TANGAZA COLLEGE

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

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COLLABORATION: A MISSIONARY VISION FOR MINISTRY IN THE PARISH

Supervisor

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A Long Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfilment
of the Requirement for the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies

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To

My parents, Mr. and Mrs Thomas Muge,

my brothers Paul and Nereus, and my sisters, Mercy and Felicia, RIP.

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I would like foremost to thank God almighty for His graces on me to this moment.

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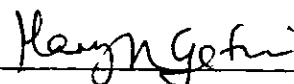
STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this long essay is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies. It has never been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

Signed: _____

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Date: _____31 - 01 - 03_____

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

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Date: _____31 · 01 · 03_____

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

In the Catholic Church, the Parish is a unit of the local Church (Diocese) in a particular area.[1] It is the community of Christ's faithful, a communion of God's family under the leadership of the priest who is a representative of the diocesan bishop (the Chief Shepherd). This unit comprises the ordained ministers (clergy) and the laity (the faithful). Both the ordained ministers and the laity are called to ministry in the Church which is service in the manner of Jesus Christ. It is working together in a collaborative manner. Both clergy and laity are called to actively participate in the Church. Ideally there is no one group that is meant to give service while the others are passive recipients. In many parishes, however, the priests are controlling every aspect of church life. They do not appreciate lay involvement. This situation makes the laity to be *objects* of service, and the priests *subjects* of service. The parish, as community of Christ's faithful, should be a sign of unity and communion where service is given and received by all. Both laity and clergy are called to be the subjects and objects of service and since both form the Church, which is a community of service, they are all called to contribute to the building of the whole community as parts of the same body, with Jesus Christ as its head. This calls for collaboration on the part of the Christian community if it is to respond faithfully to the missionary mandate of Jesus.

The Catholic Church, as it has been down the ages, cannot convincingly claim to have

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[1] E. LYONS, *Partnership in the Parish*, 3.

lived the example of service as Jesus the Good Shepherd lived. Many people see the Church as the hierarchy which is the structural arrangement of the clergy in order of position. The model of the Church in the minds of many is the pyramidal model, where the apex is Christ followed by the Pope, bishops, priests, with the faithful at the bottom. Arising from the deliberations of Vatican II Council (1962 - 1965)(henceforth Vatican II), the pyramidal model is gradually giving way to the circular model of the Church where the centre is Christ and the people are parts of the body of Christ(cf p.40 for diagrams). Though this is the model Vatican II proposes, the pyramidal model of Church is still deeply embedded in the mentality of both the faithful and a large number of the clergy. For authentic collaboration to take place the notion of *Church as hierarchy* must give way to the circular model of *Church as communion*. Church as hierarchy concentrates power in the clergy who then exercise this power alone without involving the laity while Church as communion emphasises a basic and fundamental equality of all the baptised and involves the laity in the service of the Church.

Many parishes are at the beginning of development and many have the idea that the priest is supposed to do everything for the people. The people see themselves as not sophisticated enough to make any meaningful contribution to the way the parish is run. This has led to passivity on the part of the laity in the Church today. This attitude can be erased by sound religious education and catechesis on the sacraments of initiation. In many circumstances, the priest helps to perpetuate that way of thinking when he does not encourage dialogue or entertain opposition. In other circumstances, he is forced by the situation like the lack of interest or cooperation from

the people not to seek more lay involvement in the Church. This attitude in the people is due to

the lack of encouragement and motivation from the clergy. In many parishes, there is a large

conglomeration of skilled, educated and gifted individuals who know they are meant to put their

gifts at the service of the church but, often are not given the opportunity. This has led to the

situation where "[...] some lay ministers even with years of experience still see themselves as

simply "helping hands" for professional staff, rather than ministers in their own right."[2] In spite of

the fact that the parish is supposed to be the epitome of collaboration, it is pathetic to notice that

in many places, it is still a "one-man- show" - that of the priest. Why is this so?

Collaboration is very important in the life of the Church, not because it makes the task

easier for the priest, but because it is in line with the church's vocation as it carries out its

missionary mandate, that which is given to it by Jesus. It calls for taking the risk of giving up

power and control, and becoming a servant.

In this work, "collaboration" is used interchangeably with "shared ministry/responsibility",

"team ministry", "co-responsibility", "partnership" and "co-operation".

Objective of this Study

There is no gainsaying that a lot of work by great scholars has been written on the subject

of collaboration. This work, therefore, is my own contribution to the issue of collaboration in the

parish. It is also meant to help me shape my approach to ministry by helping me to become open

to the reality of lay involvement in the affairs of the parish as I prepare for ministry as an ordained

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[2]N.P. COOPER, *Collaborative Ministry*, 15.

minister. I hope to challenge all who will lay their hands on it to rethink how they have been doing ministry or how they intend to do ministry. This work is to encourage consultations in decision-making and in the pastoral planning of the parish. It is also to provoke the laity to respond to their Christian vocation and participate more in the life of their parish instead of remaining passive spectators or indifferent observers. This is done by accepting their baptismal calling to become heralds of the Good News in their different situations. In undertaking this work, I am not under the illusion that collaboration is easy. It demands a lot of *time, energy, patience, attitude adjustment* and *will* on the part of all, and a skillful management of the human resources in the parish by all those concerned, especially the priest.

