

**TANGAZA COLLEGE**  
**Catholic University of Eastern Africa**

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**NEW METHODS OF  
EVANGELIZING THE YOUTH IN  
KITALE DIOCESE**

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**A Long Essay submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies**

**Nairobi 2005**

## **DEDICATION**

To,

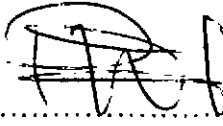
Zapho Jeremiah Majumbe, who introduced me to the ministry of the youth.

To,

All young people of Kipsaina who remained faithful to the Catholic Church when they had no youth co-ordinator for six years.

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this long essay is my original work achieved through personal reading and critical reflection. It has never been submitted to any other institution for academic credit. All sources have been cited and acknowledged in full.

Signed:  ..... Wambulwa.

Name of student: Peter Wambulwa, Fdp.

Date: 27:02:2005 .....

This long essay has been submitted for examination with my approval as the college supervisor.

Signed:  .....

Name of supervisor: Rev. Fr. Marcellus Kawasonga.

Date: 28-2-2005 .....

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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I cannot forget the St Christopher's Catholic Church which provided the first fertile ground whenever there was a youth seminar or rally. They always thought of me as the best facilitator, and this helped me to build my self esteem. I acknowledge the support given by my entire family and those who joined hands and spirit together to help me over these years I have served the youth.

May God bless you all.

## **FACTS ABOUT DIOCESE OF KITALE**

Kitale Diocese comprises of two districts, namely Transnzoia and West Pokot in the Rift Valley Province.

### **I. Transnzoia District**

Total Population of the District: 575,662

Population Distribution: Less than 18 years of age 48.30 percent.

Population Density: 231 people per km<sup>2</sup>.

Average income per family: Kshs 4,858 per month.

Unemployment Rate: 15.69 percent.

Population with access to safe water: 55.20 percent.

Population with access to safe sanitation: 68.10 percent.

Population with cemented floor: 21.6 percent.

- Transnzoia is the most densely populated district in the Rift valley, after Bureti, Transnzoia has the highest number of unemployment in the Province.
- Its absolute poverty level is 54.83 percent, and its food poverty level is 54.21 percent.

### **II. West Pokot District**

Total Population: 308,086.

Population Distribution: Less than 18 years 49.88 percent.

Population Density: 34 people per km<sup>2</sup>.

Average income per family: Kshs. 3,304.

Unemployment rate: 15.7 percent.

- West Pokot is the poorest district in the Rift Valley Province.
- It has the second lowest monthly mean income of 3,304.
- Many children in the West Pokot are malnourished

Parishes: 22

Diocesan Pastors: 17

Missionaries: 19

Total population 890,000

Catholics 100,000.

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1. Where are the Youth?

According to Kenya Bureau of Statistics, about 52% of Kenyan population is below the age of 25 years, majority of whom are below the age of 15 years of age. Most of the youth are still under the initial stage of formal education.<sup>1</sup> The common concept when one visits Kitale town is the impression of the many beautiful sign boards advertising different churches. E.g., Catholic Church Mitume Parish, the Church of the Restoration, Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Africa Inland Church, and the Winners Chapel. The general perception to any visitor would be an impression that Kitale has many Christians. This is true when one visits the Sunday schools, one will be surprised seeing them in their great numbers. This perception has easily tempted many pastors and contractors to build huge parish churches in anticipating the future with great hopes. Is this true?

In carrying out my research, it became clear that the bigger population of serious Church goers are mainly old people. The youth attend Church services at a much earlier age, between 5-15 years. From the age of 16-22, it seems that their participation becomes lesser and lesser; they no longer become interested in religious activities. This long essay tries to examine what is actually causing all this mass exodus of young people from the Church especially from the Catholic Church. Does it mean that the Catholic Church is not able to offer what the youth are looking for? Or are the Young people only looking for reasons to justify why they do not go to Church?

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<sup>1</sup> A. Shorter, *New religious Movements in Africa*, Pauline Publications, Nairobi, 2001, 73.

## 2. Children in a Family

Though Kitale is branded as one the most metropolitan town in Kenya, majority of the people are Luhya. This makes it easy for other tribes too who are in Transnzioa District to be able to speak Bukusu, a dialect of the many Luhya sub groups. Kitale like any other modern towns finds itself in changing realities. In the past, having children was a joy common to all Bukusu communities. The family, clan lineage and ethnic group took charge of an individual. The ideal person was the one what was rooted in the community. The parents had children, but indeed the children belonged to the community.<sup>2</sup> Children were raised up as social persons who would properly suit in the society.

Therefore having children and raising them up as members of a group had both religious and social connotation.

The life cycle begins again when a person dies, and that is why a dead person's names were given to newly born babies.<sup>23</sup> The responsibility of parents towards their children was to help them suit into the socio-religious values of a tribe. These values included prayers, sacrifices, wearing of amulets which were believed to be strong spiritual aids to the children. The parents taught their children directly through formal instruction, focused on desired behaviours, or they could reprimand the wrong they did not like in their children. The elders handed down educational lessons mainly those of moral sort.

These were achieved in proverbs for example.

*"Oria mawe aria mayi wo Kundi"*

(The one, who respects his own mother, respects the mother of another.)

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<sup>2</sup> L. P. Kilbride & C.J. Kilbride *Changing Family Life in East Africa: Women and Children at Risk* Gideon S. Were Press, Nairobi, 1993, 84.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 84.

This was the basis, in which one learned the standards for proper social behaviors in a given society <sup>4</sup> Children were important because they increased the membership of a given clan, hence assuring it of its future survival. The children were supposed to learn the customs properly. For example a child was expected to respect his father by kneeling before him, either when giving him something e.g., drinking water, or receiving anything from him. Children were to respect not only their parents but other people belonging to the same age group as their parents. A child had to master three areas of obedience which was compulsory.

1. Fear of God
2. Respect of others especially one's neighbours.
3. Respect all those above you in age.

Children were to acquire all these three in the process of their growth. They learned these qualities through listening to proverbs, folktales, tribal history and songs.<sup>5</sup>

### **3. Responsibilities and Education**

Children at about the age of seven began to assume different responsibilities; boys for example began to help in gardens and taking care of cows and goats. Girls did domestic duties like sweeping the compound, or baby sitting especially during the day when their mothers were away attending market or working in the fields. Young children from the same locality usually played together. These social games helped to develop social skills boys and girls usually played together. Between the ages of ten-eleven the

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<sup>4</sup> L.P. Kilbride, & C.J. Kilbride C.J., *Changing Family life in East Africa*, 86.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 88.

separation of sexes began with both boys and girls focusing on their different roles they were about to undertake.

In many homes especially during rain season, when children were not able to play outside, it was the moment of riddling "*Chingano*" in *Bukusu*, language, the purpose of riddles, was knowledge? It generated a mental competition, which helped people to train their minds on how to think and interpret things that were hidden and somehow related to each other. Children were mostly involved in this game, one who solved many riddles, was rewarded by being made the chief of an imaginary village then he or she would reveal the answer.

