional, spiritual and cognitive following as the child develops physically.

The second question is "is there any point in the life of the human person that he/she finally achieves maturity and ceases from growing and developing?' From the legal perspective, the age of maturity/adulthood is located between the age of eighteen and twenty-one in virtually all countries. But, one fact that we can hardly contest is that the process of growth and development extends far beyond the age bracket of eighteen and twenty-one. Thus, if maturity is to be understood as the point at which the process of growth and development terminates and maturity is fully attained then it is obvious that this cannot be rightly located between the age of eighteen and twenty-one. Besides, it is very much doubtful that we can identify a definite age at which persons attain maturity, understood as the age of full growth and development. Thus, the problem with the attempt to define a youth in terms of the period and the process of development is that these vary from person to person. The process might even continue in some individuals from childhood, far beyond what people would ordinarily want to consider as the period of youthfulness and extend to what is described as the middle or even the old age.

There is really no period in human life that development cannot and as a matter of fact, does not take place in ones aspect of life or the other. Given this understanding, if we are to retain our conception of the youth being marked by the period and process of growth, then it might be helpful to extend the concept to include anyone who appreciates the need for growth, seeks for growth or is actually growing in areas that are

crucial for both personal and social development. However, for our purpose, a youth can be defined as a person who is still in his/her formative years, undergoing character modeling, personality development and sometimes receiving training that has to do with human capacity development. "The youth therefore could be influenced by whatever transpires in and around his/her environment because he/she learns through observation and experience".[4] (Adeyemo & Co)

The Concept of Development

There is no agreement as to what development is. There are various aspects as to what constitutes development; however common to all is a positive change in human wellbeing. The individual and his quality of life must be the center of the conception of national development, for the purpose of this paper; the youth must be equipped to contribute their own quota to the development of the nation. The term development could be used interchangeably with evolution depending on the contexts in which it is being used, either positively or negatively to refer to situations, trends, or issues.

Development, ordinarily means "man's effort to make the necessary impact on nature; his environment, and on himself with a view to transforming and improving himself and his environment"[5] (Nwafor, 2006). It is clear therefore that development and improvement are synonymous. When something has been made to wear a new look from what it was before, we can say that a development has taken place. The words "growth" and expansion" are coterminous with development, and they suggest positive development. These words equally denote progress being made from one stage to another, which do not denote negative development like retardation, degeneration or decline. Development is the progressive realization of capabilities, abilities and talents of each individual for his /her own satisfaction and enhancement of the social good.

Development in a wider context deals with socio-economic and political life of the society; it connotes the fulfillment, realization or actualization of goals and objectives, hopes and aspirations of that society. The process of actualization begins when a society recognizes its inadequacies, and sets goals for itself, and decides to make deliberate efforts to remedy perceived deficiencies in order to attain desired goals.[6] (Nwafor, 2006). In this regard, Nyerere in Ezimah (2004) views development as having an emancipator goal, i.e., it liberates man from shackles of ignorance, superstition and oppression in all its ramifications.[7] Consequently, all forms of development have to some extent a reasonable dose of educational process. For that reason, the development of the intellectual frontiers of the individual youth cannot

be left untouched. By extension therefore, the development of the individual's intellectual capacity and capability empowers him/ her socially, economically and politically; thereby giving him not only a sense of self-fulfillment, but also a sense of belonging and commitment to the overall development of society.

Development entails more than the economic aspect of people lives. A significant development in a country like Nigeria must take into account man as a whole and not just an aspect of him. This supports the notion of subjecting development to multidisciplinary interpretation and usage, these various perceptions only contribute to showing the richness as well as the problems associated with the concept of development. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) distinguishes between two sides of development. One is the formation of human capabilities and the other is the use people make of their acquired capabilities. This implies that development could be at the level of individual and also at the level of the society.

Development is a multidimensional process involving the totality of man in his political, economic, psychological, social relations, among others. Development is not a completed affair; it is an on-going process. Thus people are the objects of development. It must involve among other things the eradication of certain human -demeaning social phenomena, such as poverty, illiteracy, lowlife expectancy; development should be the creation and maintenance of livelihood opportunities.

Development is a social concept standing for the process through which human beings strive to improve the conditions of their lives. Development is not an abstraction; it is a process of social transformation, which involves the replacement of those factors that inhibit the capacity of the individual for self-direction and the promotion of social cooperation with those which promote these ideals. In short, it is a process whose essence concerns the quality of life of the people.

National Development

The term national development is a term that refers to a sustainable growth and development of a nation to a more desirable one. National development is people oriented and its success is evaluated in terms of the impact it has had in improving the lot of the masses. True development must mean the development of man, the unfolding and realization of his creative potentials, enabling him to improve his material conditions of living through the use of resources available to him. It is a process by which man's personality is enhanced, and it is this enhanced personality and creativity, organized and disciplined- which is the moving force behind the socioeconomic transformation of any society. According to Onabajo and M'Bayo (2009), says 'national

development should be man oriented and not institution oriented, that is, individually in collectiveness and not individual.[8] To Elugbe, (1994), 'national development refers among other things, to the growth of the nation in terms of unity, education, economic well-being and mass participation in government.[9] In summary development entails the provision of all the necessary materials and equipment's that will guarantee that man in every society make a living and essence out of life.

Anaeto and Anaeto (2010) citing Todaro and Smith (2003), identified three objectives of development which are; 1. Increase availability and widen the distribution of basic life sustaining goods such as food, shelter, health and protection. 2. To raise levels of living in addition to higher incomes, the provision of more jobs, better education, and greater attention to cultural and human values, all of which will serve not only to enhance material well-being but also to generate greater individual and national self-esteem and 3. To expand the range of economic and social choices available to individuals and nation by freeing them from servitude and dependence, not only in relation to other people and nation states but also to the forces of ignorance and human misery.[10] Development is the socio-cultural, political, economic and the spiritual well-being of a society. In a truly developed state there is assurance of good quality of life, exercise of all human rights, and freedom to participate in the democratic process. From the foregoing, development implies enhanced quality of life, equity and justice, as it takes into consideration the wellbeing, growth and advancement of individuals within the society.

National development could be described as the process of putting in place all it require for a nation state to stand on its own as an independent autonomous state.it entails more than the economic aspect of people lives. A significant development in a country like Nigeria must take into account man as a whole and not just an aspect of him. This supports the notion of subjecting development to multidisciplinary interpretation and usage, these various perceptions only contribute to showing the richness as well as the problems associated with the concept of national development. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) distinguishes between two sides of development. One is the formation of human capabilities and the other is the use people make of their acquired capabilities. This implies that development could be at the level of individual and also at the level of the society.

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certain human -demeaning social phenomena, such as poverty, illiteracy, lowlife expectancy, national development should be the creation and maintenance of livelihood opportunities amongst the citizens that makes up such nation. Such process includes training and retraining of the human resources. The aim is to harness and exploit the available resources in the country. In most cases, the training is focused majorly on areas of critical needs at a particular point in time. National development means the conscious, deliberate and concerted effort made by people to address the fundamental needs or issues of their nationhood.

Human Capital Development

Human capital development was described as an end or objective of development. It is a way to fulfill the potential of people by enlarging their capabilities, and this necessarily implies empowerment of people, enabling them to participate actively in their own development. Human capital development is also a means since it enhances the skills, knowledge, productivity and inventiveness of people through a process of human capital formation broadly conceived. Thus, human capital development is a people centered strategy, and not goods centered or production centered strategy of development. What really matters is the empowerment of people to identify their own priorities and to implement programmes and projects of direct benefit to them. This in turn implies the active participation of people in the development process and the consequent need to construct institutions that permit and indeed encourage that participation.

In human capital development, education and health are essential. Education is concerned with the cultivation of "the whole person" including intellectual, character and psychomotor development. It is the human resources of any nation, rather than its physical, capital and material resources, which ultimately determine the character and pace of its economic and social development. According to Harbison, Human resources constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations. Capital and natural resources are passive factors of production; human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organization, and carry forward national development. A country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and utilize them effectively for national progress will be unable to develop anything else.[11] (Harbison, 1973, p.3).

Education occupies an important place in most plans for economic and social development. Whichever way one looks at it, the education sector is important in human development as a supplier of the

trained manpower and it is a prerequisite for the accomplishment of other development goals. Also, it is the main sector through whose national identity goals and aspirations are given meaning and reality among the people.

The Uniqueness of Youthfulness

The youthful age is the most exciting, active, dynamic period of one's life. This stage of life is characterized by physical strength, dreams of a great future, a quest for adventure and acquisition of knowledge and experience. At this stage, one can achieve the best in life. The average youth is full of life and dreams; they want to try new things. In a way, these are advantageous to them because this penchant to discover, create and try new things can be channeled towards productivity. Besides some great innovations in the world today were pioneered by young people who were curious, passionate and adventurous; young men and women who dared to dream. If the youths are well guided and mentored, they will discover their God-given potentials and channel those potentials towards problem solving. They will not only be useful to themselves and their families, they will also be making substantial inputs to national development. History is replete with youths who have contributed immensely to the progress of their countries. So many discoveries and inventions have been made by young minds.

Sixteen years old Olivia Hallisely discovered a way to detect Ebola in less than thirty minutes compared to the current method that takes up to twelve hours to get results.[12] Cancer survivor, Kylie Simonds, designed a stylish backpack that allows children taking chemotherapy intravenously to move around without having to carry IV poles along. Kylie was only thirteen when she invented the backpack,[13] four Nigerian high school students all under age 15 years, devised a "urine-powered" generator that can supply six hours uninterrupted electricity with one liter of processed urine.[14] These are ingenious minds and they are just few of the countless numbers of dynamic youths in our generation. Youths are unique; they should constantly be reminded of that and be encouraged to be at their best before this stage of their lives passes by. . For example according to the 2006 census, the youthful population constituted over 70% of the Nigerian population. Therefore, this quantum of population is a great asset for the Nigerian state if they are harnessed and utilized in the right direction. Interestingly, the transition of society from one generation to another is critical to the formative and developmental aspiration of such society. This is why society that prepares their youth for the sake of future aspiration will not only secure her future development; but, will prepare her next set of leaders with the challenges of national reconciliation and development. Hence, the

formation of youth has its implications on national development and is sacrosanct to the whole developmental aspiration of any society. The youth are the cornerstone to societal rejuvenation. Societies are not only recreated through the youthful population, but, youth are often referred to as leaders of tomorrow.

Youth and Education

Education is a process of learning and development the process is embarked upon with the objective of facilitating intellectual and moral development in individuals so as to make the youth become productive members of the society. This process of education involves the transmission of values and accumulated knowledge. It assists individuals to fashion out, pursue and actually achieve their life goals. Whether formal or informal, its basic objective is to unleash a person's potentials and develop knowledge skills and socially desirable and useful behavioural patterns. While formal education is acquired in schools, informal education takes place through everyday experiences and actual relationships with people around you.

In our effort to define who a youth is, the process of development stands out as an essential element. This suggests that education understood as a process of learning and designed to facilitate development on youths and the prospect of their development. As a result, an appropriate system of education must facilitate the "holistic enhancement of the youths" and this is essential to overcome the growing doubts Africa's prospects of developing in a increasing competitive world.

Education of the youths should go beyond mere economic empowerment in order to earn a living, it must also enhance the capacity of all to exert a regenerating and creative moral vibration on the social system, this is highly essential to regenerate the social system and cleanse it of much of the … afflicting it today.

For Onyechere Anyiam-Osigwe, holistic education must result in the spiritual, moral, economic and socio-political enhancement of both the youth and the society as a whole, he contends that the collapsing moral fibre of society, which according, to him is worse in countries reputed to be educationally advantaged is due to the neglect of the primordial essence of education" [15]which is instill moral order in the individual. The ultimate end of education is to produce good people and good members of the society. In his words, "the primordial essence of education is to reawaken the moral order inherent in the human essence: that is mould the individual in a manner that ensures that he or she becomes a good member of his tribe or community.

Education is the most crucial secular activity for national development the education of the youth is the highest secular investment that can ever be made because it empowers the youth to be great achievers and leaders. According to Eleanor Roosevett, "education is essential to good citizenship and that education is important to life because it enables people to contribute to their country and their community. Education equally helps to reform the youths' interpersonal relationship. Hence, the youth should be encouraged to socialize and keep healthy relationships to ensure a balanced social life. Also it should be inculcated in the youth values that will prepare them for leadership. Some of these values include: courtesy, humility, hospitability, compassion, generosity, patience, diligence, sense of responsibility and friendliness. A balanced life is crucial for personal success and peace of mind. Helping youths to balance their secular activities will make them more relevant in the society.

Stakeholders in Youth Formation

In general sense, the term "stakeholder" means any person or group that has a vested interest in a matter. The stakeholder can affect or be affected by the results of that which he /she is said to be a stakeholder, that is that in which he or she has a stake. The stakeholder temporarily owns the project or the business he/ she is involved in while is owner is still being determined. There are various stakeholders responsible for the upbringing and training of the youth: the school, the parent, the society, the government and religious organization .Though all these agencies of youth development are expected to mould different aspect of the youth's life so that he/ she will grow up to become the person he/she is meant to be, their responsibilities are intertwined.

The youth world is interesting and challenging. It is a world filled with potentials and opportunities waiting to be explored and developed for wonderful results. Everywhere in the world, the great potentials of the young population which is about half of the world's population are recognized. This is why so much should be committed to ensuring that these potentials are fully tapped and developed because therein lies the strength, growth and development of every nation.

Sadly, many young people fail to recognize the great potentials that they have and the wonderful future that lies ahead of them if these opportunities are properly harnessed and utilized. Many of them are overwhelmed in the euphoria and ecstasy of their age which blindfolds them to the realities of life. Others go on without awakening from the stupor their fantasies had drawn then into; thus wasting whole lives filed with untapped potentials. Some wake up too late to realize that they had wasted a good part of their lives that would definitely have made them

better than what they are and have to struggle so hard to come to terms with the realities of life.

What this shows is that while the "youth world" has wonderful opportunities, it is also filled with dangers that tend to hamper and undermine some youths. To be able to go through this stage and maximally utilize their potentials, the youth need guidance, this is what has informed this aspect of the article, the youth cannot be who they ought to be without the loving and gentle guidance of everyone charged with the responsibilities of moulding their lives. Parents, guidance, religious organizations, government, youth workers, teachers and all adults are stakeholders in this business and hands must be on deck to raise great youths.

i. The Home/Parent/Guardians.

Parents are major stakeholders in youth formation because of their natural affinity with their children. They are traditionally the ultimate caregivers who invest most, if not all, of their time on their children. It is easier to build a child than to repair an adult; that is why child's training should begin very early. Children learn how to act in the world by what they see others do and they learn about controlling aggression through adults hence, good parenting is the key to prevent juvenile delinquency. However, because of unavailability of and neglect by parents in most homes, many youths have been driven to the street by negative and external influences. The dramatic increase in the number of working class mothers with very young children has definitely left a "gaping hole" in the home. Today many children are left to their own devices often relying on TV and computers as babysitters or nannies. Breakups in families, child abuse and bad examples of parents are also negatively affecting the lifestyles and behaviours of youth.

The home is the first school any child attends and the parents or guardians are their first teachers. A child physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development begins here. Consequently, parents should endeavor to promote and support all-round growth and development of their children at every stage of life. A child that is well trained will live a happy, healthy and fulfilled life, while a child that is not well groomed will grow up living a lopsided life, becoming a liability to his parents and the nation. The Holy Bible commands parents to "train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6) it therefore behoves the parents to adequately train and prepare their youths for a blessed future both on earth and in eternity.

ii. The Government/School

The school trains the child mentally to make him/her literate or educated, and be able to make impact in this world as they grow up. The youth is the future of the world, tomorrow's people and the new inspiration, and the school prepares the youth mentally for the future. However, the school is not only to make the youth intellectually capable to meet the challenges of and fit into this fast moving world, but also expected to impart moral lessons into them. This can be fully achieved through education. No doubt education is the backbone of national development; it equips people with knowledge and skills that bring about economic wealth, social prosperity and political stability in a nation.

The government should endeavour to build more schools, provide free and quality education, especially for the less privileged. Youth empowerment programmes should be organized from time to time. Besides classrooms activities, schools should provide avenues for youth to interact with their peers and teachers so that they can develop communication and healthy relationship skills. The government through its policies helps all other agencies to do their jobs and achieve their set goals by coordinating their operations. These two agencies of formation play vital roles in the shaping of the lives of the youths.

iii. Religious Organisation

This play an important role in maintaining and helping the youths achieve their divine purpose. The goal of the religious organization is to help the youth established a relationship with God, teach them how to abide in the Lord and serve God in love and reverential fear. To do this, youth workers must be passionate and patient. They should come down to the level of the youth and befriend them. They should seek to understand their situation before criticizing and judging them, visit them in their homes, show interest in their well being, provide the shoulder they can cry on, and see about helping them out with whatever challenge is confronting them. The adults in these religious organizations should always resist the temptation to get into any kind of tussle with youths. They shouldn't approach them with an attitude that says, "We are adults and we know it all, you must listen because we are adults". They wouldn't be able to impact these youths with this kind of attitude. They should show them love, intercede for them, but don't hesitate to correct them when necessary. Above all, they should provide mentorship and live an exemplary life.