The purpose of this work is to propose how collaboration can be and should be achieved in the parish. I decided to make this my topic for the long essay as a result of my experiences of many parishes in Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Kenya. In many of the parishes in the above countries, ministry is synonymous with the work of ordained ministers. Some clergy, and many of the laity, hold that the one whom everyone looks to for ministry in the parish is sorely the priest. Why is this so? What is making it remain this way 40years after Vatican II? How can collaboration be the watchword of the parish? These and other questions I will try to tackle in this work.

To achieve this I used the social analysis method of Henriot which is the spiral process which starts from the issue, insertion and analysis. I did this through interviews of some priests and sisters in Tangaza like Sr Loretta Brennan, Fr. Patrick Ryan, Sr. Carmel Powell, and Fr. Francesco Pierli. I also intend to interview Mr. Aloys Otieno Ojore, the academic adviser in the

Institute of Social Ministry. I chose these people because of their strong beliefs in collaborative ministry and their conviction that collaboration promotes a sense of family. They have been instrumental in promoting a collaborative atmosphere in Tangaza College. I went to Embulbul to conduct interviews. I interviewed Mrs Jane Muraithi, Mrs. Rose N'ganga, Ms Patricia Wambui, (not their real names as they asked for anonymity), Mr. Bosco Kingate, and Ms Stella Maris. After the social analysis comes a theological reflection, before I propose actions to implement the vision.

Research Methodology

This work is divided into four main chapters, excluding the introduction and conclusion. The general introduction is basically what I intended to do, a statement of the issue; the reasons for choosing this topic; the objective of study; the organisation of work and the research methodology. Chapter one is concerned with my own personal insertion and experiences. Chapter two focuses on an analysis of collaborative ministry in the parish. I concentrated on the parish of Embulbul in Ngong diocese. Chapter three is a theological reflection of the situation in the light of what the Bible says about collaboration, focussing on Jesus, the collaborative leader and example for collaboration in the early church. Chapter four is the action plan that I have proposed to help achieve this vision. I have dealt with the practical ways of going about collaborative ministry in the parish. This, in my view, is based on Human Resource Management. I have then give a short conclusion to this written work but one which I hope will be a provocative beginning or refocusing for the reader.

Organisation of Work

I presented my experiences in the countries I served. I interviewed the priest and religious working in the parish and a few lay people, randomly selected, about their views on collaboration as experienced in this parish. I gave a theological reflection based on the scriptures and I presented the views of some theologians in Tangaza. I also presented the Church's teaching from the Vatican II documents, and what the Pope says about it in "Christifideles Laici".[3] I then made some proposals for achieving collaboration in any parish. I used books and other related materials to support my findings.

Scope of Study

This study focuses mainly on collaboration within the parish structures only and not between the Christian community and other institutions. I personally feel that unless the parish collaborates within itself, it cannot do so with other institutions.

I have limited my study to the parish of Embulbul which is in the diocese of Ngong, in Kajiado district of the Rift Valley Province, as an example of how collaboration is developed and should be developed in a parish.

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[3] This is the apostolic exhortation of Pope John Paul II on the mission and vocation of the lay faithful.

Chapter I

Personal Insertion and Experience

1. Introduction

Collaborative ministry is a risky venture that involves taking a step into an area that is feared by many, because it entails sharing or giving up absolute power and control, and becoming a servant. This is something many are not ready to do. It is a shift from ministry as power to ministry as service. This, therefore, leads to the recognition of all the baptised as ministers in the Church, called to participate actively in the church's mission because "if mission is at the heart of the Church, and if all the baptised are missionaries by their very insertion in the Church, then the missionary work of the Church cannot be delegated to special groups, but ought to be exercised by all the members of the Church, without distinction."[1] This, in my view, calls for shared ministry.

In order to enter into the situation of shared ministry, it is pertinent to be inserted into the stage of learning in the realm of human experience.[2] This involves a personal insertion in humility and openness to learn and be taught by experience, as, in the words of Fr. Pierli, "collaboration involves a contact."[3]

In this chapter, I will present an account of my own insertion into ministry and my

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[1] A. BELLAGAMBA, *The Mission of the Church*, 62.

[2] A. REISNER, *"The Dance of Partnership"*, 5.