*For example*

*Answer*

*Riddle*

*A white cow has chased a black one*

*Grey (white hair, has chased the black from)*

*From the fire place.*

*The head especially of an old person.*

*My man is always surrounded by spears*

*the tongue is always surrounded by teeth.<sup>6</sup>*

#### **4. Adolescence**

What one learned in adolescence was preparation for adulthood; therefore one had to take it seriously. Open display of sex was prohibited. Holding of hands, kissing embracing or other signs of affection were private activities. Sexual instruction was taught during the time of initiation.<sup>7</sup> The stories told to adolescents were different from those told to children. Those stories told to adolescent focused on both boys and girls especially what they had to expect of those they had to marry. The stories also taught young men and women how to behave especially during time of crisis. The stories

<sup>6</sup> L.P. Kilbride & C.J. Kilbride, *Changing Family life in East Africa*, 88.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, 92.

emphasized good morals, sincerity, love avoiding pride, and complete rejection of laziness.<sup>8</sup>

## 5. Before the Coming of Christianity

From a traditional point of view, formation referred to the whole process of education. It involved the instilling of all kinds of elements that the society considered vital to proper upbringing and development of the youth in all aspects. Methods of formation may have differed owing to different ethnicity, location, activities and beliefs, but the specific detail performed by each tribe focused on moral, social and economic aspects of life.<sup>9</sup>

Formation was seen as a process through which young people were prepared for transition from one stage of life to the other. It could be compared to brooding; where a chicken broods over her eggs till they hatch. The African tutor would brood the young people till they grew up, and helped them to take responsibilities of their lives. One who could not suit in the society well would be asked questions like, “*Namu wa Khwai'ula?*” meaning (who hatched you?).

The tutor would form a young person in a way that the latter is accepted in the society. For a novice to graduate, the tutor observed some of these qualities: eating behaviours, moral life, hard work. The instruction and lessons was delivered through oral literature in form of stories, myths, proverbs and riddles which left everlasting impact on

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<sup>8</sup> L.P. Kilbride & C.J. Kilbride, *Changing Family life in East Africa*, 127.

<sup>9</sup> J. Mulandi, “Religious Formation from an African Perspective”, *Afer* 45 (2003) 47-49.

the listener. The young person would now strive to make a choice by emulating what was positive and detesting the negative.<sup>10</sup>

The educators had the tasks of imparting good values to the young, and that is why it was rare to pick on any person to be the educator. The young person had to assimilate certain aspects in different stages of growth. If one individual failed to learn these lessons in the ordinary stage then the society around would teach him with brutality.

Adolescent stage was time to internalize and commit oneself to the traditional ways and life of a particular community. Those who were entrusted responsibilities were judged according to their seriousness in undertaking their duties. This is why initiation itself involved prominent rituals like circumcision, removal of lower teeth; and in some communities for example the Maasai, it involved hunting of dangerous animals like lions.<sup>11</sup> This traditional initiation created a sense of identity of all members. An initiate would therefore become a full member of a tribe entitled to property and participating in all matters of decision making.

## **6. Disappearing Sense of Self-Identity**

Ecclesia in Africa No 53 emphasized the formation and training of agents of Evangelization in Africa, by recognizing their indispensable role. The undermining of the sense of self identity, the confusion in the modern global culture, the secular materialism, the throwing out of human values, now calls for deep spiritual formation, in the new cultural context. Today Christian life is possible if we can form our youth, to make free

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<sup>10</sup> J. Mulandi, "Religious Formation from an African Perspective", *Afer* 45 (2003) 48-49.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 49.

and motivated Christian choices and decisions based on Christian's values that they have personally made as guiding principles of life. This can only be achieved by deep formation of human persons in total freedom, based on Christian principles.<sup>12</sup>

Ecclesia, in Africa, No. 75, calls for a change of approach in our way of thinking practicing our Christian faith. Our faith is not a body of doctrines to be memorized and obeyed, but following Jesus Christ as he is known personally to the individual. People change and develop new convictions not through instructions, but through experience. It is one thing to know about the personal love of Jesus Christ and other things to experience it. The formation that has been given to the agents of evangelization and those evangelized has been purely intellectual.<sup>13</sup>

For example the question and Answer catechism known as, This is our faith "*hii ndiyo imani yetu*" was used in the Diocese of Eldoret, which covered now both Kitale and Eldoret Dioceses. It had 129 questions and answers, the catechumen had to learn all by heart. The one who answered all of them was presumed to be a good Christian, irrespective of whether he or she practiced it or not. Here is a sample of question one in the same catechism:

**Q Who created the world?**

A God created the world without using anything (exnihilo) therefore all of us call him creator, and we rely on him in the process of continuing to live. Many Christians learned and answered all the questions correctly, which saw them baptized and confirmed.

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<sup>12</sup> C. McGarry, "New Evangelization", *Afer* 41 (1999) 194.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 195-196.

## 7. The Church in Kitale

The Church in Kitale, just like in any other Church in Africa, is faced by poverty. The main source of income is maize, usually grown around March and harvested around November to December. The Diocese of Kitale was created in 1998 with its territory taken off from Eldoret Diocese. Inequality in land distribution has seen selfish leaders allocating themselves large portions of land formerly owned by Agriculture Development Cooperation (A.D.C.) leaving many squatters landless.

This inequality has fostered differences among the people, as witnessed in the 1992 tribal clashes which have not healed even now. The differences between Luhyas and Pokots came about as a result of their political alliances. Pokots strongly supported Kanu under President Moi, while many Luhyas belong to Ford Kenya, a party they helped to found. Added to this division is the natural calamities, mainly famine, which hits strongly in West Pokot District causing displacement of people and as such they resolve to cattle rustling.

Kitale Diocese is experiencing internal conflicts, starting from on going cattle rustling between Pokot warriors against other communities like Luhya, and Marakwet. There are continuous threats from the Pokots circulating letters asking non-Pokots to leave West Pokot District. The land grabbing in Transnziioa District has seen people like Fr. Dolan, the head of Justice and Peace commission in the Diocese, beaten and locked up in cells for several nights. The misuse of Church properties e.g. cars, schools and land, make many youth to question why? Yet the people involved in all this scandals are both priests and committed Catholics, who receive communion every Sunday.



## 8. Moral Decadence

The Church in Kitale needs to launch a new phase of evangelization that calls for a new way of reading and proclaiming the word of God in the light of sound tradition of the Church. To do this effectively, it has to start with the reality as witnessed in the Diocese now.

Today poverty, illiteracy, diseases, wars, refugees, political instability, people changing from party to party, tribalism, nepotism, consumerism, and all sorts of vices are part and parcel of day to day life in Kitale Diocese. The religiousness, which was formally a characteristic of African culture, is slowly diminishing. Hence the rise of moral degeneration of many people especially the youth. Crimes that were unthinkable before are now committed in bright day light. Cases of homosexuality in schools are on the increase. Devil worship is also taking root among many youth; corruption by school heads, doctors, and pastors are evident in our society.<sup>14</sup>

The African values which were the glue that kept people together in respect is disappearing for example concern for each other. Food was shared so that no one could sleep hungry is all gone, today many people may have food to throw away, yet their neighbours may be sleeping hungry. There is no longer hospitality, and the sense of sacredness is fading away very fast. The loss of the dignity of human life has resulted in abortion, being treated as a process of reproductive health scheme. Terminating a pregnancy is just like going for a short call.

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<sup>14</sup> P. Lwaminda, "Formation of Agents of Evangelization for the Church as a Family of God", *Afer* 41 (1999) 181.

The former, colonial servitude has now been replaced by black indigenous oppressiveness. This can be seen clearly in discrimination and favourism whenever there is a job advertisement or recruitment of youth to the armed forces. Many who are qualified are usually turned away, and their chances awarded to those who do not merit. The youth therefore live in fear and uncertainty, despair and hopelessness. The unemployed youth are seen roaming around aimlessly in the streets of Kitale. They are exposed to the risky situations of engaging themselves into activities like drug abuse and crime.

The youth have been made to believe that African cultures are inferior; they look down upon their own cultures and seek to replace them with foreign cultures. The worst thing is that they do not know their cultures and do not even bother to know them, which makes them to be rootless and baseless people.<sup>15</sup> This therefore calls for new methods of deepening Christianity in the hearts of the youth. This is the only way to seal the dichotomy, between what the youth profess in the church and how they really live.