Developing Essential Life Skills for Youth Formation

Life skills are those abilities that will help the youth adapt and thrive in a world that is filled with daunting demands, they are the skills needed by

the youth to make the most out of their life often seen as a way to manage and maintain a quality life. Life skills will help the youths attain life's goal and give them an edge over peers and competitors. Any youth who understands the importance and the use of these skills and synchronizes them with educational dexterity will be outstanding. Experience has shown that there is often a great mismatch between what is taught in class and the realities of life. It is observed also that most graduates lacks employability skills such as team work, skills, communication skills and the ability to cope under pressure. The onus is deliberately on the youth to learn these skills and be taught these skills.

Someone once said the most important skills one should have are the ability and willingness to learn "By learning new skills we increase our understanding of the world around us and equip ourselves with the tools we need to live a more productive and fulfilling life finding ways to cope with the challenge that life inevitably throws at us" Below are some of the relevant skills every youth should endeavour to have and the youth should be taught:

Creative Thinking

This is the ability to "think outside the box" it involves devising a new approach to tasks, situations or problems. Creative thinking helps one initiate novel idea and makes one see situations and problems from a picture perspective. On can stimulate creative thoughts by being curious and following ones curiosity, taking a rest, reading widely, writing, brainstorming, eating healthy, walking, being open to new things, going outside your comfort zone and a lot more.

Time Management

Time is a precious asset and wasting it is tantamount to wasting one's life. As a youth, this skill is needed in order for the youth to be able to plan and control the amount of time spent on various activities. Time management skill will increase effectiveness and productivity because it will help the youth to discipline themselves and focus on the goal at hand.

Money Management

Many people are in a financial mess today because they have no clue about how money works. It is better not to wait to learn the hard way: learn to save, no matter how little you earn. It is imperative for the youth to be taught how to save no matter how little you earn. It is necessary for them to have a monthly or weekly budget and strive to spend less then they earn. Learning how to make money work for them through investment will help go far in life endeavour.

Survival Skill
This skill comes handy when one find himself or herself in a precarious situation they include how to administer first aid, light or put out fire, read a compass, make smoke signals, read topography, change a car tyre, build a make shift shelter, find and purify water and other survival skills like swimming, climbing and self defense.

People Skill
The way one relates with people could determine the extent of one's success or failure in life. People skill will help you to relate with people appropriately. Therefore, it is needful for youth to learn how to treat people with respect and kindness. It is needful to always think win/win when dealing with others and they should treat people the way they would want others to treat them.

Coping with Failure
A famous Athlete once said "I have missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games, 26 times I have been trusted to take the game wining shot and missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed", sometimes failure can teach us valuable lessons of life. Though it's natural to feel bad when you fail, the youth must learn that they don't have to dwell on it or allow it to define their person. They need to encourage themselves and learn a lesson from experience by asking oneself why the failure and what could have been done better. It is necessary to try to see the brighter side of things and resist the temptation of indulging in vices. The youth should deliberately make effort to try again. The youth must not allow failure to stop them from moving forward in life

Leadership Skills
The youth must be taught that as they go on in life, they will find themselves in situations where they need to take on leadership roles. It is needful therefore for them to equip themselves they need to learn how to set goals, make decisions and manage human and material resources well. They can develop leadership skill by learning to take on responsibilities in their home and school. They should always organize themselves and learn how to effectively communicate with different kinds of people.
In addition to all these skills that have been explained above, there are other valuable skills the youth should learn, they include assertiveness, cooperation, working independently, prioritizing, positive thinking, problem solving, confidence building, negotiation, presentation, listening skill communication, recognizing diversity, handling disappointment and

networking. If the youths strive to acquire these skills, they will be better equipped for the demands of life and contribute immeasurably to the development of the nation.

Symbiotic Links between Youth Formation and National Development

In the world today where spiritual lethargy, moral decadence and mind blowing corruption reign, there is need to raise youths that will be pillars and hope of the nation. This is made possible through education and the inculcation of the right values. This process is embarked upon with the objective of facilitating intellectual and moral development in individuals so as to make them become productive members of the society. The process involves the transmission of values and accumulated knowledge that will assist the individuals to fashion out, pursue and actually achieve their live goals. Whether formal or informal, its basic objective is to unleash a person's potentials and develop knowledge, skills and socially desirable and useful behavioral pattern.

While formal education is acquired in schools, informal education takes place through everyday experiences and actual relationships with people around you. This also involves capacity development which has a direct link with human development. In fact, there are a range of issues where the two are closely intertwined. These include: human capital development through health and nutrition, education and training; the accumulation of physical capital that increases the levels of investment to generate employment opportunities; strengthening governance through institutional and policy reforms; and the application of improved technologies, logistics and systems to enhance organizational performance. The ultimate mission of capacity development is for people to increase their incomes and improve their quality of life.

Capacity building helps create conditions that enable people to derive maximum benefits. It is an on-going process that involves developing competencies (skills, knowledge, and attitudes) to enable people to make things happen. There are various dimensions of capacity development, which includes; Individual (human), Institutional (organizational) and societal (community) capacities. Since the focus of this paper is on youth formation and national development, these two will be discussed:

Individual Capacities

Individual capacities relates to the availability of the right quantity and quality of human capital to achieve and sustain national human development. There are two key components needed: Planning present

and future human capital stock by skills and expertise. Periodic human resources surveys are needed and a human capital plan should be prepared with the aim of mapping current and future capacity development needs, strategies and programmes; and ensuring that there are adequate teachers, school administrators and education planners in place to design, mount and execute specialized training as well as general and professional education to meet the nation's needs in accordance with the human capital mobilization plan. The process of individual development involves a number of changes in innate resources such as knowledge, practical skills, mind sets, values, perceptions, stamina and relationships. The goal is for the individual to be empowered to live a happy, long and comfortable life. This may include providing general education and vocational training; creating a competent and motivated cadre of people that will guarantee a high level of productivity and growth; and providing good health services and nutritious food to improve health.

Institutional Capacities

Institutional capacities is concerned with institutional and organizational capabilities, both public and private, to attract financial and quality human capital and put it to productive use. Effective national performance is a condition stemming from efficient use of quality human and financial capital through institutions and organizations that enable the delivery of desired results. Weak institutions are often central to the failure of development efforts. For example, poor management of public resources undermines the state as a guarantor of public welfare and security and this is what we presently experiencing in Nigeria.

Consequently, developing capacity at the organizational or institutional level involves reforming, as and where necessary, the structures, mandates, functions, remuneration, management systems, corporate culture and operational processes of organizations – especially the public sector. Institutions must also be adequately equipped to attract and make the best use of available resources. This involves improving physical facilities and equipment, institution linkages, networking and relations and institutional philosophies. It should be emphasized at the point that the two components are complementary. For instance, if the institutional setting in a country is not appropriate, the realization of the full benefits of even the best quality human capacity would be illusory.

The importance of investing in education and health is well appreciated and understood in economies that wish to attain sustainable growth. The quality of a nation's development depends on the quality of its workforce. Nigeria is rated by international standards as 'less developed' and thus has economic growth as a major goal. Indeed, the

importance of a prime sector such as education has been stressed in Nigeria since the early sixties. Presently, there is need to stress the importance of human capital development for Nigeria, because the Nigerian economy has to be efficient and competitive in the new world order in which national frontiers no longer constitute barriers to human, material, and capital flows, the greatest barriers facing Nigeria in this millennium is the issue of capacity building to enhance productivity in the economy of which the youth can play a major role.

Conclusion

Our discourse does not pretend to be exhaustive as there are definitely a lot of issues left untouched, with many others yet to be discussed in details. Nonetheless, it is hoped that by this brief analysis on youth formation and how it could enhance national development, we have been able to stimulate some interests and thoughts in ways that would motivate philosophical investigation into how this thoughts can be further developed and applied in practical ways that can facilitate social and national development as a whole. One thing that stands out is the concern for holistic formation (spiritual, intellectual, moral, political and economic) of the youth.

Recommendations:

1. Parents should develop and inculcate proper values in their children for the survival of the individual and the society.
2. The individual's intellectual capacity of the youth should be developed in order for them to understand and appreciate their local and external environments.
3. There is need for the youth to acquire both physical and intellectual skills, which will enable them to be self-reliant and useful members of the society.
4. The government and corporate organization should promote and encourage merit-based scholarship and community service.
5. Special attention should be paid to mentoring in the training of the youth since they are looking always for role models..
6. The government should create avenues for the promotion of national and international understanding and interaction

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THE RELIGIOUS ROLES ON YOUTH FORMATION IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
The study focused basically on ascertaining the roles of religion on youth formation in national development. There has been an ongoing debate on the assertion that religion has any role to play in formation of positive attitude amongst youths needed for national development. The continent of Africa is facing great increase in social vices and poor level of development, and Nigeria is not left out. This is evident in her educational, social and economic deterioration. This paper sought to discover the reason for the deterioration and sketch the role religion has played in the formation of positive virtues for national development of Nigeria to ameliorate her state. Qualitative and descriptive method of inquiry was used in this study and it was discovered that lack of adherence to stipulated norms promulgated by religious organization has resulted in increased in social vices, mono economy, corruption, religious intolerance and lack of good governance which has contributed largely to underdevelopment. It also found out that religious groups have played starring roles in national growth through the provision of schools, hospitals, micro loans in partnership with directorate of rural farmers, inculcating morals through teaching in religious and political assemblies for national growth. The article recommends among others an improved partnership of the government arm and the different religions.

Keywords: Religion, youth formation & national development.

Introduction

There is virtually no society that does not practice one form of religion or the other. However, the role religion plays in formulation of positive attitude among youth needed for national development varies significantly from one countries to another (Ayo, 2011). Before establishing the role of religion on youth formulation in national development, it is pertinent to establish the foundation of the study. Thus, the key variables like religion, youth formation and national development were thoroughly reviewed. Religion is a powerful universal phenomenon that has permeated Countries of the world. It has to do with the belief in a supernatural being that is invisible. Religion creates great impact in human behavior and in most cases transforms primitive and hostile behavior to a refine and more acceptable attitudes compatible with human cohabitation (Awolalu, 2008). It was through the influence of religion that Nigerians stopped killing twins and banishing their mothers to evil forest; to start appreciating twin children. Religion moderates our greed, hostility and animosity of killing human being as a punishment for a minutes offence. Religion makes us to appreciate our creature and seek for ways of moderating our action in order for us to have a peaceful coexistence, and seek for salvation. This change of behavior can impact positively on national development in Nigeria. It is the effort of and activities of man that enhances or retard national development.

The Concept of Religion

Eliade (2010) in his functional perspective sees religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church, ultimate non-material fact and has a "dynamogenic" quality. That is, it has the capacity not only to dominate individuals but also to elevate them above their ordinary abilities and capacities. He argues that social life is impossible without the share values and moral beliefs which form the collective conscience. Also, in their absence, there would be no social; order, social control, social solidarity or co-operation. Therefore, the sacredness of religion strengthens values and moral beliefs which form the basis of social life.

Deton (2006) conceives religion as a fixed relationship between the human and non-human entities, the sacred, the supernatural, the self-existent, the absolute or simply, God. However, religion is such a wonderful universal phenomenon that is found in every society, developed or underdeveloped, black or white race. Pratt (1996) agrees that religion is a social behaviour associated with individuals or communities directed towards the power or forces which they conceived as having lasting and ultimate control over their religion, men exchange

obedience and loyalty with security and peace in form of a covenant with the supernatural powers, hence they turn to worship them culminating in a religious exercise.

According to Eliade (2010), religion is the most substantial bond of humanity, the fear of the unexplainable phenomena of the universe and some superstitious beliefs compel men to enter into a bond or pact with such unknown forces. Balm (1994) sees religion as the experiences of the holy. This is where the objective side of religion comes to play. The objective of worship is conceived by man to be holy; having convinced himself thus, man the "experience" of such encounter expresses and passes onto others that which he has internalized. It is easy, therefore to experience the "holy" than to know or localize it.

Serrate and Hawkini (1992) share common views with Karl Marx when they assert that religion makes one to forget one's earthly hardship because, for the religionist the other world is where one would lay his treasures. Also, there is no retaliation because "vengeance is mine" says the Lord. Marx was materialistically inclined, so to him the need of this immediate world is more urgent than the imaginary pie in the sky.

However, Davis (1993) suggests that if religion is practiced honestly, it can open to the realities of life and not cause a blind folding as some of the economic determinists seem to argue. Religion, according to Dopamu (2005), is a factor of civilization and the knowledge and its seed everywhere have been known to contain such potent elements. Forde (2002) relates religion to its role in society through individual members who believe. Thus, becomes a factor of cohesion order, peace and solidarity in the society. The researcher is of the view that religion is both God-word and Man-word oriented. It involves God and man relationship for the purpose of communion and communication in peace and security ensured on the part of man, a sort of pact resulting in some ritual observances.

Harry (2006) observes that religion in its essence gives meaning to life and serves as an instrument for promoting social solidarity, value consensus, harmony, and tolerance in the society. Also, it strengthens the unity of a group or country and much of the norms of the social system are integrated by religious beliefs.

Youth Formation

Haralambos and Heald (2004) opined that youth formation is the development of positive attitude that prepares a young person to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood and achieve his or her full potential. Youth formation is promoted through activities and experiences that help youth develop social, ethical, emotional, physical, and cognitive competencies (Ubani, 2003). This developmental phases is

part of the youth development process and supports the young person in developing: (a) the ability to analyze his or her own strengths and weaknesses, set personal and vocational goals, and have the self-esteem, confidence, motivation, and abilities to carry them out (including the ability to establish support networks in order to fully participate in community life and effect positive social change); and (b) the ability to guide or direct others on a course of action, influence the opinions and behaviors of others, and serve as a role model capable of influencing others positively (Wehmeyer, Agran and Hughes, 1998).

Conditions that promote healthy youth formation are supported through programs and activities in schools and communities. Researches on carried out on youth formation, emphasize that effective programs and interventions recognize youths' strengths and seek to promote positive development rather than addressing risks in isolation. Youth who are constructively involved in learning and doing and who are connected to positive adults and peers are less likely to engage in risky or self-defeating behaviors (Maman, 1990). Providing the conditions for positive youth attitudinal formation is a responsibility shared by families, schools, and communities. The conditions for developing such healthy attitude amongst youths needed in national development reside in families, schools, and communities.

National Development

Naomi (1995) believes that development is usually taken to involve not only economic growth, but also some notion of equitable distribution, provision of health care, education, housing and other essential services all with a view to improving the individual and collective quality of life. Chrisman (1984) views development as a process of societal advancement, where improvement in the well-being of people are generated through strong partnerships between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society. It is reasonable to know that development is not only an economic exercise, but also involves both socio-economic and political issues and pervades all aspects of societal life.

National, according to Longman dictionary of contemporary English, refers to a phenomenon that embraces a whole nation. National development therefore can be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be described as the country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government.

National Development is a process of improving the range of opportunities that will enable individual humans and communities to

achieve their aspirations and full potential over a sustained period of time while maintaining the resilience of economic, social and environmental systems. (Munasinghe, 2004).

Lawal (2011) describe national development as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. However, in this paper, national development will refer to the ability of a country or countries to improve the social welfare of the people, by providing social amenities like quality education, potable water, transportation, infrastructure, medical care etc.

Nexus between Religion Roles and Youth Formation in National Development

Religion is seen as a social-cultural system of designated behaviours and practices, morals, worldviews, texts, sanctified places, prophecies, ethics, or organizations that relates humanity to supernatural, transcendental, or spiritual elements (Morreall, 2013). Supporting the above assertion, Nongbri (2013) opines that religion is a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic. It is also seen as the entirety of the linguistic expressions, emotions and actions and signs that refers to a supernatural being or supernatural beings. According to James (2010) religion is a relatively-bounded systems of beliefs, symbols and practices that addresses the nature of existence, and in which communion with others and otherness is lived as if it both takes in and spiritually transcends socially-grounded ontologies of time, space, embodiment and knowing. Religion fosters national unity and development. It offer people the understanding of existence and provide rules and regulations which controls people behavior as it is believed that to live a godly life according to one's religion is to carry out one's duty both to God and men. Thus, it can be established that religion contributes significant in influencing youths' attitudinal development and implementation. The more youths' development and implements the right attitudes preached in the gospel, the more easier it becomes to build and maintain a healthy nation.

Parrinder (1996) and Idowu (2008) are of the view that in Nigeria; very little efforts have been made to tap the potentials of religion as cement for unity and the development of nationhood through inculcating positive attitude especially among youths. Despite the above attainable benefits, religion is being manipulated to cause ethnic divisiveness and civil strife. Some people exploit it for their selfish

political ambition. Religion is one vital element that can be harnessed for fostering solidarity and unity.

Mutuah *et al.,* (2010) avers that being life itself, religion can serve as the basis on which a nation can be solidly founded. It can also be used as an instrument of bringing into reality our dreams of a united nation. Religion is also characterized as a sound entity that is functional in the sense that it contribute to the maintenance of societal stability of equilibrium.

According to Clark (1994), religion can be used to make way for the understanding of the world in which we live. It can supply answers to such questions as the existence of God, the sufferings and pains of humans, the problems of after death and so on. It could provide moral values by which a nation may stand. Such moral values include what is virtue and vice, thereby enriching the people's morals, the welfare of the individuals and society at large.