In Tartar Parish, West Pokot District 6<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> December 2003, Ben Chesoli, a facilitator in youth seminars around the Diocese, said "If Jesus Christ comes back on Sunday every youth in the Diocese will go to heaven. But if he comes between Monday and Saturday many will see hell alive." Many youth live in two worlds. The world of Sunday and the world of weekdays. In other words the world of Christian faith and the world of their own. When in difficulty they tend to forget their faith. It is for this reason that pastoral ministers in the Diocese should emphasize on which teaching is suitable for the youth so that Christ becomes the real center where all believers should find refuge.

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<sup>15</sup> P. Lwaminda, "Formation of Agents of Evangelization", *Afer* 41 (1999) 182.

## CHAPTER ONE: YOUTH CATECHESIS

### 1.1 An Impossible Catechesis

Many teachers who teach religion have despaired in trying to present the Church to many young people especially those between 16 - 22 years of age. Such catechesis is considered “boring” and of no value to them. This group sometimes sees such instruction as too remote from their sensitivities and void. These young people arrive to this regrettable conclusion mainly because of two reasons.

1. Pedagogical problem.
2. a fundamental problem.<sup>16</sup>

#### *Pedagogical problem.*

Many youth at this age will simply reply their catechetical teachers that the Church no longer speaks to them. Christian teaching about love of God and neighbour in our society is of no value. Young people look around and see that such teaching is not true.<sup>17</sup> Simply because they can cite examples of very many rich Christians who have acquired their wealth through dubious means and have no interest in their suffering neighbours.

#### *Fundamental problem*

From questionnaire issued to a hundred youth, in different parishes in the Diocese of Kitale, the question asked was, why don't you go to Church? The result I gathered showed that 92 people out of 100, favoured a position which I summed up in this paragraph.

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<sup>16</sup> P. Babin, *Adolescent in search of a new Church*, Herder and Herder, New York, 1969, 11.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 12.

“The Church is an obstacle to the youth freedom. Because while sexual activities like fornication, lesbianism, homosexuality and watching pornography are indeed appealing to many young people, yet the Church says no to them. So it is better to stay away from the Church and enjoy one’s life.”

The second question was, if Manchester United was playing Kitale Bombers F.C, on a Sunday morning in Kenyatta stadium here in Kitale, would you go to the Church or in the stadium?

*STADIUM*

*CHURCH*

99

1

From this result we have a positive affirmation that youth are estranged from the Church. Therefore it will be the major goal of this chapter to try and establish why.

## **1.2. Age 16-22 Years**

As already noted above, we are dealing with the ages of youth between 16-22, who when they were between seven - fifteen, were very active in liturgical functions and Sunday school. All over sudden change and their earlier enthusiasm of wanting to participate in liturgical activities begin to dwindle. This group is rarely present in the Sunday Mass and other Liturgical functions. Those who participate in liturgical functions feel alienated from their group.

The Church being the mystical body of Christ should incorporate both the young and adults. Because if the body lacks some parts it makes it less functional. The youth

creativity and enthusiasm are highly needed in the Church. However we realise that today many young people are staying away from the Church.<sup>18</sup>

### **1.3. Distrustful Attitude towards the Youth**

Many who have leadership events describe their disappointments at not being given meaningful tasks, not because they are not there, but simply because of distrustful attitude towards them. The starting point of good evangelisation should first challenge this distrustful attitude and invites them to significant involvement in Parish activities.<sup>19</sup>

### **1.4. Rigidity by the Old**

There must be continuous renewal of liturgy not just changing for the sake of changing, but see where youthfulness and vitality will help both the youth and the old to express themselves better in worship in a way that is appropriate to our own age and time. The old people though having passed experiences of different times,<sup>20</sup> should avoid statements like “when I was young we were not doing things like this, but instead be willing to accept the stand of the second Vatican council especially on the constitution on sacred liturgy.

The council proposed several changes to be effected. The council cautioned that though it proposed and allowed the changes, they should be undertaken correctly and theologically, on pastoral point of view so that they may improve the faith of participants

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<sup>18</sup> A. Gaede, ed., *From Age to Age, The challenge of worship with adolescents*, National Federation of Youth Ministry, St Mary's Press, Minnesota, 1997, 2.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

and make the liturgical function more meaningful,<sup>21</sup> but it should avoid turning a liturgical function into an entertainment.

### **1.5. The Youth Quick Admission of Boredom**

The nature of liturgy follows long time tradition and an expected amount of repetition. The youth compare this to their dynamism and activity in their schools and colleges, day-to-day social life and their own peer groups and find it wanting. Because in their peer groups they enjoy dancing popular music, of famous musicians, different fashions. when this aspects seem not to show up in the liturgy. They find themselves out of place and full of boredom. The youth pastoral minister should find means and ways of helping the youth to remain active in liturgical celebration.<sup>22</sup>

### **1.6. Youth view of Religion**

For many youth religion is a tale of old people. For them the Church has no meaning. The Church is a place full of old ladies and meaningless prayers. Religion is for old people who have given up living and so need this fantasy about better life there after, but not for young people who want to live and enjoy life.

Many young people's absence from the Church arises from the fact of desiring to seek a message of meaning and good news for their own day-to-day life experiences.

Many young people leave the Church because of two major reasons.

1. Rebellion against its authoritarian style of leadership.
2. In search of truth and satisfaction.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> A. Gaede, ed., *From Age to Age: The Challenge of Worship with Adolescents*, 2.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>23</sup> C. Mowry C., *The Church and the New Generation*, Abingdon Press, New York, 1969, 52.

Every major city has large population of rejected people who are not welcomed in Churches. Majority in this group are young people. This group comprises homosexuals, prostitutes, Lesbians and drug abusers. Most of these people feel that the Church does not want them the way they are; therefore they simply turn their back to the Church and condemn it to hell.<sup>24</sup>

### **1.7. In the name of the Church**

From my interview with the youth of Motosiet Church, a negative view is emerging where the youth do everything in the name of the Church. They dance in the name of the Church. They drink in the name of the Church, have sex among themselves because they belong to the Church, and therefore they do not see anything wrong in undertaking such activities. The Church is seen as a safe place where people can do what they want. Parents can stop their sons and daughters from visiting disco halls but not the Church. This aspect has seen the increase of young people going to Church but simply because they have their own desires, if the Church blocks their desires then it becomes a block to their goals and therefore they would prefer to take another route.

### **1.8. I do not like the Church**

Many young people if you ask them whether they like the Church, the majority will say no. They were simply taken there by their parents whom they obeyed and depended on. As they grow old towards independence, they begin to cut off regular association with the Church. They conclude that they can do without it. Some transfer from city to city, one denomination to another trying to find a Church that offers vital

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 54.

experience. Many young people see the Church music as sentimental, its preaching is viewed as pompous and irrelevant.<sup>25</sup>

### **1.9. Forsaken in the Time of Need**

For many young adults who face numerous problems in their lives for example lack of financial sustainability, vocational crisis, love, sex, marriage, drug addiction and arrests by police. The Church remains quiet, only to emerge later with criticisms and blame all directed to the youth. There are moments when they have expected great consolation from the Church, but instead they were disappointed. This disappointment has caused two main divisions among the youth.<sup>26</sup>

#### ***a. The Yes Pastor Group***

These young people are willing to sing in choirs, serve as ushers, teach Sunday school, hold offices in youth group, counsel other youths. They stay very active in participating in Church matters so long as the pastor keeps approving what they do. They cooperate in all aspects.

#### ***b. The secular group***

The young secular persons may relate or not, to an established congregation. They give very little time for the Church and often they involve themselves only in social activities, like sport and drama. They often call for reform protests with the hope that Church should be renewed.

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<sup>25</sup> C. Mowry, *The Church and the New Generation*, 57.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, 58.