Denton (2006) suggests that religion may inspire people to develop great ideas as courage, love, endurance and sense of kinship. Yinger (1990) avers that national development requires that all hand must be on deck to build a strong and united nation which could be anchored on religious and intellectual capabilities of every citizen.

Awolalu (2010) succeeded in clarifying that religion can be a part in national development by promoting high moral standards such as honesty, courage, hard work, obedience and respect for leaders especially among youth that are leaders of tomorrow. He suggests that religion could be expected to encourage faith, trust, and confidence in both God and fellow human beings which makes for integration, cohesion and solidarity by bringing people together for worship, festivals, ceremonies, and prayers especially people of different ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Forde (2002) argues that religion help youths develops attitudes capable of solving the problems of selfishness which hinders the pace of progress in nation building. Idowu (2002) suggests that religion can effectively provide an understanding of certain occurrences that affect man and his environment, especially some of the trials and tribulations being experienced by Nigerians such as anxiety about the structural adjustment programme (SAP). The continued drift of the nation may be attributed to our sins, but for people who are deeply religious, it can be argued that through the power of prayers backed by God led ministers these national problems could be successfully resolved to the glory of God. According to Tim (1996) there is the beliefs that "if God cares for the things of nature and environment, such as the birds of the air, the fishes of the sea and the animals in the forest, God will definitely cater for the needs of the country which he has created". Meyer (1996)

describes religion as being capable of promoting national development and moral identity, to inculcate in the individuals the right attitude which would eradicate crime, murder, suicide, rape, corruption, indolence, dishonesty and cheating which has bedeviled the nation. He further stated that when individuals imbibe these attitudes, it will be demonstrated in their families, social groups and other works of life.

In summary, the above empirical evidence provided on the role religion in national development made obviously clear that religion helps in developing positive attitude amongst the populace needed for all round positive development. Religion instill discipline among the youths especially during their various stages of developing positive virtues like respect for life, adherence established laws, creates a better understanding of the world around us amongst others that contributes to development of the nation. It was also established that religion aid in the formulation and implementation of favourable policies that ensure sustained national development, trains up youths who can be better leaders of tomorrow and minimizes the incidence of corruption amongst the youth who are leaders of tomorrow.

Factors that Hinder National Development in Nigeria

In spite of series of developmental strategies put in place by successive governments, and sometimes with good intentions, all attempts to generate meaningful development proved futile.

1. **Poor Formulation and Implementation of Policies:** There are in most cases, no executive capacity responsible for the formulation and implementation of the plan. Some of the previous development plans failed because; there was little or no consultation of the general public. Planning is supposed to involve even the peasant in the villages. Even the Local Government officials who are close to the people were not consulted. (Mimiko 1997).

2. **Lack of Good Governance:** This militates against national development. Where there is no good governance, development becomes a mirage. This is as a result of bad leadership in the country. Most of our leaders have no sense of commitment to development.

3. **Decolonization:** Decolonization allowed the crop of leaders that aligned with colonial power to take over Nigeria. This ensured the sustenance of a neo-colonial economy even after political independence. These leaders on assumption of power quickly turned up the repressive machinery of the colonial state rather than dismantling it. Significantly, they have no vision of development to

accompany the efficient instrument of repression they inherited. All they were interested in was access to power and privileges and not development.

4. **Corruption:** High level of corruption and indiscipline is another barrier to development. Nigeria is corrupt, managed by corrupt leaders who have made the state an instrument of capital accumulation, rather than using it to project the interest of the citizenry. A very good plan supervised by a thoroughly corrupt state can hardly do a thorough job. Corruption and development are antithetical to each other, the two cannot cohabit, and so, where one is present, the other suffers. (Chuta 2004).

Strategies for Ensuring National Development

The beauty of any development plan is the faithful implementation of such plan, which its success lies with the implementers. In the previous subsections, it was mentioned that most of the past development plans failed as a result of implementation problem, lack of committed leadership, lack of adherence to suggestions of religious leaders, etc.

Based on this fact, new development policies and strategies are currently in place as alternative strategies for ensuring sustained national development, such as Seven Points Agenda, Vision 2020, change begins with you, etc. These policies and vision appear to be all embracing but they are not sacrosanct in their totality. But if faithfully implemented, the nation at least will move towards path of national development.

First, development requires total commitment on the parts of the leadership (religion and non-religion). The need for discipline and honesty on the part of the project implementers cannot be compromised; such officials should show enough discipline, interest, willingness, dedication and honesty. Without these attributes and the will to pursue set economic goals, all other ingredients of development present would amount to nullity.

Secondly, there is need for attitudinal change. Nigerians must as a matter of fact change their pessimistic attitude towards national development. The anticipated changes should be promulgated by religious leaders since they control a greater number of the populace. Similarly, the idea or belief that "things cannot work in Nigeria or Nigerian factor" should be discouraged. Real development is achieved through internal activities rather than from external influences. Development is seen as a process generated within a society by forces propagated and invigorated by the actual members of that society. It is believed that true development can neither be started nor sustained by outsiders. Although, no country can develop in isolation, but heavy

emphasis should not be placed on foreign resources for the country's development.

Importantly, citizenship should be promoted over indigeneity in order to achieve cooperation and participation of all communities in the development process. Omotoso (2008) noted that the 1999 constitution is directly or indirectly promoting indigeneity in the country. For example, section 318(1) of paragraph (IV) supports indigeneity. The constitution sets parameters for indigenes and non-indigenes. It equally gives legal bases to various discriminatory policies that actively promote indigeneity, contrary to some sections that argue against discrimination. This is very contradictory.

Leadership in Nigeria must behave in a way to inculcate the spirit of patriotism in the minds of the people, so that they will be ready to stand with the government in her development efforts. When Nigerians see themselves as one and not as belonging to one section of the country as portrayed presently, the urge to develop Nigeria will be germinated and sustained.

Additionally, the need to reform electoral process is imperative for socio-economic and political development. Electoral fraud is one of the banes of Nigeria's development. The role of leadership in development cannot be overemphasized, all efforts towards development must be coordinated and directed by the leaders, therefore, the leaders must be development conscious, have genuine interest for development and the political will to propel such development. The leaders must also have the cooperation of the people, because, it is the people that develop a nation. Honestly, the aforementioned ingredients cannot be possible without a legitimized mandate for the leaders by the people. When a leader assumes office illegimately or through electoral fraud, such leader is bound to fail in his effort to generate meaningful development. This is due to the fact that such illegitimate leaders tend to display characters that repress development such as; selfishness, corruption, pride, thuggery and inefficiency and also, there is apathy and natural detachment to development plans by the people as they did not see such emerging leaders as the products of their consent through voting. Based on the foregoing, the electoral process should be reformed in such away that nobody assumes power (political) through crook or fraudulent means. The process should be made opened, free, fair and competitive. All legal battles preceding the elections must be concluded before any swearing in. This, it is believed, will create genuine environment conducive for development.

Lastly, development plan should not be exclusively regarded as economic issue it should be seen as holistic and encompassing national

issue that cuts across economic, social, political and psychological aspects of human endeavour.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has x-rayed the place of religion in youth formation in Nigeria's national development. It must be noted that religion cannot be rejected in its totality because of how much it has permeated into our knowledge system. More so, the world is gradually growing into a global village within which all kinds of cross-cultural activities are taking place.

Religion can be used as a tool or means of promoting national development by nurturing youths to development positive attitude. Though religious conflict are master minded by greedy and corrupt politician and religious leaders. The structures of the society guarantees religious conflict, and can be used too to strengthen inter-religions cum denominational cooperation; which will promote national development. Religion has a direct impact on the individual, the individual are the once who steer the ship of development, due to their ability to peacefully co-exist and use their creativity to better themselves and their environment. It is equally the individual that is used to ferment religious conflict. Religion preaches the virtues of peace, love, understanding and goodness. If the individual is highly religious, his moral upbringing will impact positivity on national development.

However, it is an urgent task for us to raise our religious norms such that it contributes positively to national development through the cultivation of positive attitude among youths. This must be reflected at homes, in governance and in school curricula at all levels. Indeed the opportunity to correct the basic error of our religious beliefs is upon us; this is because it will restore to us our inward beauty, identity, and pride. It therefore behooves us to choose where to belong so that we can proceed in putting measures in place to attack any hindrance to national development which we hope to achieve. Government should carry out deliberate effort to promote inter-religious and denominational cooperation, meetings, conferences and universal worship, by creating a platform that will handle such responsibilities. The platform will action the followings:

i. To periodically host interreligious/denominational worship.
ii. Promote high moral standards such as honesty, hard work, obedience and respect to elders and leaders.
iii. It should be used to build faith, trust and confidence in both God and fellow human beings.
iv. Build solidarity, integration and cohesion among the people irrespective of one"s religious denomination.

v. Preach against vices, crime, corruption, indolence, dishonesty and cheating.
vi. Promote value re-orientation of the people through this platform, Churches, Mosques, National Orientation Agency, Schools and etc. to depart from existing socio-economic vices, impatience, corruption, electoral violence, that is crippling our polity.

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IMPACT OF RELIGION ON SOCIETAL VALUE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
The article examined the impact of religion on societal value development. Discourse on social values as they relate to environmental and sustainability issues has almost exclusively been conducted in a secular intellectual context. However, with a renewed emphasis on culture as defining and shaping links between people and nature, there has been an increasing level of scholarly attention to the role of religion and spirituality in defining, molding and understanding social values in the society. In this article we explore the intersection of religion and social values for sustainable development. First, we consider this nexus as it has been explored in existing scholarship. We acknowledge a body of research that has suggested that many religions are broadly associated with self-transcendent values. However, the degree to which they are translated into pro-environmental attitudes and behaviour varies according to context and application. Second, we argue that while there is much potential support for human values for sustainability within religious traditions, it is essential that religion is seen as a complex, multi-scalar and multi-dimensional institutional phenomena. Consequently, analysis of the relationship between religion and social values must account for the context of narratives, histories and practices. Third, using this lens, we show how religious perspectives can contribute to operationalising theories of systemic change for sustainability. Finally, we outline key principles for further sustainability research seeking to advance knowledge on the relationship between religion and societal values development.

Keywords: Religion, social value and development.

Introduction

The contributory role of religion to societal value formation and development cannot be overruled. This is based on the established fact that religion is one of the most prominent and wide-reaching social institutions, touching and shaping virtually every sphere of culture and society (Ibikunle, 2015). In corroboration, according to the Pew Research Centre, approximately 84% of the world's population are affiliated with a religion (Pew Research Centre, 2017). Given this ubiquity and social influence of religion, it is argued that articles or publications on social values development ought to consider the place of religion carefully in order to establish the relationship between religion and societal value development. There is a diversity in the practices and worldviews across (and even within) different religious traditions. This makes identifying a clear definition of religion difficult. However, HaluzaDeLay (2014) provided a concise definition of religion by defining religion broadly to include "beliefs, worldviews, practices, and institutions that cross borders, time and scale from the level of individuals all the way to transnational and transhistorical movements". He also noted that the western notion of equating religion with an established set of beliefs does not represent many eastern or traditional religious systems, which often emphasise collective practices as much as cognitive beliefs and may lack firmly established institutionalised teachings.

Religion is a social-cultural system of designated behaviors and practices, morals, worldviews, texts, sanctified places, prophecies, ethics, or organizations, that relates humanity to supernatural, transcendental, or spiritual elements. However, there is no scholarly consensus over what precisely constitutes a religion. Different religions may or may not contain various elements ranging from the divine, sacred things, faith, a supernatural being or supernatural beings or "some sort of ultimacy and transcendence that will provide norms and power for the rest of life". Ezeanga, (2010) opined that religious practices may include rituals, sermons, commemoration or veneration (of deities), sacrifices, festivals, feasts, trances, initiations, funerary services, matrimonial services, meditation, prayer, music, art, dance, public service, or other aspects of human culture. Religions have sacred histories and narratives, which may be preserved in sacred scriptures, and symbols and holy places, that aim mostly to give a meaning to life. Religions may contain symbolic stories, which are sometimes said by followers to be true, that have the side purpose of explaining the origin of life, the universe, and other things (Odudele, 2006). Traditionally, faith, in addition to reason, has been considered a source of religious beliefs.

Having reviewed briefly the concept religion, it is pertinent that the variable societal value development be reviewed. This will help provide the fundamentals needed to establish the relationship between religion and societal values development. The concept of social values is gaining increasing attention within sustainable societal value development. The word value reflects the importance, worth, desirability and the respect something gets in return (Soykan, 2007). As a sociological concept, values refer to similarities and shared demands. Social values are moral beliefs and principles that are accepted by the majority so as to ensure the continuity of a society (Ergil, 1984). Values, in addition to these qualities, signal not what is there but what should be there in a society in form of moral imperatives (Inkeles, 1964). In that sense, values are accepted as truthful opinions and criteria set for what is expected by a society. Establishing the relationship between religion and societal value development Ibikunle (2015) argued that religion form the basis by which individuals in the society learn, develop and maintain values in the society. He went further to say that a greater number of the attitude exhibited by individuals is largely dependent on the morals and values taught by religious organizations.

Available researchers have indicated that there is little or no efforts made by previous researchers to establish the relationship between religion and societal value development. Thus, available studies have been unable to provide concise information on the essence of religion in developing and maintaining social values needed in ensuring the smooth operations of the society. Furthermore, most research institutions do not encourage the study of religion, reason being that people do not exhibit interest in religious studies. As most people view knowledge obtained from such field as irrelevant and practically applicable. Hence, little or no interest is displayed in carrying out studies to provide factual information on the nexus between religion and societal value development. Similarly, the relevance of diverse cultural resources is acknowledged in this scholarship, there is little explicit recognition of the more specific role of religion in establishing and shaping social values in society. In this article we refer to societal values as a broad term which encompasses human values held or expressed at different scales of aggregation and it influence development of values within the society.

Religion

Religion is seen as a social-cultural system of designated behaviours and practices, morals, worldviews, texts, sanctified places, prophecies, ethics, or organizations that relates humanity to supernatural, transcendental, or spiritual elements (Morreall, 2013). Nongbri (2013) opines that religion

is a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic. It is also seen as the entirety of the linguistic expressions, emotions and actions and signs that refers to a supernatural being or supernatural beings. According to James (2010) religion is a relatively-bounded systems of beliefs, symbols and practices that addresses the nature of existence, and in which communion with others and otherness is lived as if it both takes in and spiritually transcends socially-grounded ontologies of time, space, embodiment and knowing. Religion fosters national unity and development. It offer people the understanding of existence and provide rules and regulations which controls people behavior as it is believed that to live a godly life according to one's religion is to carry out one's duty both to God and men. Religion is also characterized as a sound entity that is functional in the sense that it contribute to the maintenance of societal stability of equilibrium.

Values

The word value reflects the importance, worth, desirability and the respect something gets in return (Soykan, 2007). As a sociological concept, values refer to similarities and shared demands. Social values are moral beliefs and principles that are accepted by the majority so as to ensure the continuity of a society (Ergil, 1994). Values, in addition to these qualities, signal not what is there but what should be there in a society in form of moral imperatives. In that sense, values are accepted as truthful opinions and criteria set for what is expected by a society. In fact, when we say we enjoy similar things and we find the same things beautiful, we refer to shared content of values. What sociologists call collective consciousness are called by philosophers objective soul are the domain of common values (Ülken, 2001). It is clear that without society, there will not be any biological, psychological, and sociological value. Only in society, language, religion, morals, arts, and traditions can appear the result of which is the accepted core of a society. Coming to the world as an organism, human beings come to learn societal dreams, ideals, norms, morals, arts and religion by means of growing into an identity (produce) from an organism (Türkdoğan, 1992).

Function of values

Values in social system always take part at the beginning of activities, inside and at the end of the process because they are the powers which begin in the world of consciousness and conscience. Human beings and societies exist together with their values (Lawal, 2002). Physical wealth of

a society is also based on the perception, belief and values that the society has. Those cultural codes are road maps in a way to determine the routes of an individual and the society. As a result, in almost every society people take values seriously, sacrifice their interest, struggle for them and even they die for them. In this context, some functions of values could be the following:

1) They show the ways of thinking and behaving ideally.
2) Values are used as means in judging.
3) They make people focus on useful and important cultural objects.
4) They play a role as a guide to adopt and realize social roles.
5) They perform as social control and restraint tools.
6) They provide solidarity (Fichter, 1990).

Religion and Social Values

The term 'value' can connote a range of different meanings and interpretations. Values can equally refer to broad underlying principles in life, important features within a landscape, or monetary figures assigned to goods or services. But as it applies in this context, values are standards, principles or ideals with which we evaluate actions, people, things, or situations. Tadaki *et al.,* (2017) helpfully outlined a broad typology of value concepts in an environmental context. In exploring the intersection of religion with social values, we focus our inquiry on transcendental or 'held' values. Most commonly, these values are associated with the work by Shalom Schwartz on 'universal' human values (Schwartz, 1994). Kluckhohn and Strodbeck (1961) first theorised that universal values might be arranged along various continua, and this was refined by a range of scholars, most prominently by Schwartz. Most important were two continua: (1) from self-transcendence (e.g., protecting the environment) to self-enhancement (e.g., social power), and (2) from openness to change (e.g., freedom) to tradition (e.g., self-discipline). Scholars have found strongest support for pro-environmental behaviour and attitudes within the self-transcendence dimension of human values (de Groot and Steg, 2007).