## Conclusion

The Church today is experiencing mass exodus, of young people therefore the Church is truly being shaken to its foundations. The number of confessing youth in Western countries and even in Africa, has considerably diminished. The decline of communism in many countries in Eastern Europe, has not made the situation any better. The missionary movement has shown less activity in Asian countries, which account for half the world's population.<sup>27</sup>

The rise of Pentecostal and evangelical churches, have shown more growth and expansion than the main stream Churches. This therefore is a good reason for us to know why? Though the Church has a large membership registers of young people, they have not found it worthy as an association for friendships, information, counsel or involvement in crucial issues of these days.<sup>28</sup> The Church is therefore faced with two eminent dangers, the youth who are attacking it from within, while other institutions doing it from outside.

Some of these institutions compete for loyalty, time and money of the young, ranging from profit motives, power and pleasure. Generally younger members feel excluded from much of the total life and effort of the Church. They know that the older members feel they cannot serve the Church faithfully and properly without them. The young people are often put out in marginal activities and told to run their own activities, they are told under what condition and within what limits. They may act as the Church and in the name of the Church.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> C. Mowry, *The Church and the New Generation*, 66.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 66.

<sup>29</sup> C. Mowry, *The Church and the New Generation*, 67.

## **IS THE CHURCH ANY-BETTER?**

This is the question the young people struggle to answer. They seem to have discovered that though they may be committed to the Church, they are generally not fully included on serious decision-making. They have not seen the Church to be any better than other organisations around them. While the Church claims to be different from other organizations, it uses the same standards to make decisions just like other secular organizations. For example leaders are chosen on the basis of age, wealth, position, or “company” in which they belong. The young people are always seen as leaders of the future, but not now. If the Church has to be seen as an institution of integrity and worth by the new generation, it must demonstrate a public concern for the whole of mankind. The Good News should reach all, just like Jesus loved the whole world, that he gave up his life for it<sup>30</sup>.

### **QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE**

Answer *Yes*, if the statement is completely true.

And *No* if it is hardly true

	No	Yes
1. I like my church	96	4
2. It offer the best	91	9
3. it enables me meet friends	92	1
4. It blocks my freedom	96	4
5. It explores new possibilities for me	90	10
6. It cares for us	95	5

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 72.

7. It takes care of the youth	98	2
8. God loves us through the church	98	2
9. The church helps me to love God	90	10
10. I feel happy in the church than elsewhere	96	4
11. I like the word of God	99	1
12. It changes me	92	8
13. I like picnic organised by the church	3	97
14. I like going to church during night services	1	99

Out of 100 papers circulated, the result is clear. These phrases targeted two main issues. First, to test the commitment of the youth to the Church, and how much spiritual nourishment they receive from it. The result indicates that many young people though they attend Church services, they are less committed. This can be deduced by the 90% victory against 10%.

Also from this conclusion, it is true that very few young people find the word of God nourishing in their lives. Majority live in a situation just like the seed falling on a rocky ground. It quickly germinates, but the lack of soil to grow its roots makes it to dry up easily. Many youth hear the word of God, but as soon as they leave the church all is gone.

## **CHAPTER TWO: YOUTH AND MASS MEDIA**

### **2.1. Youth Dissatisfaction in the Church**

#### **2.1.1. Youth Creating a Vacuum**

As already noted in chapter one, the young teens as they grow up begin to feel that the Church setting both from within and outside does not favour them, and therefore seem to alienate themselves from it. This is further activated by the youth encountering with mass media. The youth encountering with mass media, featuring scientific programmes which seems to undermine the values the Church held, by proposing a life style that is based on ones personal pleasures and values which I will now develop in details in this chapter.

#### **2.1.2. Changes in the Society, New Realities**

Since independence in 1963, Kenya has experienced several political changes, for example the passage from one political party to multi-party system, social problems, economic changes for example the continuous depreciating value of the Kenya shilling against other world currencies like Dollar, Euro, Pound. Changes in education systems, for example passage from 7:4:2:3 to 8-4-4. Religious differences as witnessed in the rise of many religious movements and sects.

Whenever all these current problems arise, the young people find themselves heavily hit. The social problems affecting the family are displaced onto the youth. Broken families, urbanization and replacement of traditional norms by western ideas are good examples where the youth find themselves to be the major victims. This affects their faith tremendously and forces them to abandon or suspend it.

### 2.1.3. Suspended Faith Period

Many young people between sixteen and twenty-two go through a period where they suspend their belief. During this period the previously learned beliefs are neither rejected nor affirmed. This period may extend up to the age of twenty-eight.<sup>31</sup>

### 2.1.4. During Childhood

As part of the process of growth, many educators agree that there are four stages of faith as indicated here below:

- (1) Experienced faith
- (2) Affiliative faith
- (3) Searching faith
- (4) Owned faith

**Experienced Faith:** is received during early childhood where an individual learns through touch and experience to trust parental figures, the world and God.<sup>32</sup>

**Affiliative Faith:** This faith is precedence in school years, where an individual learns through the stories of the community he/she is located. The individual derives identity by affiliating to the group or community where he/she belongs.

**Searching Faith:** When faith continues to grow from affiliative stage, it comes to a searching faith. Questioning, experimentation and acting against the will of the community, here an individual commits himself/herself to various ideologies that mark this stage. The dominance of this faith style is evident in the late teenage, where teenagers want to do things their own way. When the three mentioned above are

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<sup>31</sup> *Young Adult Ministry Resources*, Department of Education, USA Catholic Conference, Washington DC, 1988, 28.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, 28.

combined. They result into owned faith, which may develop as a predominant style and personal commitment.<sup>33</sup>

Late adolescence and young adulthood appear to be the most probable time for development of searching faith. For a young person who has been matured in the Church, there is the time he/she may drop out and suspend all Church related activities.<sup>34</sup>

#### **2.1.5. Rural –Urban Migration**

That in the cities life is enjoyable, there are better roads, clean water and electricity are among the many reasons urban migrants desire before beginning to move. Generally debates in favour of town life against countryside life ends up with proposers winning as towns are looked at as small heavens on earth. But today towns are characterized by stinking garbage, burst sewers, pot holed roads, polluted air and water, with all the streets full of street children and begging mothers make one feel that life in the village is much better.<sup>35</sup>

Towns are generally multicultural. Therefore, whether one likes it or not traditional cultures are modified by mutual contact and by demands of modernization. Micro cultural environment are created in towns, which become gateways to new ideas and techniques. Towns therefore become essentially a ‘Market’ of ideas where one can sell and buy any idea he/she values as good. Towns are also good markets for booming economy and attractive social life.<sup>36</sup>

Towns are attractive because they are political power centres, religious centres, education centres, communication centres, cultural centres and even rural development

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<sup>33</sup> *Young Adult Ministry Resources*, Department of Education, USA Catholic Conference, Washington DC, 1988, 29.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, 29.

<sup>35</sup> P. Wambulwa, *Together as One*, Pauline Publications, Nairobi, 2002, 3-4.

<sup>36</sup> A. Shorter, *African Culture: An Overview*, Pauline Publications, Nairobi, 1998, 34.

centres. Rapid urban growth in population is mainly caused by rural urban migration rather than normal increase of population. The majority of rural-urban migrants move in search of Job opportunities, of which the youth are the majority.<sup>37</sup>

#### **2.1.6. Types of Urban Dwellers**

Generally there are three groups of urban dwellers, namely:

- a) "Ad hoc Transients". This first group of individuals retain their rural values and patterns of behaviour. They come to the city with a specific objective, or service not readily available in their rural homelands. This category of people stay in the city on for few months, weeks or just days. What is necessary for them is to know a minimum rules required to achieve their objectives.
- b) Situational Urban Dwellers: They are individuals who have either a cluster of goals or one important goal, which can only be achieved by extended period of residence in the city. This involves then some form of temporary employment and means of how to secure food and their necessary basic needs.
- c) Committed Urban Dwellers: This group has both physically and psychologically severed their rural roots and live with their families in the city.<sup>38</sup> Seventy percent of the youth find themselves in this group, because either they are born in town or have moved to town in search of employment.<sup>39</sup>

#### **2.1.7. Consequences of Migration**

Families break up with urban migrants establishing concubines because of husbands failing to go home frequently. The children are brought up without the father's image. This creates the imbalance preparation towards their citizenship. The exodus of

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 36.