Religion and Societal Values: A Complicated Relationship

As we have already hinted above, while religion certainly can be viewed as a fertile source of values that align with sustainability, simply equating religion with certain sets of values does not adequately capture the more complex interplay of religious belief, belonging, and environmental values (Ayuba and Alex, 2006). Any serious consideration of the intersection between religion and values for sustainability must not

simply force religion into existing value frameworks, despite the empirical relationships described in the previous section.

One of the dominant discourses that has considered human values is within the field of social psychology. Although social psychology has amassed detailed knowledge of the structure and composition of values in societies around the world, few scholars of social values have explored why certain values emerge in different contexts. Recently, some social psychologists have emphasised the systems view of values, namely that values are not simply static constructs in people's minds, but are deeply embedded in culture and ecology (Kitayama 2002; Manfredo *et al.,* 2014). We also adopt this perspective, but suggest that values are in part an expression of dominant narratives within cultures, withheld narratives providing a locally inflected mesh in which values carry their meaning. Taking the broad view of religion that we outlined above, even 'secular' narratives can been seen to have some religious or quasi-religious dimensions. Moreover, in reality, there is a melding of myriad narratives within most societies. These narratives may be considered as forming part of a larger 'worldview' out of which individuals operate. According to research by Hedlund-de Witt (2012) and Hedlund-de Witt *et al.,* (2014), worldviews are comprised of inter alia axiology (core values), as well as ontology (including a cosmogony), anthropology (the purpose of the human being) and societal vision (how society should be organised or function). Understanding values (axiology) apart from these other dimensions is, therefore, a superficial reading of society.

Another key factor which must be considered in seeking to understand the role of religious values in sustainability is the way that religious identity and belonging works at multiple scales, from individuals to groups to international bodies and values across these scales do not always align. For ease of explanation, we conceptualise religious values as present across three scales: the individual scale, the community scale, and the formal institutional scale. These three levels interact with one another and are permeable to the (often notionally secular) socio-cultural and ecological context within which they are embedded. The formal institutional scale includes public statements by major religions or denominations. For example, the Buddhism Faith Statement on Ecology (Fossey 2003), the World Council of Churches "Justice, Peace and Creation Concerns" (World Council of Churches 1983) or the Bristol Faith Commitments compiled by the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (The Alliance of Religions and Conservation 2015). The community scale would represent the teachings and viewpoints of particular churches, temples or faith communities. The individual scale is the values held by individual members of these

communities, which may be highly diverse and conflict at times with the values espoused at the other scales.

To demonstrate the complex dynamics across these scales, we take as one recent example the Roman Catholic encyclical by Pope Francis, *Laudato Sí* (which is examined in depth by Christie et al. 2019). The publication of encyclicals are major events, occurring infrequently, and carrying particular normative force as formal religious teaching by the leader of the Roman Catholic church. Laudato (2015), the first encyclical on the environment, was widely hailed as precipitating a change towards (or intensification of) pro-environmental values among Roman Catholics, who number nearly a billion worldwide. Interviews conducted by Kidwell (unpublished data), indicated that there was indeed a boost perceived by elite actors (priests and denominational leaders). Again, our point here is not that values are uninfluenced, but that the dissemination and mobilisation of values is complex (Kidwell *et al.,* 2018). Popular views often hold that the Roman Catholic Church is hierarchical and top-down. However, in practice, this research suggests that within the American Roman Catholic context, values are often consolidated in free-standing ways at different scales: from individual, to parish, to diocese, to regional ecumenical partnerships, to global community. As Li *et al.,* (2016) suggest, at each of these levels, actors may be subject to different cross-pressuring effects, whereby political and religious affiliations are in conflict around an issue like "sustainability" may itself also be unstable (Johnston, 2013). It is impossible to locate a universally agreed upon definition of sustainability and as such scholars and practitioners have developed definitions to fit specific purposes (White, 2013). In this ambiguous context, we may appreciate a range of ways that religion doesn't always sit comfortably with 'sustainability' as a concept. Not only may religious communities emphasise particular dimensions of sustainability—emphasising human health over ecological integrity for instance—religious perspectives may also challenge sustainability as a normative goal. The concept of the "common good" discussed by Christie *et al.,* (2019) within Catholic teaching as an alternative (albeit not inconsistent) aspirational goal to sustainability is a good example. Appreciating narratives and worldviews of faith communities relevant to conservation activities has recently been emphasised as best-practice (Schaefer and Higgins, 2017).

Role of Religion in the Society

Religion permeates every aspects of man's existence in the universe, be it politics, social, cultural or economic life of the people (Bankston and Zhou, 1995). It has been used as the most important instrument in the

social control of man and the society. It performs the social functions such as providing aims, purpose forms, defense and sense of direction. The role of religion in promoting peace security and eradicating the youth's militancy cannot be over emphasized.

1 Religion Stimulates Social Habits and Checks Anti- Social Behavior.

Religion is "an efficient means of social control, stimulates social habits and checks anti-social tendencies". It offers the whole society a concept of its own scared value. It prescribes a particular kind of behavior or conduct to its adherents in terms of knowledge, thinking, reflection decisions, choices, tastes, opinion, habits, feelings and freedom of actions (Benson, Leffert, Scales & Blyth, 1998). Such particular life styles are created, maintained and sustained through religions doctrines, ethics, and laws safe guards are prescribed against deviation from these life styles. Religion polishes and fashions morality in positive dimension. To neglect religion is to do away with morality, without religion moral development of the society will be meaningless.

2 Religion gives Emotional Security, Spiritual and Material Support.

Religion is an instrument for defense. It provides belief and attitudes that help to defend the people against vexing doubts, anxieties and aggression. As people do struggle with life of uncertainties, powerlessness and insecurity religion provides answer to the things that threaten people's life and survival. It was even noted that religion offers emotional, spiritual and material support to its members in times of tension, stress or hardship (Lawal, 2003). The poor and wretched ones are to be given alms or gifts from the rich ones among them. Victims of natural hazards or wars are to be aided and their life must protect as a sacred entity and peaceful coexistence of the society. Also religion offers resistance against frustration, hostility, suffering, anxiety, despair and hatred

3. Religion Reforms and Resettles Deviants

A deviant is person who is deficient in moral and social standards from what is normal and accepted. Religion can be used to call the out law persons or sinners back to repentance, and makes them become socially integrated into the society (Odudele, 2006). Religion struggles with the ultimate problems of human life that deprive man from behaving in the morally and socially accepted ways. It gives a sense of direction and makes people to perceive, feel, think, act and behave in a specifically desired ways. It moves people a way from despair and restores confidence in them. Armed robbers, adulterers, drunkards, drug- addicts, law- breakers and frauds to mention a few have been changed to behave

in a socially approved manners and society see and treat them with trust and confidence.

4. Religion Fosters Social Solidarity and Friendships.

Religion serves as a powerful means for the solidarity among its members and nearly all the great social institutions have been born in religion (Ezeanya, 2010). Also, religion regulates social life of the society by creating some sort of order for its members to live together. Religion encourages solidarity, consensus, cordially, harmony, cooperation, unity, stability, security and peaceful co-existence. Religion creates several fellowship groups for the adults and youths alike. Out of these fellowships, friendships, marriage and brother hoods emerged. It allows the adherents to coordinate their activities in submission to rules and regulations under the guidance of values, so that they can live harmoniously with their fellow human beings.

5. Religion helps to bring about Social Change.

A change haves place in religion as a social phenomenon. In Nigeria, religion helps to bring about social change. Social change has described as the change that occurs in world views, ideas, values, beliefs, rules, relationships, institutions, symbols speech, languages, style of thinking and behaviors and the means of production and distribution of goods and services (Fadiyimu, 2004). A social change is the alteration in the patterns of social action and interactions. Religion introduces and disseminates new idea and information about education, medicine, literature, agriculture, games, markets organization and administration. Religion brings establishes new form of education, dressing, marriage, law courts and languages in Nigeria.

6. The Relevance of Religion in Cultural Development.

Religion helps in transforming the society by introducing new cultural elements. Religious doctrines, laws organizations, modes of dressing, dogma, buildings, patterns of marriages, training of children, burying the dead and many other items of culture are influence through religion. Morality is used to give meaning and purpose to the cultural behavior (Obikunle, 2015). Wherein the culture deviates from the real religious meaning, then it has to be checked, so that there is balanced relationship between the cultural elements and religious ideology. Indecent modes of dress, is discouraged for the sake of modesty and moral implication given.

7. Religion Ensures the Retinues Existence of the Society.

Ayuba and Alex (2006) opined the positive role of religion is to holding society together as a form of "social glue". Religion serves as a social bond that holds the society together. It strengthens the basis belief and values of the society. It stresses for the social cohesion of all its members

to live in unity and peace. Religious ceremonies are performed to remind people that they have a common history and identity, thereby ensuring the continuity for the existence of the society. There are events in the life of an individual and in the life of a society that point to the fact that God is working out this purpose for the common good of the individual and the society.

Impact of Religion on Societal Value Development

Man as a human being, cannot exist without religion because it is intrinsic in his nature. One cannot isolate religion from the life situation. Religion determines its true value from the role it plays in the enrichment of the quality of life. It has a role to play, a contributive role in the evolution of man and developmental of societal values, by providing society with ethical codes, social rules and ideals, rituals and devotion that guide the activities of man in the course of social interaction. Religion also enhances human values and self-awareness (Bjarnason, 1998). Religion helps one to lead a disciplined and purified life. Religions always stand for the betterment of human soul. The different religions, though devotedly called by different names, show a surprising likeness of spirit and life. It is a unique specific expression and cannot be equated with anything. There is no religion which does not stress one form or other of universal brotherhood, and which does not advocate kindness to all living things. In the religions of the non-vegetarian people, there is an acceptance, in principle at least, of the non-killing commandment. And there is the general acceptance by the Semitic religions that a form of grace accompanies fasting and abstention from meat eating on certain days (Lawal, 2003). Buddhism in principle is solidly based on non-hurting (*ahimsa*), and Jainism makes the high level of this principle.

When religion is not influential in a society or has ceased to be, the state inherits the entire burden of public morality, crime and intolerance. It then must use punishment and police. Yet, this is unsuccessful as morality, integrity and self-respect not already inherent in the individual, cannot be enforced with any great success. Only by a spiritual awareness and inculcation of the spiritual value of these attributes can they come about. There must be more reason and more emotional motivation to be moral, etc., than threat of human discipline.

Conclusion

We have explored in this article the complex relationship between religion and development of societal values development in the society. While there are consistent trends regarding values promoted by major faith traditions and certain values operationalised within universal

human values theory, religion comprises far more than the promotion of particular values. To progress research on the intersection of human values and religion, we suggest that religion must be understood as a multi-faceted embodied institution of substantial social and political relevance. This broad understanding of religion thus enables scholarship on social values for sustainability to connect with theories of social transformation. We encourage scholars pursuing such a research agenda to recognise that values are not freestanding but are connected to social practices and institutional dynamics, to pay attention to local expressions of values embedded in religious contexts, and to embrace more embedded vernacular than that of social psychological theory (e.g., concepts such as compassion/love rather than self-transcendence). Thus, it has been established that religion contributes significantly to the development of positive societal values.

Recommendations

Based on the observation made in the course of the theoretical review on the impact of religion on societal value development, the study suggests that the teachings and activities of religious organizations in Nigeria should be encouraged, since it contributes significantly to positive societal value development. More so, similar study should be pursued by potential researchers on the impact of religion on societal value development as this will help the researcher pursue the objective the current study was unable to pursue owing to the limited timeframe allotted to this study.

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FORMATION OF THE YOUTH AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
The future of any and every great institution in the world, largely depends on folks who fall within the age bracket of those regarded as youths, who undisputedly are the leaders of tomorrow, whether or not they are prepared for it. The youths no doubt are a very important class of any nation, since their resourcefulness, skills, strengths can no doubt be beneficial in sustaining any nation's development. They bring in a kind of vitality and enthusiasm that can drive any nation to the zenith of development and self-reliance. But more often as we see; especially in developing nations, not much regard is given to youth formation, in a bid to prepare them for their future role. The consequence of which is, being plunged into the future with absolutely no formation and preparation, they also fail to maintain the standards already set in place. This study is therefore, posed towards understanding the importance of youth formation and it's implication in attaining sustainable national development. It shall also establish the extent of interaction between formation and national development; the challenges of youth formation and the role of major stakeholders. A qualitative, critical and analytical assessment of these issues will help us to arrive at the shores of the objective of this study. This piece, discovers that, in other to situate the youth of today strategically for national development, we must put into consideration the demographics of youth as well as their corresponding formation. This remains the task of every major player saddled with the enterprise of promoting national development.

Keywords: Formation, Youth, Youth formation, Development, National development.

Introduction

Every nation of the world, strives to attain an all-round growth. And undoubtedly, the future of any nation rests on the shoulders of the youth. They eschew age long out dated mentalities, the values they hold and the qualities they possess, can inevitably bring development to any nation. The knowledge, skills and principles which they have acquired over the years would be used as tools for the development or otherwise of the nation.

Youths can bring social reform and improvement in society. We cannot do without the youths of a country. A nation requires their participation to achieve her goals and help in taking the nation towards progress.

Indeed, the youths are the movers and shakers of the nation. Without them, the nation has no future, remains moribund and faces extinction if care is not taken. The development of any country requires active participation from the youth. We must make all the youth aware of their power and the role they have to play in nation-building. As well as contribute our quarter to their proper formation. There are many ways in which we can help the youth of our country to achieve their potential. For that, the government must introduce programs that will help in fighting off issues like unemployment, poor education institutes and more to help them prosper without any hindrance.

But today what do we find? Ill formed youths, who cannot cater for their own well-being less talk, the well-being of a nation. Can this situation cannot be blamed totally on the youths? This write up, attempts at presenting a brief insight into the crisis concerned with youth formation and briefly state how their proper formation can aid them to contribute effectively to national development.

Conceptual Clarifications

Formation: Formation can be referred to as the act or process of value adding. This value may be social, religious, an ethical. It is the process of giving a form to a person, or an act of taking form.[1] It has to do with character development, value orientation and moral integrity. It is a process of breaking and shapening, breaking out deformations and molding forth a transformation.

Youths: Many definitions of the youths are often done with age classifications. And these categorization differ from place to place. Generally those who fall within the age bracket of 14-35 are often regarded as youths. In some cases, the age range can be up to 40. It usually is a period between childhood and adulthood, between dependence and moving towards independence. The definition of a

youth is a young person who has not yet reached adulthood and refers to the time period before you become an adult.[2]The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 as youth.[3]**UNESCO further notes that: Youths have the creativity, the potential and the capacity to make change happen – for themselves, for their communities, and for the rest of the world.[4] Simply put, youths have the vitality needed to transform any society. Pope John Paul II affirms this youthful vitality when he avers that:**

Youth is the age of hope, of promise, of enthusiasm, of plans and of ideals. Youths do not want to give up in the face of difficulties. Youth does not want to put up with the short comings of the status quo. Youth believes in a better world and is determined to do something to help bring about it.[5]

Youth formation: Youths are the building blocks of every developed nation. Youth formation is the process of preparing the young for the future act of becoming leaders. The youthful stage is a formative age, which enhances the youth and makes him or her contribute meaningfully to national development. Youth formation is a duty for all, social agents - the family, the church, the government, parents and youths themselves. The energy and vigor of the youths act as catalyst for national development. That is why, countries which utilize their youth in positive direction are more developed. Youths can constitute both a challenge and an opportunity for development.

The need for formation is vital, because the youths of this century live in a dysfunctional world, with so many contradictions, unprecedented changes. A world torn apart by a complexity of conflicting value orientations, divergent worldviews and competing ideologies.[6]

Within the black continent, youths bring out the potentiality for Africa's development. Youths could be a source of labor inputs as well as human capital in production, which would improve total factor productivity in a region of the world where capital formation is limited. When employed, youths could be a reliable source of demand for the economy through their consumption activities. Especially in the African continent, the youths of Africa could be critical for the development of a new class of entrepreneurs that African countries need to prosper.[7]

Development: Development is generally used to denote growth or progress. It is a process that creates growth, progress, positive change or the addition of physical, economic, environmental, social and

demographic components. The purpose of development is a rise in the level and quality of life of the population, and the creation or expansion of local regional income and employment opportunities, without damaging the resources of the environment. Development is visible and useful, not necessarily immediately, and includes an aspect of quality change and the creation of conditions for a continuation of that change.[8]

National Development: National development is a constructive process of engaging all the people of the country in building political stability, social unity and economic prosperity of the country.

National development involves social harmony, infrastructure development and economic growth of the nation. Youths involvement in any growing economy is an essential key to development. Youths are the greatest power of the country therefore significant efforts must be established to help empower them to competently and adequately contribute towards sustainable development of the nation. National development will improve the lives of citizens with the growing economy.[9]

Challenges of Youth Formation

Many challenges exist today, which impedes youth formation. These range from lack of proper education, lack of social and basic amenities, lack of job opportunities, lack of support for creative innovations and worse still, there is the *dysfunctionalism* which is associated with the agents of socialization which in turn affects formation. George Ehusani, in *Success without Successor*, affirms this socializational *dysfunctionalism* when he avers that

The traditional agents of socialization - the family, the church and the school, appear to have lost much of their authority and pride of place in the socialization and formative process. Today the Internet, the Television, the Cinema, the Home Video and the Peer Group appear to have snatched from the Parents, the Priests and Catechists and the School Teachers the primary prerogative of imparting knowledge and values and building the character of the younger generation.[10]

- **Family**. The family is the bedrock of any human formation which is to be impacted into young people. When the formation which the family ought to impart is missing, it requires extra effort to get the formation of young people aright. In these times, news of broken families and failed relationships constitute no new surprise to us. But the end process of these broken families are traumatized children and youths who are left and if not by grace, would themselves become partners of broken families, thus continuing the cycle. Again many

parents are career persons, who love their jobs so much at the expense of valuable family formation of their wards. They at best leave the formation of their wards to uneducated house assistance, who have the potentiality to bring into actuality the deformation of young people.