<sup>38</sup> J. Gus Liebenow, *African Politics and Challenges*, Indiana University Press, Indiana, 1986, 190-192.

<sup>39</sup> *The Seed magazine* 8 (1995) 20

the youth into the cities contribute to deviant behaviour which are not accepted in the society. Homosexuality and prostitution are purely practiced for the sake of having money. Though they were formerly regarded as wrong, they are slowly being accepted as normal mostly by the youth.<sup>40</sup> Now there are open self-proclaimed homosexuals and lesbians claiming the privileges of marriage to be accorded to them too.

#### **2.1.8. Disappearance of Cultural Values**

In rural African setting, the mode of dressing conforms to the gender. Men's wear was proper to men, and ladies' dressing was proper to women. In urban settings, unless one observes well, he/she might not know the difference between a boy and a girl. They all wear long trousers, earrings, curled hair, painted nails. When youth migrate from a rural area to town and encounter these realities, first they are shocked but as the time goes on, they adapt to the situation, whether they like it or not.

#### **2.1.9. The Urban Mission of the Church**

In Africa the towns were seen as alien places identified as alien places with non Christian and hostile administrators. But as parish centres moved from countryside to town, dioceses which were previously named after a geographical place, were eventually named after towns.<sup>41</sup> For example the Vicariate of Upper Nile changed to Diocese of Kisumu.

Urban Churches are heavily influenced by realities of urban life. Therefore to evangelise urban dwellers, especially the youth, one has to take into account two aspects.

1. Specialized ministry: this refers to a Church where the focus and goals are set to

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<sup>40</sup> P. Mbiti, *Rural Sociology and Rural Development*, Kenya Literature Bureaux, Nairobi, 1974, 75.

<sup>41</sup> A. Shorter, *African Culture Overview*, Pauline Publications, Nairobi, 1998, 37.



achieve a certain desired end. Catholic Church approach is mainly here. They begin a project in a place after studying the need of area.

2. "Ground free": these are large Churches along major highways. They are sometimes racial meaning they are composed of people of the same tribe or race most likely people who moved to town from one ethnic group.<sup>42</sup>

#### **2.1.10. The Role of Church**

Though cities and towns provide several amenities generally lacking in the rural settings, they also have contributed to the disappearance of some African values. For example, in urban centres, the whole family may be living in a two-bedroomed house. Boys and girls sleep in the same bed-room. This is why cases of incest either a father sexually assaulting his daughter, or a brother assaulting a sister are on the increase. It is the role of the Church to present the true message of the Gospel, to victims of such circumstances, reconcile them and show them the mercy of God.

This has given way to new centres like "Amani Counselling centre" meant for those who have undergone any sort of trauma. They are counselled and offered new beginning in life. The Church tries to restore hope where it has been lost by those living in cities. The Church owns and finances institutions, which help the marginalized in the cities. The Catholic Church in Kitale owns Don Bosco Children Centre for street children and "*Jisaidie project*" for single mothers and unemployed youth.

### **2.2. Youth attracted to Mass Media**

#### **2.2.1 The Power of Mass Media**

As the young people move to urban centres, they come face to face with mass media. Today, we should look for means of communicating to the youth in a way that is

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<sup>42</sup> B. Rogers, ed., *Urban Church Education*, Religious Education Press, Birmingham Alabama, 1989, 2.

effective. The full blast of FM radio stations in Nairobi, Mombasa, Eldoret, Nakuru, and Kisumu is an experiment made towards this direction. Though this is something we should be proud of in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, all evangelical academics should emphasize the role communication in spreading the Gospel message. This consists first in listening and then showing how the Gospel meets the needs of the time.<sup>43</sup>

### 2.2.2. Science and Technology

In our living rooms we have televisions, radio cassettes, newspapers and pictures. While we travel we carry mobile phones, we see bill board along the roads all full of messages, therefore wherever we are there is a kind of information we are receiving. This information comes to us through a certain kind of media, this compels us to ask the question “Is mass media a blessing or a curse?”

A couple that recently rejoiced in Kitale for having bought their new television set, video deck, and DVD player found themselves few months later regretting as to why they bought these equipments because they found out that their son who was pious and good Christian instantly became anti Christian because of watching films which seemed to undermine the role of God in human life. This is the situation where many young people find themselves in as soon as they join college or university.

The research on college and university students commitment to their faith showed that students generally are moved towards secularisation of their religious beliefs adapting to a more hedonistic tendency.<sup>44</sup> Most of the young adults move away from their family Church and form their own communities. They may be living in campus complexes, apartments and flats. They recreate with other friends from different cultures

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. *The World Council of Churches Conference*, New York, July 1961, no. 23.

<sup>44</sup> H. Atkinson, ed., *Handbook of Young Adults*, Religious Education Press, Birmingham Alabama, 1995, 238.

whom they identify themselves with. It is the task of the Church to go them and speak to them, otherwise technology and science will easily win them away from the Church.

### 2.2.3. Catholic Church and Mass Media

The traditional view of the Catholic Church concerning mass media was that of suspicion. The Church viewed films and cinemas as the source of immorality in the society. However, it seems that the notion changed abruptly. The Catholic Church realized the powerful influence the mass media can be of help in spreading the Gospel message and other developments. The Church did release several documents on the means of social communication, for example *Inter Mirifica* of 1963. In this document, the Church recommended that proper use of means of social communication can be of far reaching impact upon the promotion of truth, justice and development. It is the duty of all responsible to support and promote proper use of means of social communication.<sup>45</sup>

In 1971, another document was released entitled *Pastoral Instruction on the Means of Social Communication*. No. 13 of the same document states: "All men of good will are impelled to work together to ensure that the media of communication contribute to the pursuit of truth and speeding up of the progress of the Gospel message thus spread, will promote the brotherhood of all under God who is the father of all."

Article no. 100 of the same document exhorts the faithful to pray for the success of the apostolate through the use of mass media. The faithful are asked to give support so that the means of social communication may be used for the formation of justice, peace and human progress. Articles 150-153 affirm that it is the duty of all Christians to support

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. *Inter Mirifica*, no. 4.

programmes that are suited to the family; for example care of orphans, economics and home management.<sup>46</sup>

Through the mass media the youth will be given the necessary information that will help them participate fully in matters of the Church which they seem to be abandoning.

#### **2.2.4. Televangelism**

Pentecostals and Evangelicals seem to have discovered the use of mass media earlier and made proper use of it. Televangelism for example as used by Protestants, target a huge number of viewers who in normal ways would not come to Church. The viewers make contact with televangelists and go further to give donations, ordering videos and compact discs. Televangelism is a powerful combination of preaching and worshipping. It is therefore the easiest way to disseminate the message. It reaches even those who are far off who may not be reached normally because of infrastructure or other geographical difficulties.

The media has helped alleviate the suffering of people, for example when Nation Media Group highlighted the story of a young Turkana girl who was gravely malnourished, she managed to receive enough assistance from those who saw her picture on newspaper and on television. As there are still places where the Gospel has not yet penetrated, for example China, good television programme may win back many Christians and especially the youth. In Europe where Christianity seem to be dwindling only good programmes on television, radio and video may reclaim back the faith of young generation.

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<sup>46</sup> J. T. Agbasiere, ed., *Church Contribution to Integral development*, Gaba Publications, Eldoret, 1989. 244.

From the research conducted in Kitale town by “Aruba Youth Group” to find out how many young people watch television and have an access to the radio. It was discovered that 20 young people watch television every day, 10 watch it occasionally, while 50 have a direct access to radio. The conclusion reached was if there were good Catholic programmes on television and radio, 80% would watch or listen to them.