- **Church**. Many Churches today, are but true Churches. They are advanced shrines and medium for business. Many main stream Churches, have become a reproach and abomination to God. Thus the message of Christ which ought to have a formative impact on the lives of young ones, is now being distorted for a message that preaches material prosperity and the desire for materialistic relevant miracles. Today, the pulpit is been used to advise young ones about the seemingly wastage of time on education. They only present to the young 'the miracle working God' and not the 'suffering Jesus' who carried his cross. Every line of scripture is interpreted in a liberalistic manner, and people end up fed with stones instead of bread.

- **School**. Many schools today are set up for profit making, over and above value formation. We need to try striking simple conversations with our latest graduates in order to discover the mess many youths have been entangled in. Professors who engage in nebulous acts such as mal-practice, were those who had access to quality education. Schools today have lost their influence over value and character formation. Students and parents decide what they want, and what they do not want and in a bid to retain numbers especially due to financial rewards, the schools watch the children throwaway their future, while they sit and fold their hands.

- **Unemployment**. Lack of employment destroys certain formation to be gotten from the ethics of work. When jobs are not readily available, and those available are not meant for the educated but the connected. This creeds the contemporary belief among youths that education is no longer the key.

- **Lack of Mentorship.** Lack of mentorship is another factor destroying the affective formation of youths. Youths witness everyday those who preach but do not practice; those who outline policies and principles but do not follow them. The end result of this accumulated experience never motivates but translates them into being oppressed oppressors.

- **Social Media.** The social media frenzy, has taken over the task of formation of these impeded agents of formation. From children who live in abundance but thirst from lack of attention, to those who want answers to the meaning of life, and seek means for channeling their vitality and passion in expressing themselves. The media (wrong use of it), has given young people today the illusion of a false presence, a feeling of *acceptedness,* and a fabricated feeling of satisfaction. This makes a lot of persons accept whatever is brought to the table.

Authentic Formation of Youths: Implications for National Development

Can youth formation be beneficial for national development? Yes. This is because, we cannot eliminate the important role youths play, in any nation's development. Youths could be a source of labor inputs as well as human capital in production, which would improve total factor productivity in a region of the world where capital formation is limited.[11] Youths are critical for the development of a new class of entrepreneurs and leaders that can keep any nation aright.

Youths spur in-depth research into varying issues confronting our collective existence. They ask questions which set researchers into motion. They challenge, oppose existing foundations, by seeking more and more to make adjustments to existing status quo. Thus only when they are adequately formed, that it would be possible for them to make ethical choices, which in the long run would be beneficial to any society.

With the new waves of knowledge attained from globalization, youths are better able to make choices that support the pursuit of educational goals and the development of life skills necessary for national and local leadership positions. For instance, youths with access to reproductive health education, services (where they are welcomed), will enable them make rightful decisions as regards their health.

Youths occupy a prominent place in any society, for apart from being the owners and leaders of tomorrow, they have energy and ideas that are society's great potentials.[12] The National Youths Development Policy asserts that: Youths are the foundation of a society. Their energies, inventiveness, character and orientation define the pace of development and security of a nation. Through their creative talents and labour power, a nation makes giant strides in economic development and socio-political attainments. In their dreams and hopes, a nation founds her motivation; on their energies, she builds her vitality and purpose. And because of their dreams and aspirations, the future of a nation is assured.[13] The

statement above acknowledges the role of the youths in the peace and security of a nation.

Youths depending on how they are employed, can be agents of peace as well a instruments of war. They no doubt can play the role of peace mediators. Ozohu-Suleiman avers that: as [an] active segment of any society, youths are the major determiners of peace and stability of a nation.[14] Conversely, the degree of disorderliness and instability in society is also determined in part by youths. Peace is a precursor of development. The absence of peace means that no meaningful development can take place.[15]

Youth Formation: A Task For All

To our already existing identity as victims of bad government, today, we all are potential martyrs (whether we are ready or not), and also potential victims of kidnap, potential victims of wrong medical treatments, potential victims of collapsed buildings, potential victims of human inhumanness.

The formation of the youths remains an absolute task for everyone interested in the well-being of any nation. As faulty foundations can lead to collapse of structures, same can be said for any nation which pays little or no attention to youth formation cum development. Everyone must put in whatever it takes to give a better foundation for the youths. There must be a revival of the agents of socialization. The creation of enabling environment for family life. The creation of job opportunities and incentives for the youth. The admittance of youths sufficiently formed into the political and economic structure of society.

The political society itself, is an important agent of the formation of the youths. The quest for an all-round character cum moral value formation for young people must have a place in any government's policies. Leaders are to be aware that they must be role models and not pharisaic in nature. Government must set up effective youth policies which must move from the level of being an act of government to the level of honest implementation. Furthermore, equal opportunities must be provided for all irrespective of caste, creed, gender, race, religion and more. There are various issues of nepotism and favoritism which eats away the actual talents of a nation. This must be done away with.

Since those found in the society are those found also in the Church, it follows that if the youths in the society are damaged, the youths in the Church would also be damaged youths. Given this fact, the Church must rise up and contribute her quota to the formation of the

youths. She must play her role as an agent of the formation of youths. As George Ehusani notes:

Church based programs and projects for youth development should include not only spiritual, moral and doctrinal education, but also (especially in our economically distressed environment where many youths have dropped out of school and are without skills) to include vocational and basic skills training for economically disadvantaged youths.[16]

The youths themselves have a role to play in their own formation. The self is the first agent of formation. They should avail themselves of any and every such opportunity provided for their growth and wellbeing. Many youths today seem lackadaisical in affairs which should help their self-growth and aspirations. They are lured into all kind of life style which would lead to their unproductivity. If youths do not open and dispose themselves they cannot be formed and cannot eventually contribute to national development. At best they can just be noise makers on social media platforms.

Youth Formation in Nigeria: Issues and Concern.

Youths have a vital role to play in building this nation. They are spurs to facilitate Nigeria's economic greatness and instigate developmental strides. But the youths of this country have not had a soft bed on which to land on. They are plagued on all sides many factors which are within and without. From lack of adequate formation to absence of infrastructural requirements for right living. Some of these issues as well as the resulting concerns are highlighted below.

Socio-Economic and Political Environment: The socio-economic and political environment in Nigeria poses a great challenge to the youths. Economic and social statistics present a somber picture that leaves much to be desired. Almost half a century after flag independence, the economy continues to be dominated by the primary sector – agriculture, oil and minerals. This is partly because the country has not been able to create an environment for high value added economic activities. There is low domestic capital formation and declining direct foreign investment, with the exemption of the oil and gas sectors, until recently very heavy indebtedness, high unemployment and the informalisation of the economy where the majority of its people live in poverty.[17]

Nigeria performs very poorly in terms of global economic competitiveness. The country lacks basic social and physical infrastructure. As a result, most people on the country have no access to basic services such as potable water, electricity, good sanitation, roads and

healthcare. All of this is coupled with a high illiteracy rate. The country's underdevelopment has been reinforced by authoritarianism, political instability, ethnic and religious conflicts in the last decade.

Even almost two decades after the return to democratic rule, we witness today instability in governance- like those in governance do not have an idea about governance. We witness tribalism and nepotism, we see a government that grossly tells lies, and misleads the public, we see non-accountability of public officials, lack of transparency in decision-making, electoral frauds and the colonialisation and personalisation of the state and national resources by the political elite. This situation presents particular challenges for the Nigerian youths.[18]

Lack of Education: Education is very crucial to the formation of youths. In Nigeria, our educational system is nothing to write home about. The aim of education is to bring about intellectual, moral, social and psychological formation of the human person. A person who is balanced in these areas of life will make the society proud. But today we find students who are intellectual thieves, socially imbalanced, morally bankrupt, psychologically confused, emotionally imbalanced, and physically challenged.[19] More worrisome is the fact that education in Nigeria today is certificate based education, rather than education for productivity. Thus we have more graduates, but less people who can distinguish their left from their right. Education also ought to help us make ethical choices, but we have today more educated illiterates, who lack value appreciation and moral ethos.

Lack of Employment. Youth unemployment poses a great threat to the country's stability and development, and if not checkmated on time, it may lead to disastrous consequences for the nation. Desperation can drive the unemployed youths into living outside the law in order to survive and as a means of expressing dissatisfaction at the apparent neglect of their very existence. Crime as a result of unemployment has adverse effect on the economy.[20] E. Okafor laments that: High level of corruption in Nigeria has robbed the country of developing a vibrant economic base in spite of her abundant natural resources. Massive corruption is perpetuated in every sector and has permeated the entire social structure of Nigeria. Funds meant for development projects which could have generated employment have been misappropriated, diverted, or embezzled and stashed away in foreign banks. Endemic corruption has robbed the country of the chance of developing a vibrant economy that would have created jobs for the youths in the various sectors of economy.[21]

The consequences of not fully developing and harnessing youth's potential could be dire, having enormous impact on the economic, political scientific, moral and social life of a nation. Youths are more likely to become frustrated because of legitimate grievances, including a lack of employment opportunities, low educational attainment, little participation in decision making and low social mobility. In this volatile context, greedy and opportunistic politicians could even exploit these grievances by involving these frustrated youths in creating massive instabilities that could impede the development of any nation.

We must invest heavily in our children and youth population, so that from among them would emerge better presidents, better governors, better local government chairmen, better MDs and Directors of companies.[22]

If posed for a better future, the Nigerian youth, has the propensity for greatness. Being more technologically attuned and with the desire to improve on existing parameters of development, they can help push the integral part of Nigeria's socio-political cum economic growth and development. The challenge faced by those saddled with the responsibility of youth formation, remains how to sufficiently harness and channel young people's passion, energy and enthusiasm into positive outcomes.

Concluding Remarks

The task of national development of any nation requires the captainship of astute and sound personnel. Sound men and women of deep vision, with sincerity of purpose, hardworking credible persons who are self-sacrifical and patriotic. In the words of Abolade Fagbohun,

Nation-building and the associated developmental issues require men and women of deep vision; sincerity of purpose; selflessness; genuine love for their country and their people; hardworking; of conscience, integrity, credibility, trustworthiness, honesty, reliable and able; people who do not think of stealing or embezzling; people who do not misuse the authority and power conferred on them, by God or Man; people who do not think that getting to positions of authority is a "do-or-die" affair; people who understand the meaning of nation building, leadership, good governance, rule of law, political emancipation, equality, human and civil rights, civility, freedom of speech, rule of law, diversity and religious tolerance; people who will shun and will not tolerate tribalism, corruption and nepotism. These are the people who can build nations and create the change we want to see.[23]

If a nation believes in its youths and believes that without the youths, she can't achieve her greatness, then she should make more

investment in them, because without investing in the youths, the future of a nation will not have any returns.

The youths themselves should also be proactive, and help in their own formation. They should indulge in selfless services, and in the long run become positive change agents and role models.

The Church, family, school, the government and society at large have equal responsibility to provide the youths with an environment that is conducive to bringing about a formation for the youths. There is the need as Ehusani avers,

> …to invest in our future by channeling a lot of our time and resources into the wholesome formation and integral development of our youths, because what we see as our successes today must bear fruits in future generations… because our successes today must not end with our generation. They must have a multiplier effect on the coming generation.[24]

Also, the youths should have a responsibility to be more proactive. An ideal youth who seeks to become a leader of tomorrow, must endeavor to be honest, hardworking, thrifty, idealistic, disciplined, patriotic, compassionate, sportsmanlike, moral/religious and above all he should be capable of dreaming high and positive dreams.[25]

In the end, youths by their very nature are transforming, and by default, under formation whether or not the society puts effort into their formation, they are being formed, the question is not whether they are being formed or whether they should be formed but that whether by default or effort they receive the appropriate formation. Whatever they receive determines what becomes of the development of any nation.

To transform the crisis of youth formation and development today, we need a paradigm shift in the structure and method of their formation, as well as the environment we provide for them, and the opportunities we present for them to grow.

Endnote

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SEMINARY FORMATION AND MODERN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION: ISSUES AND POSSIBILITIES

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Abstract
The means of Social Communications in modern times have developed to such an extent as to be able to exert profound influence on every aspect of human endeavour. This development has coincided with a gradual shift in the Church's Hierarchy's overall attitude towards the said means of Social Communications, from one of suspicion and rejection (especially in the early years of the Cinema), to critical understanding and appreciation. This shift in approach invites ongoing critical reflection on how the Church can better understand these providential gifts to man, so as to engender a responsible use of them that will result in better persons, faithful Christians and a more committed, evangelizing Church. The formation of future priests is an important *locus* for the deepening of the Church's appreciation of these means of communication. It is imperative for future priests, a good number of whom are Digital Natives, to develop a keen understanding of the culture of the modern means of communication, and it's implication for the Church's mission. Using the extant situation in the Major Seminaries of the Old Lagos Ecclesiastical Province as a case study, this paper attempts to raise issues bordering on the implications of the present state of the means of Social Communications for the human person as a whole. These issues will be correlated with possibilities that can be applied to Seminary formation, so as to highlight some valuable lessons for the Church.

Keywords: Social Communication, Formation, Digital, Seminary

Introduction

In 1986, the Pontifical Council for Catholic Education issued the *Guide to the Training of Future Priests concerning the Means of Social Communication.* The rationale behind this was…

…so that the preparation of future priests in this regard may be less inadequate and may better meet their needs in the work that awaits them, the Congregation for Catholic Education, having consulted widely with experts in the matter, and especially with the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications, is pleased to offer to seminaries the present "*Guide*" in the hope that it will help in some way in carrying out their responsibilities. Whatever possible future developments and local diversity of situation there may be, all institutes of priestly formation must today urgently face a common core of fundamental questions concerning the personal conduct of receivers, the pastoral use of the *mass media*, and specialized formation for particular works.[1]

This was a landmark document, in so far as its subject matter is concerned. It showed the Church playing her maternal role and appreciating the influence that the means of Social Communications exercise on every aspect of human endeavour, influence which while largely positive, could also be damaging to the fabric of human society. Thus, the *Guide* sets out to ensure that "future priests [are] trained **in the seminary** in the correct use of these instruments. This provision had a threefold purpose, namely, that the seminarians might impose discipline on their own personal use of the media, that they might be able to train the faithful in their turn to exercise similar self-discipline, and that they might learn how to use the media in their apostolate"[2].

Since 1986 till date, the world has undergone transformation in many ways, not least of which is that fact that we are now witnessing the entrenchment of the digital age, and its implications for the humanity. Unlike what obtained then, which was largely restricted to the Print and Electronic Media, the inception of the World Wide Web (www) in March 1989, coupled with the proliferation of computers in portable forms, radically transformed the means of Social Communication and the ways persons make use of them. The advent of the smartphone as well, has created 'a whole new world' as regards how people communicate.

This 'new world' needs priests, just like other 'worlds' or epochs have always needed priests. These priests need to be prepared and trained in how to effectively serve in this 'world' after the example of the Good Shepherd, Jesus, who has such a relationship with the sheep that He knows them, they know Him, and they listen to His voice and do what He asks them to do (cf John 10:1-21).

This paper argues that in the Spirit of the 1986 *Guide*, we need to update our present approach to the formation of future priests on the means of Social Communication, so that they can function more effectively as pastors post priestly ordination. The paper will have the following sections:

- The Essence of Seminary Formation (according to the Magisterium)
- Communication Formation within Seminary Formation
- Modern Means of Communication – Overview
- Modern Means of Communication – Possibilities for Formation
- Modern Means of Communication – Issues in Formation
- The Baby or the Bath water?

The Essence of Seminary Formation:

The setting up of seminaries for the training of future priests, can be traced to the Council of Trent. In its legislation *De Seminariis*, the Sacred Council "…made it obligatory for every Diocese to erect a seminary for the purpose of educating the local clergy. Whenever possible, this institution was to be built near the cathedral church so that young aspirants to the priesthood might serve a sort of apprenticeship there by participating, each according his rank, in the divine offices presided by the Bishop"[3]

Before this decree of the Council, seminary formation had always tried to mirror what Jesus did with his disciples, in the three plus years they spent with Him. During this period, they learnt from Him, before being entrusted with the mission to go into the whole world and baptize those who received their teaching about Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20). It was similar to what Paul did with Timothy, and what continued in the early centuries of the Church, leading up to the Patristic era and to the Middle Ages. We observe that there was always some form of training of future clerics, and this training was not cut off entirely from the community where they would serve in the future. There is the opinion that "with the breakdown of feudalism and the rise of universities, this ancient system of clerical formation became either impoverished or generally abandoned. As a result, a large segment of the late medieval and pre-Reformation clergy received inadequate training and were very often ordained for an office they were not sufficiently equipped to exercise"[4]

The Council of Trent therefore, concerned with the laxity in clerical life and the harm that this was causing the Church, used *De Seminariis* to set the motion for a uniform but high standard for priestly formation, imperative on all the Dioceses in the world, so as to

checkmate the possibility of unsuitable and poorly prepared candidates being ordained as priests.