#### **2.2.5. FM Stations**

Between 1998 and now there are so many FM radio stations operating in Kenya which came up to rival KBC (Kenya Broadcasting Cooperation). Just to mention a few, Iqra FM, East FM, Kiss FM, Waumini Radio, Inero FM, Citizen Radio, Ramogi, Biblia Husema, Metro FM, Capital FM, Hope FM, Kameme FM, Nation Radio, Nakuru Hosts Jesus is Lord FM, Eldoret Hosts Radio Sayari, and Mombasa Hosts Pwani FM. Using interview method hundred papers were circulated with the question what is your favourite programme? 76% said they like good music, meaning 76 people have a radio at their disposal. Therefore good radio programme will reach at least 70% of the young people, as it is the easiest means of communication in the countryside.

#### **2.2.6. Video Showrooms**

Within Kitale Parish there are forty video showrooms which are open more than eighteen hours per day. They are full of young people who go in to watch different films. The message of these films have a direct impact on the youth and society bringing us to the dark side of mass media.

a) Pornography: Many video showrooms are full of pornographic films. This explains why many young people frequent these places. The result of this is now

negatively affecting the society. Sex and public signs of affection which in traditional Luhya society were seen as private affaires are now done in broad day light.

b) Homosexuality: Homosexuality which was previously not allowed is now becoming part and parcel of day to day life in schools and colleges. Pastors and priests have come up in support of such practices because they have been shown on videos and people have copied styles of doing it better. (Gene Robinson, the Anglican Archbishop of Hampshire Dioces in the USA).

c) Crime: Many films show violent action which have seen the increase of crime in our country. Most young people who watch these films learn tactics of handling guns and other weapons. The video showrooms rather than being places for leisure are turning out to be training schools and colleges for criminals.

d) Secularism: Secularism is a process which undermines the significance of religious beliefs and insitutional practices. Secularism bases itself on the fact that religion should not determine our values and therefore advocate for people to do what they want freely without worrying about God. The protagonists of this trend argue very convincingly that young people feel attracted to their beautiful ideas; for example enjoy now tomorrow you are not there. They have diminished the role of the Church in education in schools and colleges. After the State has taken over the control of schools the Church no longer has any authority on major decision affecting the life of the society. Such views should be counteracted by youth formators highlighting those areas in Christian thinking which point to the values and respect of God.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> D.D. Celia, *A Handbook in Theology and Ecology*, London, 1990, 20.

## **Conclusion**

Pope John Paul II's message for the 39<sup>th</sup> World Day for Communication said: "Modern technology places at our disposal unprecedented possibilities for good, for spreading the truth of our salvation in Jesus Christ and fostering harmony and reconciliation, yet its misuse can do a lot of harm giving rise to misunderstanding, prejudice and even conflicts." Therefore the fundamental ethical principle of mass media should be to use communication in the promotion of the people's development but not destroying themselves (*L' Observatore Romano*, English edition no. 4, 26<sup>th</sup> January 2005).

## CHAPTER THREE: BRINGING THE YOUTH BACK TO THE CHURCH

### Introduction

As already seen in chapter I and II, it is evident that Societal hurricane mainly brought about by Mass Media and post Modernism is inevitable. The youth are in the midst of this social hurricane, which may destroy and cause havoc in the day to day life of the youth. Therefore one has to be careful of these five models, which have been used by the Church in evangelization.

### 3.1. Models of Evanguenization

#### 3.1.1. Assimilating Church Model

In this model the Church tries to make itself relevant to the prevailing culture, by adopting that particular culture's characteristics. The Church adopts this model in order to be welcomed by that culture and encourage that culture to be open to accept the Gospel. Just like what Paul says that "to the Jews I became a Jew to win the Jew, and those under the law I became like one under the law (1 Cor. 9: 20)."<sup>48</sup>

This model has two positive aspects.

1. The Church values the Culture of a certain geographical setting.
2. The Church has to understand the Culture of a particular people before beginning to evangelize it.

On the contrary this stand generates other difficulties.

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<sup>48</sup> J. Long, *Generating Hope*, Inter Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1997, 19-20.



When the Church assimilates cultures, it ends up being seduced and then being assimilated by them.<sup>49</sup> In this model, one feels that what has been approved by the society is at the same time true biblically.

Following this model, Christians have lost track in life because they have been seduced by the culture of consumerism. That is why many Christians today believe that health and wealth are spiritualized in a sense that accumulation of goods is a blessing from God because of their faithfulness to him.<sup>50</sup> This approach makes the Church to lose her prophetic role because of tolerance. At the end the clear distinction between the culture and the Bible disappears and all is treated as one. Therefore the Church may not be in position to reprimand the wrong in that culture that is not Biblical.

### 3.1.2 Protecting Model

The world around us is full of corruption and decay. The breakdown of education systems, hospitals, parastatals and disintegration of moral values, make other Christians to build a wall around them and see the Church as good and the culture as bad.<sup>51</sup> That is why Christians of different denomination today have their own schools, hospitals, shops television stations, Radio stations, for example Radio hope, owned by Nairobi Pentecostal Church, Jesus is Lord in Nakuru, Radio Sayari, in Eldoret and Biblia Husema. Some members of these Churches listen to only radios run by their own Churches because they are afraid of hearing what they do not want

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<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, 20.

<sup>50</sup> J. Long, *Generating Hope*, 22.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, 22.

From this view Aruba youth carried out a research to find out how freely the youth can hold ecumenical prayer sessions. They discovered that many pastors strictly cautioned the youth from their Churches not to mingle with others. From the above it follows that the structural composition of the Churches in Kitale are founded on this trend. The youth discovered that many Churches are based on tribal grounds meant to protect their culture and society.<sup>52</sup> This chart shows the details of their findings.

TRIBE	MAIN CHURCH	OTHER CHURCHES
LUHYA	African Divine church	Catholic  P.A.G.(Pentecostal Assemblies of God) and Salvation Army
KISII	S.D.A (Seventh Day Adventist)	Catholic
KIKUYU	Full Gospel Church	Catholic
TURKANA	Legio Maria	Catholic
POKOT	Catholic, Anglican Lutheran Church.	Deliverance.

Instead of struggling to protect our schools Churches, people should rather strive to believe in God, where their consciences will be able to speak to them correctly.

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, 26

### 3.1.3 The Unchanging Church

This Church simply ignores culture. It views its role as having nothing to do with the present culture, because the Church is above and beyond culture. The unchanging Church holds to its tradition by equating them to Jesus. Many elements of the Catholic Church fall under this model.

The strength of this model is its stability and therefore it endures from one generation to the next. The weakness of this model is although the culture and people within it change, the Church does not change. The unchanging model of the Church becomes marginalized and does not exert much impact on the society. As it becomes increasingly marginalized, then also increasingly becomes irrelevant in the eyes of the people. The unchanging Church is unable to draw new members, and it will continue to lose its youth who feel that the Church has no answers for their struggles.<sup>53</sup>

### 3.1.4 The Battling Church

This Church fears annihilation, and therefore struggles for survival with all means available. The Christians in the battling Church are usually committed. They see the world divided between *good* Christians and *bad* ones.<sup>54</sup> The good Christians must fight the bad ones. The tendency seen in many protestant Churches waging war against Catholics accusing them of worshipping idols is a result of this view. The destruction of a statue of Mary in the Holy family Basilica some years back, and the recent destruction of windows of some Presbyterian Churches of East Africa, are all an indication of a battling Church. The arrogance of Christian claiming to speak for all committed Christians is in

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<sup>53</sup> J. Long, *Generating Hope*, 26-27.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 29.

itself a weakness because it is strongly hampering the spread of the Gospel. This makes it difficult to come to the Church.

### **3.1.5 The Influencing Church Model**

In this model, cultures are not seen as battlefields but as mission fields. Christians are not warriors but missionaries. The Christians in the influencing Church do befriend individuals and groups in the cultures so that they may influence change in them. They are usually very prophetic in a given culture where they really transform it.<sup>55</sup> Their underlying principle is Jesus Words in Mt.5: 16, that your light must shine so that people seeing your good works may give glory to your Father in heaven. Today many Christians opt for this model. They do not preach or say anything but emphasize in doing good, and their good works touch the lives of many. For example Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

### **3.2. Suggested New Approaches to Evangelization**

After having assessed the strength, and weakness of each of the five church models used in evangelization, I would suggest new ones, which may be effective in evangelization of the youth. Today.

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<sup>55</sup> J. Long, *Generating Hope*, 31-32.

### 3.2.1 The Use of Audio-Visual Material

Many youth interviewed concerning best ways they thought would revive their interest in Christian messages strongly suggested the use of Audio Visual Material, ranging from the use of pictures that are relevant to the Gospel message for example, MAFA pictures which are produced in Cameroon and available in Kitale Catechetical Centre. They said where the Catechetical teacher may be short of words, the pictures helps to complete the message.<sup>56</sup>

Slides and video tapes are easy to prepare, the youth evangelizers should learn to help the young people produce films that may be relevant in their lives, by using characters of people they know this will make a long lasting impact on the viewer. In producing such videos. The video producer should emphasize areas which concern the youth directly for example pre-marital pregnancy and HIV / AIDS. Religious videos will help to boost the work of catechetical teachers and vocations animators.<sup>57</sup>

### 3.2.2 Proper Catechetical Training

Unfortunately many young people feel that to be catechist is only left for the old people who are not educated. In some parishes even women are not allowed to be catechists, for example Kipsaina Parish. People therefore see catechetical instruction as being of little value. The Lack of proper catechetical training has given rise to “Jua Kali” (road side) answers on issues that require proper teaching.

A youth called Simiyu in Kolongolo Parish, asked why he does not go to Church, he simply said, “I saw a priest smoking”. If this youth had received proper catechetical to

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<sup>56</sup> P. Karigi, *The Report of Youth Seminar*, Unpublished, Kitale, 1995, 6.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 10.

instruction, it would have helped him to know that, mistakes committed by one person do not make everybody guilty. Though the phrase “one rotten potato makes the whole sack rotten” is true, it is equally true that the holiness of one young person can make the whole village holy.

The catechetical teacher should introduce some basic knowledge to the catechumen especially in their tender age. He should instil in them the art of reading so that apart from what is taught in the class, they can read books like “*Njia yetu ya kuwa wajumbe wa Mungu*”. Such books have clear explanation of methods of teaching and preaching.<sup>58</sup>

### 3.2.3 Improving Liturgy

One area that is generally overlooked in the Church is the liturgy. Nobody cares about its preparation. The one reading or taking part in any single part during liturgical celebration should prepare well. The reader for example should prepare earlier to avoid reading what is not in the text.

If the reader fails to pronounce properly, the all text may be rendered meaningless to the listeners. No one should be given the reading immediately he/she arrives in the Church. Rather, time should be allocated to the reader to go over the text to master where are pauses, commas and full stops. Many youths interviewed responded that many times the reader is too slow, because he/she belongs to a particular small Christian community that has the duty of preparing liturgy of the day. Whether he/she feels comfortable or not in reading, one is compelled to read. On the contrary the readings should not be read too

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<sup>58</sup> P. Karigi, *The Report of Youth Seminar*, 12.

fast. Young people wanting to show off their reading skills have sometimes read too fast leaving the listeners without any thought from the readings.<sup>59</sup>

### 3.2.4 The Call for New Evangelization

The second Vatican Council 1962 – 65 called for the entire Church to recognize her essential identity as missionary. Today the Church understands her mission as that of witnessing Christ among cultures, closely following the model of influencing Church already discussed above. So that there is a deeper evangelization in cultures that have already embraced the Gospel, and at the same time in those receiving it now. However after 100 years of evangelization, secularism and materialism threaten to undo the work that was done by early evangelizers.<sup>60</sup>

### 3.2.5 Neo-Catechumenal Way

New movements that are being formed in the Church are a new possibility of rekindling the Church, among them is neo-catechumenal way, popularly known as “Neo-Catecumenato.” This movement received its approval statute in Vatican, on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2002, during the solemnity of the Saints Peter and Paul. The Pontifical council for the laity affirmed that the movement was at the service of Bishops and Parish Priest to help rediscover and strengthen the ongoing education in the faith. It offers the faithful the chance to revive the treasures of Christian faith in their lives.<sup>61</sup>

Benard Waswa, a strong member of the movement in Kipkeikei Church, said “if Neo Catecumenato is well guided it will be a powerful tool of evangelization, especially

<sup>59</sup> P. Karigi, *The Report on Youth Seminar*, 14.

<sup>60</sup> P. Karigi, 18.

<sup>61</sup> R. J. Quinn, *New Evangelization in Africa*, Pauine Publications, Nairobi, 2005, 13-14.

to the youth who seem to be bored by the old ways. Unfortunately movements like ours have met strong opposition from Bishops and Parish Priests. They do not bother to know why they were founded, but simply brush them off as useless and threatening the faith. However by banning them they cause more disturbance to the Church than allowing them to function in a well directed manner".<sup>62</sup>

### **3.2.6 Charismatic Group**

The movement first began in Kitale Diocese, in Tar Tar, Parish under a Comboni priest, father Marcello in 1984. Bishop John Njenga, who was then the bishop of Eldoert, now Archbishop of Mombasa, banned the movement. This saw all who favoured the movement leaving the Catholic Church and establishing the now widespread Gospel outreach Church, with its headquarters in Eldoret.

Healing masses of Fr. Bill, are popular among many Christians. The charismatic sing, praise, speak in tongues. At a quick glance you may not notice the difference between and Pentecostals. They hold public crusades, just like the later.

The Catholic charismatic group is very successful in other African countries for example Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and Angola. Fr. Sylvester Dabire, a Donorione Priest from Burkina Faso carried out a research, to find out how many Catholic want charismatic abolished. To his surprise he found out that 7 out every 10 Catholic Christians supported charismatic movement. In my research, I discovered that many charismatics are young people and the elite rich, who are able to support and finance most of the movements' operations.

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<sup>62</sup> Bernard Waswa is a member and coordinator of Evangelization in Kipkeikei.



### 3.2.7 CRUSADES

Crusades are one form of evangelization that can help bring back the youth in the Church. Crusades have engaged Catholics in the public proclamation of the word, though some priests and Bishops are sceptical about their operation. Charismatic movement has received a boost by having several priests joining the group. The charismatic movement is now attracting a large number of participants especially the youth. It is assured for survival more than movements directed by priests and religious for two reasons.

- (i) Lay people have permanent jobs and live in permanent domicile. They remain members for a long time supporting the movement financially.
- (ii) Priests and religious are on transit, from one parish to the other, therefore a movement headed by a priest who is an active evangelizer will flourish in his presence and dwindle when he is transferred.

Crusades are one possible way in which the youth can easily be won back to the Church. However. The organizers of the crusades should consider these points.

- (i) Use Catholic hymns. They can do this by developing a strong music ministry, by cooperating with the parish choir.
- (ii) Use Catholic expressions and signs, and be proud of Church symbols and know how to explain them.
- (iii) Their teaching must reflect true Catholic teaching and doctrines avoid all simple explanations to be accepted by Pentecostals.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> R. J. Quinn, *New Evangelization in Africa*, 51.