This has remained the essence of seminary formation. In the words of *Optatam Totius,* the Second Vatican Council's decree on Priestly Training, …major seminaries are necessary for priestly formation. Here the entire training of the students should be oriented to the formation of true shepherds of souls after the model of our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest and shepherd. They are therefore to be prepared for the ministry of the word: that they might understand ever more perfectly the revealed word of God; that, meditating on it they might possess it more firmly, and that they might express it in words and in example; for the ministry of worship and of sanctification: that through their prayers and their carrying out of the sacred liturgical celebrations they might perfect the work of salvation through the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments; for the ministry of the parish: that they might know how to make Christ present to men, Him who did not "come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45; cf. John 13:12-17), and that, having become the servants of all, they might win over all the more (cf. 1 Cor. 9:19). Therefore, all the forms of training, spiritual, intellectual, disciplinary, are to be ordered with concerted effort towards this pastoral end, and to attain it all the administrators and teachers are to work zealously and harmoniously together, faithfully obedient to the authority of the bishop.[5]

The *rinovamento* brought about by the Second Vatican council, was keenly felt in the Seminaries. While what obtained prior to the council was not inadequate, the changes the Council advocated in the Liturgy and the Pastoral life of the Church, coupled with the stress on the dignity of the laity, meant that future priests needed to be trained diligently in the demands of the pastoral life. Priests, more than before, are to be immersed in the life of their flock, so that they can better direct them spiritually. Hence, "…those capabilities are to be developed in the students which especially contribute to dialogue with men, such as the ability to listen to others and to open their hearts and minds in the spirit of charity to the various circumstances and needs of men"[6].

In 1990, we had the 8th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, with the theme 'The Formation of Priests in Circumstances of the Present Day'. The Synod has been described as very pastoral in tone, and directed towards placing stress on priestly formation and the person of the priest himself, before and after ordination[7]. In the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation following the Assembly, *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* we read;

> This same synod also sought to answer a request which was made at the previous synod on the vocation and mission of

> the laity in the Church and in the world. Lay people themselves had asked that priests commit themselves to their formation so that they, the laity, could be suitably helped to fulfill their role in the ecclesial mission which is shared by all. Indeed, "the more the lay apostolate develops, the more strongly is perceived the need to have well - formed holy priests… The more the laity's own sense of vocation is deepened, the more what is proper to the priest stands out."[8]

It is instructive therefore, in the light of this expressed desire to redefine or re-emphasize the identity of the priest, to consider what the Synod Fathers considered the essence of Seminary formation. So, after reflecting on the challenges to priestly life, the present state of vocations in the Church, and the Spiritual life of the Priest, the Synod Fathers then reflected on the formation of candidates for the Priesthood.

> …In this sense, the "seminary" in its different forms - and analogously the "house" of formation for religious priests - more than a place, a material space, should be a spiritual place, a way of life, an atmosphere that fosters and ensures a process of formation, so that the person who is called to the priesthood by God may become, with the sacrament of orders, a living image of Jesus Christ, head and shepherd of the Church. In their final message the Synod Fathers have grasped in a direct and deep way the original and specific meaning of the formation of candidates for the priesthood, when they say that "To live in the seminary, which is a school of the Gospel, means to follow Christ as the apostles did. You are led by Christ into the service of God the Father and of all people, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Thus you become more like Christ the Good Shepherd in order better to serve the Church and the world as a priest."[9]

Suffice it to say that the same Synod Fathers had already outlined what is expected of the Priest. “it is equally certain that the life and ministry of the priest must also "adapt to every era and circumstance of life.... to be as open as possible to light from on high from the Holy Spirit, in order to discover the tendencies of contemporary society, recognize the deepest spiritual needs, determine the most important concrete tasks and the pastoral methods to adopt, and thus respond adequately to human expectations."[10]

Other documents that address the theme of Seminary formation, have more or less the same idea.[11] Seminary formation is basically a period when candidates who feel called to the serve in the ministerial

priesthood, are accompanied in shaping themselves after the example of their Lord Jesus Christ, so as to be able to serve the people of God, for whom God bestows the gift of priestly vocations in the first instance.

Communication Formation within Seminary Formation

The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* identifies four major pillars of Seminary formation, viz, Spiritual, Human, Intellectual and Pastoral formation. To successfully situate communication formation within these pillars, it will be important to define communications as a reality.

Etymologically, communication is directly from the Latin *comunicationem*, which means 'making common or imparting'. It can also be considered from the past-participle stem of *communicare*, which means 'to share, divide out, impart, inform, join, unite, participate in'.[12] Lexically, communication refers to "a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs and behaviour".[13] In addition, Scholars of communication proffer different definitions of the reality. Popular definitions however tend to all accept the fact that communication has to do with the sharing of meaning through some commonly understood language.

If we accept this understanding of communication, then we will see that it actually cuts across the four pillars of priestly formation of Spiritual, Human, Intellectual and Pastoral formation. For instance, as regards human formation, it has been said that "formation for the priesthood must necessarily provide adequate means to allow for maturation in view of an authentic exercise of the priestly ministry. To this end, the seminarian is called upon to develop his personality, having Christ, the perfect man, as his model and source"[14]

For the seminarian to make progress as regards his human formation, communication is essential, as "the use of the media and ease with the digital world are an integral part of the development of the personality of the seminarian, because, using new communication technologies, priests can introduce people to the life of the Church and help our contemporaries to discover the face of Christ"[15]

The same is true of Spiritual formation. All the tools of spiritual formation listed in the *Ratio Fundamentalis* depend on communication. Personal union with Christ through prolonged and personal prayer needs a combination of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication to be effective. *Lectio Divina* is based on the printed medium of the Sacred Scriptures, just like the Liturgy of the Hours. The Sacrament of Penance and Spiritual Direction involve dyadic communication, through which the Spiritual Director and the Confessor serve as God's instruments to get the seminarian to open up with sincerity, trust and

docility. Daily participation in the Eucharist is also a deep communicative experience at different levels.

The fact is that in the real sense, there is no formation without communication, as it underlies everything that goes on in the Seminary. And even when the concept gets restricted to the tools that facilitate it, otherwise known as the means of communication, it still cuts across the four pillars, as these means are always being used in the formation process.

Modern Means of Social Communication: An Overview

Traditionally, the study of communication takes into consideration the different levels at which people communicate. These are;

1. Intrapersonal level, where communication that takes place within a person or carried out by a person that he/she does not intend to share with others.
2. Inter-personal communication, which occurs between two persons, and is also known as dyadic communication.
3. Small group communication, which refers to communication that takes place within a group of persons, with a minimum of three and a maximum of twenty.
4. Public communication, that is, communication between a person and an audience beyond 20 people.
5. Mass communication, which is communication involving a person or an entity and a usually large and undifferentiated number of persons.

Each level of communication has the possibility of making use of a medium to facilitate the communication process. It is such media that are referred to as the means of communication. Another way to define them sees them as "the various methods of sending information between people and places, especially phones, computers, radio, et cetera"[16]

Since man became self-aware, and saw the need to reach out to others, he has made use of different techniques to do so. The human voice for instance, is a very important means of communication, and based on this we have language and by extension, writing, as other examples of the older means of communication.

In modern times, and in the light of the available body of knowledge on the different levels of communication, it is difficult to proffer an exhaustive list of the means of communication currently used by persons. However and in no particular order, we can talk of the following; voice, books, newspapers, magazines and periodicals, pagers, computers, word processors, radio, facsimile machines, telephones, smartphones, telegraph, television, and so on[17]

While not exhaustive, the means of communications mentioned above cuts across the different great epochs of communication that humanity has experienced, viz, the phase of Primary Orality; the age of Writing; the period of the Press; the age of the Electric Media; and the Digital age.[18] Courses on the History of Human Communications use these epochs to help students situate the development of communications from the earliest men and women till now, acknowledging the fact that innovations in successive epochs tend to build upon the achievements of preceding ones, rather than obliterate them.

Presently, we are in the digital epoch, the beginning of which we can attribute to the invention of the first computer, and the birth of the possibility of representing phenomena in numerical form. In this epoch, we have witnessed the passage from analogue to digital systems in communications; the computerization of the systems of communications and the creation of integral multimedia networks, especially in the case of the internet. We have also experienced the movement of media towards portability, so as to facilitate the accessing of services at any point in space, and the passage of the mass media into *personal media*.[19]

It is in this wise that we will consider one of the most significant inventions of the digital age; the smartphone. The dictionary defines the smartphone as "a mobile phone that can be used as a small computer and that connects to the internet".[20] This definition is quite modest. In fact, the typical smartphone has advanced computing capabilities, with which it can access web pages and browse the web using data networks or Wi-Fi support and mobile broadband. It also has the capacity to interact with other devices using Bluetooth and near field communication, such that information can still be passed across in the absence of internet connectivity. The smartphone can view, edit and share different types of documents, since it can run applications that enable such. It can download different types of files, take photos and record videos, offer music playback and view movies, amongst others. It can serve as a radio, language translator, store dictionaries and encyclopedia, compass and magnifying glass and so on.

The smartphone can serve as a calendar, a clock, a directory containing list of contacts, can download, store and read maps for navigational purposes as well as give weather updates. It can assist the user carry out financial transactions, keep accounts and make budgets, track funds and finances, make travel arrangements, monitor heart rate, organize ones activities as well as provide entertainment. It can serve as a library where e-books and downloaded content are stored for further reference. And with the advent of the 'internet of things'[21] we now have

users who use their smartphones to secure and operate their homes and appliances.

The smartphone can do all these because it is actually a "modernized personal digital assistant (PDA) with wireless connectivity compact in design with a high-resolution touch screen, multi-touch interface and QWERTY keyboard[22]. The smartphone is not essential for healthy living, but in this digital age, it enhances and makes life easier.

Modern Means of Communication – Possibilities for Formation:

In his message on the 44th World Communications Day, Pope Benedict XVI said

> …priests can rightly be expected to be present in the world of digital communications as faithful witnesses to the Gospel, exercising their proper role as leaders of communities which increasingly express themselves with the different "voices" provided by the digital marketplace. Priests are thus challenged to proclaim the Gospel by employing the latest generation of audiovisual resources, which, alongside traditional means, can open up broad new vistas for dialogue, evangelization and catechesis. Using new communication technologies, priests can introduce people to the life of the Church and help our contemporaries to discover the face of Christ. **They will best achieve this aim if they learn, from the time of their formation, how to use these technologies in a competent and appropriate way, shaped by sound theological insights and reflecting a strong priestly spirituality grounded in constant dialogue with the Lord.** Yet priests present in the world of digital communications should be less notable for their media savvy than for their priestly heart, their closeness to Christ. This will not only enliven their pastoral outreach, but also will give a "soul" to the fabric of communications that makes up the "Web". [23]

We have tried to argue earlier, that communication as a reality, cuts across the four pillars of priestly formation, and the means of communication are already being used in formation. In addition to this, it is a truism that "those who begin the Seminary journey are, for the most part, already naturally adept and immersed in the digital world and its instruments". [24] Indeed practically every student in the three major seminaries of the Old Lagos Ecclesiastical Province for instance, is a digital native[25] This is why it has been recommended that

> …social networks should be integrated into the daily life of the Seminary community in a particular way (by a use that is vigilant, but also serene and positive). They should be experienced as places that offer new possibilities from the point of view of interpersonal relationships, of encounter with others, of engagement with one's neighbor, of the witness of faith. These may all be viewed from the perspective of formative growth, which cannot fail to take into consideration every place in which relationships are formed and in which we find ourselves living. [26]

The modern means of communications offer many possibilities for formation. We can consider this especially from two of the pillars of formation which we left out earlier, Intellectual and Pastoral.

Intellectual formation is "aimed at achieving for seminarians a solid competence in Philosophy and Theology, along with a more general educational preparation, enough to allow them to proclaim the Gospel message to the people of our own day in a way that is credible and can be understood…"[27]

The means of communication will help to open up for the individual seminarian, fonts of knowledge that will be otherwise difficult to access. The presence of electronic libraries in Nigerian Universities and Major Seminaries is testament to the fact there are inadequate materials in the physical libraries of these institutions. This fact has been lamented for a long time, and if truth be told, as it affects universities, so it affects seminaries. The e-library simply makes it possible to gain access to materials otherwise impossible to get.

Going forward, there is the need to progress beyond the idea that the presence of an e-library with a certain number of computers in a Seminary completely fills this need. This is especially true of Seminaries in the Old Lagos Ecclesiastical Province, which each boasts of functional and relatively well equipped e-libraries. But can we say that 30 computers in an e-library are sufficient for over 180 students? Or 50 for 400 students?

One of the ways the Seminaries have employed in getting around this dearth of computers is the use of computers owned by liturgico-cultural groups and other associations by the students, in a designated area. This helps to lessen the burden, but there is still a long way to go, as there remains a significant shortfall in the number of available computers vis-à-vis the population of students.

The academic contemporaries of these young men in formation (undergraduate students in universities) do not have the same challenge. It is either the universities (mostly private universities) insist on each student having a personal computer, to facilitate learning on-line, or the

students are allowed to use their smart phones for the same purposes that the computer does. The fact is that such institutions have made advancements in the digitalization of their processes, and any student without the relevant accessory to function in that environment is as good as being a 'non' student. This is because apart from being cut off from the academic activities of the school, he/she will end up being grossly unprepared for life after the university, in a world where 58.7% of persons (or roughly 3 out of every 5 persons) has access to the internet.[28]

It is our considered opinion that seminarians in formation should be able to take advantage of the available technologies which add value to their training. A seminarian with a smartphone, can have access to countless materials, books, documents and sources, which may not be in the physical library (and if there, not in sufficient quantity for the time needed for in-depth study), and which while accessible via the e-library, he may also not be able to use it properly due to reasons given above.

He can use his smartphone to prepare and submit assignments, which will be beneficial in three ways; one, it will help lecturers enforce deadlines, through platforms that will be time-limited (thus improving the discipline of the seminarian); two, it will reduce cost and waste to be incurred via printing on paper; and most importantly, it will eliminate plagiarism from the seminary system, as such soft copies can easily be uploaded to anti-plagiarism software for checks and assessments.

In addition, the seminarian who is open to formation will be assisted to develop a healthy reading habit, in consonance with the best traditions of priestly life. This is because, while there appears to be a worldwide decline in the number of persons reading books[29], there is an appreciable increase in the number of hours spent online. This is one of the effects of the phase of digitalization that we are in currently, and while no one can predict the future as to whether this trend will be reversed or it will become more entrenched, there is wisdom in preparing the future priest to spend this time online constructively. He can be trained to create virtual reading libraries, and challenged to read works on-line with his smartphone.

As regards Pastoral formation, being schooled in the means of communication helps the seminarian to understand his flock, who are completely immersed in this new world. Increasingly, priests are having to carry out pastoral ministry online. This is the reason why Dioceses, Parishes, Institutions and even certain individuals have webpages/websites, and maintain an online presence, conscious of the implications of web 2.0 for such webpages/websites.

In addition, the presence on social networks and the floating of Blogs, Vlogs, YouTube channels and Podcasts, are efforts made to reach

the people in that space where many of them prefer to be. It is a response to the signs of the times, already articulated by Pope Benedict XVI, when he stated

…responding adequately to this challenge amid today's cultural shifts, to which young people are especially sensitive, necessarily involves using new communications technologies. The world of digital communication, with its almost limitless expressive capacity, makes us appreciate all the more Saint Paul's exclamation: "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel" (1 Cor 9:16) The increased availability of the new technologies demands greater responsibility on the part of those called to proclaim the Word, but it also requires them to become become more focused, efficient and compelling in their efforts. Priests stand at the threshold of a new era: as new technologies create deeper forms of relationship across greater distances, they are called to respond pastorally by putting the media ever more effectively at the service of the Word. [30]

It is while in the seminary that the future priest will learn how to not only use the means of communication in his pastoral ministry, but also how to be a shepherd to his flock, who are fully immersed in this digital environment. This can be seen as a variant of *anticipatory socialization*[31], whereby the future priest learns how to manage the pastoral challenges that are associated with the digital age, by assuming these roles while in formation, and thus benefits from his experiences.