### 3.2.8 Music

The Luhya indigenous music is rich in message and rhythm. The music was varied depending on the occasion. There were songs for children, entertainment dances, which were mainly accompanied by instruments like “*Siiriri*” (a one stringed musical instrument, also known as banjo in English). “*Isukuti*” dance is popular because it is performed in open places, where every participant employs his own style. Women wear “*Maveyo*” (Banana leaves”).<sup>64</sup>

There were wedding songs and dances, circumcision songs which I would like to examine in details, as circumcision was one of the most important ceremony. One had to undergo songs of scorns which were sung for those who were cowards and this would encourage them to be strong and endure the pain of the ceremony. Bukusu boys go through different stages, each stage with its own Music and dance. The songs sung during night vigil, before the initiation, all call upon the boys to forget childhood. After circumcision has been done very little is revealed about what really happens during the seclusion period.<sup>65</sup>

Music carry very special messages, for example ‘*Sioyayo*’ (is a song sung for a boy a few minutes before circumcision). The song encourages the candidate and warns him if he ever dares to escape. It also praises the fearless promising them abundance of blessing

If religious music is adapted properly it may make a strong impact on the youth, because they will know the importance of each stage in their spiritual journey. Entertainment songs, when adapted for liturgy ends up making the Church a place of

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<sup>64</sup> G. Senonga-Zake, *Folk Music of Kenya*, Uzima Press, Nairobi, 1986, 29.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, 41.

entertainment, without deep spiritual foundation. Melodies of circumcision will make the youths understand that the matter at hand is serious.

The musical styles especially the music of the people, should be considered for worshipping while respecting the functional needs of the song within the rites. The peoples own religious songs should be encouraged with care, so that the faithful especially the youth may increase their participation in liturgy. The music of the young brings freshness and variety to already existing genres and at the same time infuses sacred music with energy and vitality.<sup>66</sup>

Therefore the tensions in parishes regarding musical styles, where a group of young and old favours a certain style should not be there. The function of music at liturgy is to support community prayer, but not to entertain. This is an issue where sometimes it is difficult for teens to understand. Therefore pastoral musicians should strive to balance the functions of prayer, when choosing music.

### 3.2.9 Overcoming Challenges

There are problems that hinder young people from listening to the message of the Gospel and putting it fully into practice. Social class difference creates a situation where those from rich families feel that they have nothing in common with those from poor ones. The rich simply drive away to Kitale for Mass while the poor go to the local Churches, which do not have cemented floor.

The young people have no interest and do not take seriously matters pertaining to the Church. They simply see the Church as a place to pass time. Some even come to Mass wearing beach kits. They always come late to Church and prefer standing behind and

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<sup>66</sup> G. Anne, ed., *From Age to Age*, 14.

disappear from the Church as soon as the homily or any announcement is prolonged. They usually come with newspapers and magazines which they read even when the Mass is going on. They never open their mouth to sing and as a result they do not find anything interesting in the Mass. The Church becomes a place for them to meet their friends as offices and other public places are usually closed on Sundays.

Until the youth overcome this drawback, they will never enjoy the fruits of the word of God in their lives.

## CONCLUSION

In the message of John Paul II addressed to the youth of the world in Manila Philippines in 1995, where more than 1 million young people attended. The youth of the world agreed upon these six resolutions.

- (i) To love Christ with their being in order to proclaim his love to the world.
- (ii) Pray and deepen their relationship with Jesus.
- (iii) Love and serve others so that they may become the voice of Christ in the schools, Churches and daily life.
- (iv) Work for the Church to be a vibrant community.
- (v) Accept and learn more about the faith of the Church, so that they can pass it over to others.
- (vi) Build peace around them by bridging the gap between races, religions, rich and the poor, the laity and the hierarchy, the young and the old.<sup>67</sup>

Ten years down the line, can any of the resolutions be verified? In many Churches leaders do not listen to the youth to see how best they contribute to the growth of the

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<sup>67</sup> *The Seed Magazine* 8 (1995) 20.

Church. But instead some church leaders act as if they will be in the authority forever. Strikes in schools, universities, colleges and other institutions of learning are indication that the youth are agitating for new ways of doing things rather than only following that which has been laid down as a rule. The youth view the Church as a wealthy institution with many tycoons being the leaders this makes the youth feel that the church has failed to address itself to their problems.<sup>68</sup>

Worse still the same Church goes further to ask for Sunday collection "*Sadaka*". In carrying out the interviews the question concerning offertory was "are you happy with the sixth rule of the Church which states support the Catholic Church. Materially 90/100 young people said NO only ten said YES. This result demonstrates clearly that the youths feel offended during the time for offertory. Among the reasons cited by the youths was:

Priests lack accountability of what is contributed. Churches built by European fathers were always maintained and painted regularly. When the parish is handed to the Diocese, the maintenance stops, and one hears only of *harambee*. Therefore as much as "*Harambee*" should be encouraged to support the Church, some should be avoided and the main emphasis in the Church be marshalled towards the preaching of the word of God, but not money.

Unfortunately many leaders have stopped listening and tried to force the success of their projects at the expense of loosing people's faith because too much is spoken about "*sadaka*" and *harambee*". The big question remains for what reason should we build the magnificent cathedral on forced harambee and then end up loosing half of the faithful to

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<sup>68</sup> H. M. Tatah, "The need for Pastoral care of the Youth, *A/er* 38 ( ) 7-8.

other Churches. Would it not be better to have Christians who are strong in faith even if they worship under a tree? <sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Minutes of the youth workshop held in Kitale, 2002.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

Priests, Religious, Parents and teachers should take care of the youth properly. This will win their confidence back to the Church. The youth should be allowed to share their joys, struggles and feelings which in turn will help animators to guide them to grow into mature adults. In evangelising the youth, special attention should be focused on several areas.

- 1) Character formation will help the young people to become aware of their good qualities and human weaknesses which they will struggle to avoid.
- 2) Moral education: The youth should be helped to grow in virtue and avoid evil.
- 3) Sex education: They should be assisted to have self discipline and self mastering in dealing with their sexual emotions.
- 4) Spiritual formation will help them to develop religious habit like prayer, Bible reading and daily faith practice. This can be done at home, school and even parish.<sup>70</sup>

In chapter one I concentrated on demonstrating how young people begin to widen the gap between them and the Church, as they feel that the Church does not address itself to their needs. Chapter two further discussed how this gap is achieved especially by the help of mass media and modernity. Finally in chapter three I began by describing the different Church model adapted by different churches for evangelization. These five models have either favoured or necessitated the departure of the youth from the church. It was on this note that I proposed new method that can help re-evangelize the youth. The Church has no alternative but to invest more in youth ministry.

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<sup>70</sup> J. K. Finn, *Building Youth Ministry in Parish*, Saint Mary's Press, Christian Brothers Publications, Winona, Minnesota, 1989, 40.

Pastoral success or misfortunes of youth ministry will all depend on the formators of the youth. If all efforts and energy of young people was used for good end the Church could be flourishing now. The youth would be instruments of peace, where there is hatred they would sow love. Unfortunately many youth have been used as courses of disharmony in the society, where there is joy they have brought hatred where there is unity they have brought disunity. The future of the Church depends on how we train and handle the youth now. Youth animators and trainers must be role models to be emulated so that the youth do not just follow their words but also their example.

Many major denominations seem to have discovered this. They have taken a step to ensure that the voice of the young people is heard within their decision making process. The young people must have representatives on all levels. Young people should be empowered to take up their right place in the decision process of the Church. Many young people should be given the opportunity to participate in the matters at hand. This will help them to develop their self-esteem, faith, confidence and acquire extra determination in what they do.<sup>71</sup> So that, as Jesus commanded his apostles to go out and preach the Gospel to all nations (Mat. 28: 19), the world today will also be evangelized not only with the old but the youth as well.

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<sup>71</sup> P. Ward, *Relational Youth Work*, Lynix Publications, London, 1995, 85.



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