Modern Means of Communication – Issues in Formation:

It is instructive that in the same section where it is said that "the Church, in virtue of the mandate received from Christ, looks confidently at the possibilities offered by the digital world for evangelization…"[32], we also read the following; "it is necessary to pay prudent attention to the inevitable risks that come with frequenting the digital world, including various forms of addiction, which can be addressed with suitable spiritual and psychological supports"[33]

There is need for vigilance in the use of the modern means of communication. The digital age and its main facilitator, the internet is neither morally ambivalent nor wholly positive. Indeed, "people in emerging and developing nations say that the increasing use of the internet has been a good influence in the realms of education, personal relationships and the economy. But despite all the benefits of these new technologies, on balance people are more likely to say that the internet is a negative rather than a positive influence on morality…"[34]

The seminarian in formation is yet to complete his journey of personality integration and configuration to the person of Christ. This means that when he has a smartphone in his possession, it could expose him to some harm, especially in the following ways;

1. Illegal downloading of copyrighted materials: As prevalent as this is, downloading of copyrighted materials without the permission of the owner of the intellectual property is wrong (and in some cases liable to prosecution).
2. Negative Impact on Human Socialization: One of the effects of smartphones and by extension, social networks, is that persons now interact more via such platforms than face-to-face communication. This is impacting negatively on families, religious communities, rectories, offices and so on. There is the danger that with the smartphone in his possession, the Seminarian will also be guilty of this trend.
3. Disorientation on-line: There are virtually no rules in cyberspace, and anyone with the right gadget can post anything online, without the rigour of confirming its veracity. This causes confusion that can affect the Seminarian, should he frequent misleading websites.
4. Pornography: The possession of a smartphone will accentuate the temptation to view pornography on-line.
5. Anti-Social Behaviour: One of the features of social networks is the increase in harassment, threats, hate speech, and similar illegal, immoral or inflammatory behaviour. When the seminarian has a smartphone, he may be more prone to carrying out such actions.
6. Effects of Virtual Reality: Studies have shown that increased exposure to the internet increases the risk of internet addiction disorder[35]. In addition, the longer the time spent in the virtual world, the less attention that is given to real life issues. These can affect a seminarian in possession of a smartphone.
7. Financial fraud of any sort, et cetera, can be carried out via the smartphone with ease.

These issues can pose real threats to priestly formation, and it is understandable that in order to prevent them, many seminaries in Nigeria, following the directives of their proprietors, enforce an outright ban on the use of personal phones and computers by seminarians in formation *while in the Seminary.* This ban has been in force for quite a few years now. But should the presence of such dangers justify the continuance of this ban, given the possible benefits that are lost in the process?

Conclusion: The Baby or the Bath Water?

As far the means of communications are concerned, it is fair to say that as a Church, we have always displayed an attitude of suspicion, due to fear of its negative effects. It suffices to examine the tone of the first few magisterial documents on the means of communication to appreciate this

point. At the same time, this attitude is not as dominant as it once was, as more study of communications as a reality has helped the cultivation of a corresponding attitude of critical understanding, in order to make the best use of these gifts from God. But *the suspicion is yet to fully go away,* and often exists side by side with efforts to maximize our understanding and use of the means of communication, to the extent of even vitiating initiatives that promote the latter. But we do not need to throw away the baby with the dirty bath water.

We are of the opinion that it is better to return to the inspiration behind the publication of the 1986 *Guide* in this question of the means of communication. The idea of that document was that

…social communications training … which is specifically pastoral, is to be given to all students without distinction during their philosophy and theology courses. It has three aims:

a) To train those concerned in the correct use of the instruments of social communication (and in general, of every technique of expression and communication) in their pastoral activities, when the circumstances permit it;

b) To train them to be masters and guides of others (receivers in general, educators, all those who work in the *mass media*) through instruction, catechesis, preaching, etc., and as consultants, confessors, spiritual directors;

c) Above all, to get them into a state of mind in which they will be permanently ready to make the necessary adjustments in their pastoral activity, including those demanded by the inculturation of the Christian faith and life in the different particular churches, in a world psychologically and socially conditioned by the *mass media* and even already by telematics and informatics.[36]

Consequently, it will be better on the short and long run, to expose seminarians in formation to more means of communications rather than less. We are in a situation where the Authorities have to consider providing Seminary Formators with the necessary wherewithal to be able to effectively mentor and journey with their students, as regards proper, responsible use of the means of communication, especially the smartphone. It will not be easy to correct them when they misuse the smartphone or personal computers, if these are not mainstreamed into the regular seminary curriculum. At any rate, that seminarians do not have smartphones in the seminary *does not* mean that they do not have smartphones outside the seminary, which they use during vacation. Is that period not part of their formation for the priesthood?

Similarly, and in the light of what has been said above, there is the need to have experts in Communications Science among the

seminary staff, who will be responsible for teaching communication courses that span through the entire duration of the formation of the future priest. What we now have in the seminaries under consideration in this paper, are seminar courses on aspects of Communications located either at the final year of the formation program, or carried out during inter-semester breaks. These are better than nothing, but still far from the desired point, if the 1986 *Guide* is taken into proper consideration. The presence of such an expert will reasonably guarantee that the Seminarians understand from the outset, how they are to use the means of communications, and transform them from possible distractions to critical aids to their integral formation, and future priestly life.

Additionally, we humbly state that there is a flaw in the reasoning that the ban on smartphone usage in the Seminary helps the candidate avoid the dangers associated with it. It only postpones the proverbial evil day, as instead of making 'low profile' errors, while in formation, with the possibility of correction, we will expose ourselves to the possibility of high profile 'gaffes' being committed by the same person, with the difference being that he is now a priest, and unfortunately, may not be as eager to accept that sort of correction. And as for teaching the lay faithful how best to use the means of communication, it will be a case of *nemo dat quod non habet*[37].

Therefore, in the question of Seminary Formation and Modern Means of Communications, the possibilities in permitting full exposure to these communication tools significantly outweigh whatever benefits that would come from shielding those in formation from these tools, in the light of the present digital epoch.

Endnote

[1] Congregation for Catholic Education, (1986) *Guide To The Training Of Future Priests Concerning The Instruments Of Social Communication,* Presentation, accessed from http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_19031986_guide-for-future-priests_en.html (Retrieved March 05, 2020)

[2] *Ibid,* No 4

[3] "Seminary Education ." New Catholic Encyclopedia . (Retrieved March 04, 2020 from Encyclopedia.com)

[4] *Ibid*

[5] Decree on Priestly Training *Optatam Totius*, (October 28, 1965) in Flannery, A. (ed) (1995). *Vatican Council II: The Concilliar and Post Concilliar Documents,* Bombay, St. Pauls' No.4

[6] *Ibid*, N.19

[7] See http://www.synod.va/content/synod/en/synodal_assemblies/1990-eighth-ordinary-general-assembly--the-formation-of-priests-.html

[8] John Paul II, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, (March 15, 1992) No 3. Retrieved March 05, 2020 from www.vatican.va.

[9] *Ibid*, No. 42

[10] *Ibid*, No. 5

[11] For instance, the revised *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis,* authored by the Congregation for the Clergy, (No. 35) we read "Priests, who are configured to Christ, Head and Shepherd, Servant and Spouse, participate in His one priesthood and saving mission as co-workers with the Bishops. In this way they are visible signs of the merciful love of the Father in the Church and in the world. These characteristics of the person of Christ help us to understand better the ministerial priesthood in the Church. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they inspire and guide the formation of seminarians so that they can be conformed to Christ by their immersion in the mystery of the Trinity"

[12] See https://www.etymonline.com/word/communication (Retrieved February 24, 2020).

[13] Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Communication. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. (Retrieved March 06, 2020, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/communication)

[14] Congregation for the Clergy (2016) *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis,* Vatican City, L'Osservatore Romano, No 93.

[15] *Ibid,* No. 97

[16] Cambridge. (n.d). Communication. In *Dictionary.Cambridge.org*. (Retrieved March 03, 2020 from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/communication).

[17] We have deliberated left out the internet or the worldwide web, from this list of the means of communication, because of its unique characteristics. In the words of M. A. Dennis & R. Kahn, the internet is "a system architecture that has revolutionized communications and methods of commerce by allowing various computer networks around the world to interconnect. Sometimes referred to as a "network of networks," …the Internet provides a capability so powerful and general that it can be used for almost any purpose that depends on information, and it is accessible by every individual who connects to one of its constituent networks". See Brittannica.com

[18] For a detailed treatment of these different epochs, see Gronowski, Dariusz (2007) *Teoria Generale Della Comunicazione*, Roma, EDUSC, (Dispense per uso degli studenti) pp 89-126.

[19] Gronowski, *Ibid*, p. 121

[20] Cambridge. (n.d). Smartphone. In *Dictionary.Cambridge.org*. (Retrieved March 04, 2020 from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/communication).

[21] The internet of things is a proposed development of the internet in which many everyday objects are embedded with microchips giving them network connectivity, allowing them to send and receive data. See "internet, n.". OED Online. March 2020. Oxford University Press. https://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/248411 (Retrieved March 06, 2020).

[22] Lenovo. *What is a Smartphone*. (Retrieved 2020, Feb 24 from https://www.lenovo.com/gb/en/faqs/pc-life-faqs/what-is-a-smartphone/)

[23] Benedict XVI, "The Priest and Pastoral Ministry in a Digital World: New Media at the Service of the Word" message on the 44th World Day of Communications, 24 January, 2010, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedictxvi/en/messages/communications/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20100124_44th-world-communications-day.html (Retrieved February 27, 2020) (emphasis mine).

[24] Congregation for the Clergy, *ibid,* No. 99

[25] D*igital Native* is a term used to describe a person who has grown up in the *digital* age, and is used to digital systems as a result. It is used to contrast Digital Immigrants, who had to acquire familiarity with *digital* systems as an adult.

[26] Congregation for the Clergy, *ibid,* No. 100

[27] *Ibid,* No. 116

[28] According to available statistics, the world population as at December 2019 was estimated at 7,796,615,710, with 4,574,150,134 having access to the internet. https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm (Retrieved March 02, 2020).

[29] This has been the subjects of many academic papers and newspaper articles, but we will just refer the reader to one; Twenge, J. M., Martin, G. N., & Spitzberg, B. H. (2019). Trends in U.S. Adolescents' media use, 1976–2016: The rise of digital media, the decline of TV, and the (near) demise of print. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture, 8*(4), 329–345. https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000203

[30] Pope Benedict XVI, *Ibid.*

[31] Anticipatory Socialization "involves the informal adoption of norms or behaviour appropriate to a status not yet achieved by the individuals concerned, so providing them with experience of a role they have yet to assume. For example, children may anticipate parenthood by observing their parents as role models, and the careerist may anticipate promotion by emulating the occupational behaviour of his or her superiors". (See "anticipatory socialization." A Dictionary of Sociology. . (Retrieved March 05, 2020 from Encyclopedia.com: https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/anticipatory-socialization)

[32] Congregation for the Clergy, *ibid,* No. 98

[33] *Ibid,* No. 99

[34] See https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2015/03/19 (Retrieved March 06, 2020)

[35] Internet Addiction Disorder has been defined as "a maladaptive patter of internet use, characterized by psychological dependence, withdrawal symptoms when offline for prolonged periods, loss of control, compulsive behavior, and clinically significant impairment of normal social interactions or distress" (See Internet addiction. (n.d.) *Segen's Medical Dictionary*. (2011). Retrieved March 6 2020 from https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Internet+addiction)

[36] Congregation for Catholic Education, *ibid,* No. 30

[37] This Latin saying means "You cannot give what you do not have".

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WOMEN IN YORUBA RELIGION AND CULTURE

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Abstract
This paper discusses the place of women in Yoruba Culture and Religion. It first established the fact that Yoruba culture and religion are strictly related. While culture expresses religion, religion is part and parcel of Yoruba culture, and these two elements occupy a valuable place in the life of the Yoruba. It observed that the Yoruba value motherhood even as polygamy was common, targeted at having more children, specifically, male children because of inheritance. The women were indispensable partners of the men folk; it was the women that managed the home and made Yoruba valued festivities a huge success. They were not just partners in relation to the men, they assumed leadership offices like the Iya Laje. This paper also discovered that women were the sustaining force of Yoruba Religion. Women did not only participate but played leadership roles, especially as concerns rituals. In several cults for instance, women were priestesses like, Ìyá Ọ̀ṣun, Ìyá ÒGún, and Ìyá Ṣàngó. They were also readily accessible to feed the gods and take care of

shrines. This paper discovered that women were not only well involved in the Yoruba life, culture and religion, they were indispensable. For the purpose of this study, the phenomenological method of inquiry would be employed.

Key words: Women, Yoruba, Religion, Culture, Motherhood, Iya Laje, Priestesses

Introduction

This paper discusses Women in Yoruba Culture and Religion especially in the precolonial period. Yoruba people according to Atanda (1989) constitute one of the major ethnic groups in modern Nigeria and they effectively occupy the whole of Ogun, Ondo, Oyo and Lagos State and a substantial part of Kwara State. A considerable number of Yoruba people also inhabit the South- Eastern part of Republic of Benin (formal Dahomey). As a group, they have distinguished themselves in their belief and traditions. The Yoruba deities are called Orishas and the oral traditions have it that they have more than 420 Deities that are worshiped differently without clashes with rituals, music, dances, and prediction practices from their priests and priestesses. Yorubas believe that when they die, they go to the realm of ancestors where they can still have influence on events taking place on earth. They believe in re-incarnation. Hence there is a link between the living and the dead. God Almighty to them is called Olọ́run.

Most of the Yoruba people take part in farm work. The men grow foods such as corn, yams, cocoyams, nuts, and cocoa. Men are also often traders and craftsmen as well. Women do less work on the farms, but are important traders as they market their husbands' farm produce. Their rank traditionally depends on that of their husbands. Therefore wives of kings, chiefs and Ifa priests were honoured more than those that were married to ordinary members of the community. Some of Yoruba values are respect for elders- growing up has benefits. They also value honesty, collective community development, cultural observes reflecting in their interaction with others- mode of dressing and diets. They also value humility and perseverance. And more importantly, they value communal life. All these are inculcated in their informal training originally called home training.

Akíntúndé and Fálọlá (2016) summarize Yoruba values as follows: "Good virtues can also be learned through proverbs (òwe), Ifá corpus (odù), and some mythical stories and parables. Generosity, hospitality, and kindness are interconnected and closely related. The Yorùbá expect that a person who possesses a virtuous moral character,

such as kindness, ought to be generous and hospitable. All virtues are intrinsically connected with and relevant to individual and communal peace. When these qualities are in abundance, the Yorùbá consider the society to have abundant life."

Yoruba culture and religion are closely related. While culture expresses religion, religion itself is part and parcel of Yoruba culture. This is simply their ways of life as well as their belief. Any effort to separate culture and religion among the Yoruba will surely be ineffective. According to Olajubu (2008), "the traditional cultural and religious practices of the Yoruba people are closely intertwined. In traditional Yoruba religion, women are its majority membership and sustaining force. Consequently, women play leadership roles in Yoruba religion, especially as concerns rituals." The researcher witnessed in some villages in Yoruba land, while women would carry sacrifices in afternoon to ensure safety in the environment. At times, they may be two or three women doing this at the same time with total enthusiasm and seriousness.

Yoruba believe that women apart from being complementary, they are representation of peace and harmony. Hence the common wish and prayer at the beginning of a New Year "ọdún á ya'bo fún wa o" (This year will bring us all that the female principle stands for). This prayer is a representation of the people's conception of female (abo) and male (akọ). A "female year" in this context is a blissful and pleasurable year. Since Yoruba belief that symbols of calmness and peace (ẹ̀rọ̀) represent female principles, whereas toughness represents male principles.

Another important fact about Yoruba women down the ages is their trust in motherhood. Motherhood is cherished beyond any other thing. Despite the fact that polygamy was common in the indigenous Yoruba culture, having children was as good as living or being alive. To this, Ilesanmi (2013) opines that "among the Yoruba people, motherhood transcends biological readiness" Akíntúndé and Fálọlá (2016) explain this concept better in these words "a woman must bear children; motherhood is highly valued by the Yorùbá people. A proverb states ọlọ́mọ ló l'ọkọ (the one who bears children is the owner of the husband)." Many a time they say olomo lo l'aye (the one who bears children owns the world). Therefore, you have names like Omojola (A child is greater than wealth), Omoyajowo (A child is preferred to wealth), Omoleye (Children are honorable), Omolabake (A child is to be pampered), Omobanji (A child awoke with me), Omolade (A child is a crown), Omoniosinmi (A child will bury me), Omolere (A child is a reward), Omolaso (A child covers nakedness), Omolara (A child is family), Omolayo (A child is joy) in Yoruba culture to drive home the fact that children are better than any other thing in life. A mother then

will stay in her marriage through tick and tin because children are involved and many a time it becomes the only reason why they have to persevere. In the midst of chaos, they remove their children first and any other thing can perish.

Akíntúndé and Fálọlá conclude by saying that " a barren woman does everything humanly even spiritually possible to have a child, which may result in the children of cowives becoming possible targets of attack from a barren woman or other enemies." As they struggle to become mothers, the desire to have male children is another important issue. Male children are highly valued than female children because of inheritance as Ilesanmi (2013) consents therefore, "the heir receives much honour but a female child cannot be a heir in Yoruba land." Along with this struggle, they still participate actively in the affairs of the society and in religion by taking leadership positions by becoming regents, priestesses and even Deities.

Women in Yoruba Culture and Religion

Women in Yoruba Culture: The culture of Yoruba people reflects in their trades and professions, music, dressing, choices of meals or diets, celebration of the living and the dead, togetherness, arts and festivals, folktales, proverbs, myths and symbols. This culture is also their religion and Idowu (1966) asserts to this by saying that "the religion of the Yoruba permeates their lives so much that it expresses itself in multifarious ways. It forms the themes of songs, makes topics for minstrelsy, finds vehicles in myths, folktales, proverbs and sayings, and is the basis of philosophy."

Yoruba women were always available to take care of their homes and children even the extended families. They were useful domestically, such as catering, tailoring, and housekeeping. They were helping their husbands in farm work as very popular in the traditional Yoruba culture. They always break into age groups for support and encouragements through regular meetings and connections. Akíntúndé and Fálọlá (2016) in their contributions are of the opinion that the precolonial Yorùbá woman's active participation in economic activities allowed for accumulation of wealth, through which she accessed sociopolitical space. Prominent examples of women who achieved socio-economic power and subsequently wielded great political influence in their societies and environs include Ẹfúnṣetán Aníwúrà, the Ìyálóde (woman leader) of Ìbàdàn and Mọ́gàjí of her lineage, and Madam Ẹfúnróyè Tinúbú, the first Ìyálóde of Ẹ̀gbáland. Other women became adelé ọba (regents) to fill leadership vacuums in their communities, and some became the ọba of their communities, such as in old Onìdó kingdom.

In the culture, Yoruba women were part and parcel of war even though men were always at the war front. Ilesanmi (2013) asserts that, "while men rely on brute force and medicinal power in fighting wars, women rely on psychological and the cult knowledge which are by far superior to those of brute force and medicinal aid." They have a particular role to play in all the events of the traditional life be it related to peace or to war. In the mind of Ilesanmi (2013) as well, "women most of the time were responsible for the happenings of the environment as he identifies them as a group that "can cause war, act as instrument of war, act in avoidance of war and their role in the formulation of peace treaty." A good example is the story of Moremi, who sacrificed her son Oluorogbo to a goddess for her people to have peace.

Women in Yoruba Religion: Yoruba people stand out in their religious practices. They belief in God and in other gods that are closer to them and they carve images of them in their shrines. In relation to this, Johnson (1921) affirms that "Yoruba people believe in the existence of the ALMIGHTY GOD, him they term *Olorun*- Lord of heaven. They acknowledge Him, maker of heaven and earth, but too exalted to concern Himself with men and their affairs, hence they admit the existence of other gods as intermediaries and these they term *Orisas*." He went further to explain Yoruba belief by adding that they also belief in the future state, therefore the worship of the dead, and invocation of the spirits and in the "doctrine of metempsychosis, transmigration of souls, hence they affirm that after a period of time, deceased parents are born again into the family of their surviving children." Women are the majority when it comes to practicing traditional religion. However, Idowu (1966) is of the opinion that Yoruba people are "religious in all things." He states further that "Religion forms the foundation and all-governing principle of life for them. …the full responsibility of all the affairs belongs to the Deity…through all its changing scenes, its joys and troubles; it is the Deity who is in control" Women were very much ensnared into this religious practices that apart from the time of worship, they make their religious practices part of their daily activities. Idowu (1966) opines that "usually, women are more religious ones who are more frequently caught in this practice by wayside shrines, sacred trees, sacred brooks, at cross-roads, or at any other places marked with some sacred signs, asking for a blessing on their journey, their work, their wares, their family or their private undertakings".

As we pay attention to the role of women in Yoruba culture, some of them became Deities with specific responsibilities like their male counterparts like: Ajé - orisha of wealth, Ayao - orisha of air, Yewa - orisha of the river Yewa. Of the maternity and of the children, Nàná

Bùkùú - orisha of the river and of the earth, Ọbà - first wife of Ṣàngó and orisha of domesticity and marriage, Ọtìn - orisha of river, she is hunter and wife of Erinlẹ̀, Olókun - orisha of the seas, Ọ̀ṣun - orisha who presides over love, intimacy, beauty, wealth, diplomacy and of the Ọ̀ṣun river, Ọya - orisha of the Niger River; associated with wind, lightning, fertility, fire, and magic, Yemọja - a mother goddess; patron deity of women and of the Ogun river and finally Yemowo - wife of Ọbàtálá and of the water.

Each òrìṣà has its shrine and favorite sacrificial offerings, and its followers observe a distinctive set of food taboos. Women were readily available at these shrines to feed the gods and clean the shrines. They equally make provisions for food during festivities. To their followers, the òrìṣà bring the benefits of health, wealth, and children, but they punish negligence, offences, and the breaking of taboos. Various worshippers enjoy the support of the ruler (ọba) and some of the worshippers visit the palace to greet him and impart on him the blessings of the òrìṣà on their feast days.

In line with this, Akíntúndé and Fálọlá (2016) arrive at a beautiful description on the role of women in Yoruba religion. "Women play key roles in religious ceremonies as priestesses and prophetesses. Some important deities are female. For instance, several cults, including Ọ̀ṣun, Ògún, and Ṣàngó, have women priestesses who are known as Ìyá Ọ̀ṣun, Ìyá Ògún, and Ìyá Ṣàngó, respectively." They went further to explain that Yorùbá women in precolonial period were admitted into sacred knowledge (awo). As initiates, such women could participate as leaders in high religious ritual practices from which uninitiated men and women were excluded. The admission of women into sacred knowledge translated into religious powers for those women. They went on to serve as diviners (Ìyánífá).

Yoruba women have mystical powers as they appear week physically; some of them have more than they carry outside. "Yoruba people also believe that some women have extrasensory, celestial powers. Some of these powers are intended for destruction, and these women are referred to as ìyá ayé (women of the world). Women were often regarded as atúnnidá, or women who have the ability to affect one's destiny and possibly change such an individual. Akíntúndé and Fálọlá (2016)

They were the brains behind most of the happenings in cults. Ilesanmi (2013) says emphatically that "there is no Yoruba native cult without women as its backbone" and always women were deprived to see or witness these happenings hence the saying; *Obinrin o kii wo oro* which means that women must not witness the happening within the cults. And to this, Ilesanmi says, "It is women who ban other women from seeing

the cults." Apart from women this, "the most powerful women's cult is witches cult" Ilesanmi (2013). He explained further that men fear them most because they decide who should be king and put a mark on him from birth. Also, women cults controls men as vanguards; they can make men suffer indescribable pains and yet pretend that they knew nothing about the genesis of the suffering and they give full support to the one they love.

Conclusion

The participation of women in Yoruba culture and Religion are not prominent today like in the traditional culture. Colonization and civilization has really influenced these practices. Today, Christianity and Islamic religions are becoming popular and women are not taking active participation in them. It appears to be men religion. For example, women are no longer participating in rituals; they are not even recognized in worship. Although in some cases they still take care of the places of worship as cleaners but not as prophetesses and priestesses except in some white garment churches. Women are still the majority in places of worship, at Prayer Mountains and attending vigils, asking for blessings on their journey, their work, their business, their family or their private happenings. Nonetheless, they are in the minority in the political and economic structures of the society. Yoruba women today struggle alone in this individualistic society. Thanks to colonial masters who brought civilization in its positive parts but this has really destroyed Yoruba values and women participation in their culture and Religion.

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FORMATION OF THE HUMAN PERSON IN THE 21ST CENTURY

COMMUNIQUE

1. Preamble

The Seminary of All Saints, Uhiele, Ekpoma, Edo state in celebrating Twenty Five years of existence as a sacred institution for the formation of future priests for the Church convoked an international conference, the second of its very kind to mark this landmark. The conference was held at the seminary compound from the 18th to 21st of March, 2020 on the theme**: Formation of the Human person in the 21st Century**, and the following points were arrived at.

The 21st Century is complex, sophisticated, global and amazingly interconnected. It is a world that questions: it is curious and challenges even age long traditional institutions, structures and beliefs. There seem to be an unrelenting battle by many forces, for the soul and heart of the 21st century world. The Human person as well as the whole formation process are although evolving, but in at a slow pace, hence there is a need for a synergy between the four aspects of formation; spiritual, pastoral, human, and intellectual as it pertains to the human person living and existing in the 21st Century. It is pertinent to review and evaluate the processes and overall mode of priestly formation in this century in face of global and local realities that have become part of the society in the 21st Century.

2. Attractions

The business of the Seminary is to form Catholic men for the ministerial priesthood. The task of Seminary formators is to ensure that candidates were thoroughly grounded in theological truths and priestly spirituality with clear expectations in terms of doctrinal orthodoxy, liturgical celebration, pastoral ministry and priestly spirituality with an eye to the vicissitudes and vagaries of the time and place. The preoccupation of the Formators in Seminary is how to form the seminarians for optimum efficiency and pastoral effectiveness as priests. The zealous and dedicated Formators, therefore, are constantly in search of enhanced and up to date methods and techniques to carry out this duties satisfactorily.

While formation of the Catholic Priests has the same objective, the context, time and methods for doing it have continued to change.
The maximization of the principle of solidarity and subsidiarity would enhance the updated functionality and utility of the collective efforts of both the Proprietors and the Formators at the priestly formation in our time.

3. Dangers

Not to take note of the constant change about formation and take advantage of the new methods and techniques that soothes the present time would cause injury to the integrity, comprehensive and the updated functionality of other the Seminary as an institution and Formators as conscientious labourers in it.
Formators should guide against the "*i no go do for my pikin*, because my papa no do for me" syndrome, this mentality only leads to retrogression
Formators are also to watch out so as not to project and prescribe their personal spirituality as the norm for everybody. No general principles and objectives are approachable from various and different angles.

4. Challenges

The family is the first place for the formation of the human person, It is within the context of a healthy family that a healthy priestly or religious vocation is been nurtured. However, some of the deadly traits we notice in some seminarians are defects resulting from family set-up or societal backgrounds: Aversion for Truth telling; irresponsible life style; lack of commitment; sexual immaturity and abuses, mistrust of authority and disconnection from and discontent with the teaching, directive or spirituality of the Church
The discernment of motive can some as well as the spiritual, moral, and intellectual adequacy can some time prove to be an herculean task.

5. Response

The Church in Nigeria needs priests, who know what they are doing, who can defend the faith. We need priests who can manage their emotions and sexuality. We need priests who are not ruled by anger, bitterness, or malice. We need priests who are not always on their "high-horses'. We need priests who can relate with confidence and charity towards all men, Christians, Muslims, and Traditionalists alike. We need good, happy, efficient, holy, loyal, hardworking, and compassionate priests. We need priests like Christ. This is the task of

the Seminary at this time in Nigeria, it is a great task but it is not impossible. All of us must do our part by giving our best to Christ and his Church We must pay more attention to every aspect of human formation, because the times are changing, demands are higher, and the stake is grave.

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60. Chukwurah, Peter Izuchukwu
61. Clement, Emmanuel Ojo
62. Cyril Osilama Adamu
63. Danladi, Paul Amos
64. December, Andrew Ogheneosun
65. Deile Peter
66. Douye Stephen Onoriode
67. Ebiwarebo Evans Samuel
68. Ebor Samuel Osimeoagwe
69. Edema, Philip
70. Ediale, Andrew Osaremen
71. Edosomah, Edgar Chukwudumebi
72. Edwin N. Omorogbe
73. Egho, Augustine Chukwuka
74. Egielewa, Peter Eshioke
75. Egwu Peter Ikenna
76. Ehiomhen John Aiwonose
77. Ekairia Eugene Okueamhen
78. Ekechi John Okwudili
79. Elegbede, Dominic Oluwatosin
80. Elias, Innocent Chidera
81. Elimian, Thomos Onosetale
82. Elvis Imafidon
83. Emekhi, Ambrose Oseghale
84. Emmanuel I. Ukpebor
85. Emmanuel Ogundele
86. Enihenhenan, Simon Oseghale
87. Enowoghomwenma, Matthew Osakpomwan
88. Eromiokhale Augustine Osemundiamhen
89. Esene, Emmanuel Bernard
90. Ewedina, David Francis
91. Eze Chidubem Anthony
92. Ezuna Paschal Chekwube
93. Fabidun Fancis
94. Fadele, John Adebayo
95. Faniyi, Victor Oluwasegun
96. Fashanu Oluwadamilare Emmanuel
97. Felix Ehimare Enegho
98. Francis Adedara
99. Francis Adelabu
100. Francis Eshemomoh Ikhianosime
101. Francis Oseghale
102. Frofoun, Owey Ebianoukabo
103. Gagana Clement Akpesiri
104. Garuba Bethel Emmanuel
105. Genesis, Joseph Oghenemaro
106. Gregory Ebalu Ogbenika
107. Hilary Oseabulu Odenore
108. Ibhazobe, Kennedy Ebinehita
109. Ibi Valentine
110. Idahosa Amadasu
111. Idobogbe Clement Ebanehita
112. Ifedioranma, Francis Chinonso
113. Ijezie Francis
114. Ilegbedion, Romanus Ighodarosa
115. Ilemonu, Vincent Eyegwialo
116. Itulah, Timothy Osemudiamhen
117. Iyah, Wilson Emoefe
118. James, Callistus Chukwuma
119. John Segun Odeyemi
120. Johnson, Avivie Ekine
121. Junaid, Lawrence Bamidele
122. Korie Praiz
123. Lawrence, Friday Stephen
124. Mark Omorovie Ikeke
125. Martins, Benedict Barisua
126. Masigwe, Vincent Ikemefune
127. Michael Odubela
128. Michael Olawuyi Olawuni
129. Michael Sola Omojola
130. Mike Boni Bazza

131. Mkpahu Maduka Benjamin
132. Mmadu John Chibueze
133. Mochi, Benedict Oshiokekhai
134. Morah Francis Ikechuwku
135. Most Rev Dr Michael Odogwu Elue
136. Most Rev Dr. Adesina Francis
137. Most. Rev. Donatus Ogun
138. Nicholas Oshiokede
139. Njoku, Joseph Emeka
140. Njuwe, Henry Chukwuneku
141. Ntui Victor Ntui
142. Nwagu, Michael Uche
143. Nwokpor Joseph Sunday
144. Nwokwu, Matthew Onyedikachi
145. Obiagbalasi, Henry Ebere
146. Obiejesi, Emmanuel Ekene
147. Oboh Bernard Odion
148. Oboh, Paul Eromosele
149. Odion, Destiny Paul
150. Odozi, Joseph Chukwudi
151. Ofomata, Francis Ifeanyi
152. Ofuokwu, Emmanuel Chukwunonso
153. Oguekwe, Gerald Chiazokam
154. Ogunlaja, Philip Omotoso
155. Ogunsanya, Paul Kehinde
156. Ohumaegbulem Emmanuel Chukwugozi
157. Ohwota, Anthony
158. Ojekunle, Francis Oluwatobi
159. Ojeniyi John Ayanponle
160. Okafor Justin Onyebuchi
161. Okee, David Johnbosco
162. Okoboshi, Peter Chukwuma
163. Okoh, Peace
164. Okonkwo Vitus Peter
165. Okonmah, Kenneth Chukwubuikem
166. Okoro, Destiny
167. Okoro, Ernest Ichako
168. Okoye Sylvester Uzokwe
169. Okpako, Raphael Oghenero
170. Okpalefe, Paul Ejomafuvwe
171. Okpomeh, Jude Aghuoghenathor
172. Olagunju, Emmanuel Eniola
173. Olanrewaju, Boniface Oluwaseun
174. Olumuyiwa Anthony Omodunbi
175. Oluwadare, Lucas Abiodun
176. Omoalu, Augustine Emaneshi
177. Omodara, Michael Tope
178. Omodiale Daniel Ehimen
179. Omojola Immaculata Olu
180. Omosebi, Michael Thomson
181. Onifade, Emmanuel Kayode
182. Onojame, Victor Isicheri
183. Onwuneme, Anthony Blair
184. Onyele Ifeanyi Callistus
185. Onyemegbulem, Adrian Chukwufumnanya
186. Ootoade, Anthony Adebayo
187. Opoggen Anthony Mudiaga
188. Orisheminone, Alexander Emavremu
189. Osawaru, Osamede Christopher
190. Oseghale, Jude Ehimen
191. Oseyande, Geoffrey Osamudiamen
192. Oshevire, Francis Ogheneyoma
193. Oshogbo, Jonh Dennis
194. Osuji, Benedict Chigozie
195. Otoagua, Matthew Osazee
196. Otutu, Ebenezer Ehinomen
197. Ovadje Gregory
198. Owie, God's Time
199. Owolanwo, Victor Uniaminuva
200. Oyanoghafo Alphonsus Nosakhare
201. Ozom Anthony Oyenanai
202. Paul Ọlátúbọ̀sún Àdajà
203. Peter Egbe
204. Peter Wojuaye
205. Polycarp B. Imoageme
206. Prof. Agatha Eguavoen,
207. Prof. Isaac E. Ukpokolo
208. Prof. John Afiagbokai Onimhawo
209. Prof. Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony
210. Prof. Michael Ogunu
211. Rex Osajie
212. Salako, Matthew Setonji
213. Samson Imhagbe
214. Samuel, Charles Odiri
215. Sani, Joseph Osizehmete

216. Sekunda Gabriel Babatunde
217. Stan-William O. Ede
218. Sule Jude Etseoghena
219. Sylvester Idemudia Odia
220. Theodore, Jonh God'spower
221. Thomas Anthony
222. Thomas Martins Akinwale
223. Thomas Onuh
224. Toriola, Peter Oluwatosin
225. Ubhimhiye Luke Ehiabhi
226. Uduebholo Ahamiuki Benjamin
227. Ugonabo Valentine Ekene
228. Ulebor, Benjamin Junior
229. Umeh, Francis Paul
230. Umehido Ignatius Obinna
231. Umukoro, Patrick Oghenekaro
232. Unuabona Abraham Amioshor
233. Usuogie Andy Obho
234. Uzere Augustine Othuke
235. Uzowuihe, Emmauel Onyekachi
236. Vincent Ojo
237. Yonronfun, Reuben Mautin
238. Ziakegha, Clement
239. Ebimobowei