[3] Fr. Pierli in an interview I conducted with him in his office at Tangaza College on the 12th of April 2002.

experiences in Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Kenya. It is not a chapter on history, but of reflection on the different situations and parishes in these countries, and my learning from these situations as they helped me towards a better understanding of the importance of collaborative ministry today.

1.1 My Home Parish Experience

Charity, it is said, begins at home. It is in the light of this that I intend to start from my home parish. It is on the outskirts of Jos, the Plateau State capital, in Nigeria. The notion of Church there is still the pyramidal type with the priest running the parish in conjunction with some individual or a clique of elites. The notion of a vision statement with a set of objectives and goals to which a parish strives, is foreign to the people. They have never heard of it. The vision statement is a declaration of what a parish intends to achieve, and what direction it intends to take. The matter that mainly concerns the priests is finance and the control of the parish council. Parish life is largely prayer groups who work on their own, with no liaison with the larger community and without looking into the different needs of the people. This situation is that which keeps the laity far from the priests. Sundays are days of obligation for the people who may keep them well, but then return to their houses for the rest of the week. The priests often act dictatorially and do not often seek help from anyone else. Many of the priests are, in fact afraid of opposition, and, therefore, make all the decisions without consultation.

The Christians, are not invited "[...] to move beyond a vision of mere intra-community concern to one which aspires to greater collaboration with the wider community."[4] For years, the

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[4]L. SOFIELD - C. JULIANO, *Collaborative Ministry*, 72-73.

priests are seen as those with the *power*, while the Christians *do* what they (priests) say. This is the result of a faulty catechesis which emphasises Church doctrines at the expense of Christian formation. This is compounded by the lack of an organised ministry for the teaching of catechism. It is left as the chief responsibility of the Catechist(s) who is (are) in many cases, not well formed for the enormous task of catechising. Christian life has become a Sunday affair for the people and finance has taken the central stage of many homilies. A small elite, chosen by the priest may be influential but they will not be vocal in criticising or challenging him.

My experience in Zawan Parish is one of a community which is without a group identity and "it is not surprising that for communities which have no clear identity as a group, mission remains the activity of an elite few."[5] Indeed, mission is the activity of those few elites who have sacrificed collaboration at the altar of selfishness.

1.1.1 My Kaduna Experience

Learning is a life-long experience. In 1993, I was sent for my first pastoral experience as a seminarian to St. John's, Kachia, in Kaduna State of northern Nigeria. While I was there, I had the opportunity to experience co-responsibility at a greater level.

It is a parish where the people and the priest have a sense of belonging and an identity as a community. The priest is one who lives and works *with* his people and not *for* them. There is a togetherness that underlies the life of the community. His policy is to challenge, motivate and encourage the people to a greater participation in the life and activity of the Church.

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[5]W. JENKINSON - H. O'SULLIVAN, ed., *Trends of Mission*, 368.

1.2 My Ivory Coast Experience

In 1998/9 I was in the Ivory Coast for a year of pastoral experience west of Abidjan in the diocese of Man. This region is populated by the Yacoubas and Gueres who have strong traditional beliefs in witchcraft. A lot of the adult population who attend church are not baptised and therefore not married in the church. In many of the parishes, there are little activities like small prayer groups where the laity participate. Parish life is the concern of the priests, the sisters, and mostly of a group of primary school teachers who form the core of the charismatic and liturgical groups.

In my one year's experience in the diocese of Man, I noticed a gap between the priests and the people. This was enhanced by the attitude of some priests who seemed not to be welcoming to the people. I sensed in the people, an atmosphere of fear of the priests. This created a distance between them and made the people to see church life as participation in the Sunday Eucharist only. More and more I noticed that the priests were dispensers of the sacraments and not facilitators of collaborative ministry. Finance was a major topic of discussion when the priests met at the expense of the promotion of a greater lay involvement in the parishes. A pathetic observation I noticed in one of the parishes was that the church building was always under lock and key. This kept the people away from it.

One lesson I learnt during my one year stay in the Ivory Coast was that priests can have the best of intentions for the growth and development of the parishes and to foster a sense of communion but cannot succeed without the participation of the people who need the priests to

meet them at their level and help them move forward. Collaborative ministry cannot grow on fear, or on a perceived lack of respect for the people and their subsequent isolation by the priests. For I came to realise that freedom to relate with the people in love, respect and trust is essential for the priest in order to get the laity to be active participants in the mission of Christ.

I learnt that collaboration is not forcing people to change from their "pagan" mentality but working with them to the extent that they themselves will see the need to change. I agree with the words of Estella that "change will happen once people are ready, that is, when they are convinced of the need to behave differently."[6] The priest as facilitator of change is to help the people in this gradual process. I came to realise that shared ministry in the Parish demands from the priest identification of the gifts of the people, recognition of varying levels of maturity among them, respect for differences and the presence of genuine love and acceptance of all.

1.3 My Kenya Experience

The time I have spent in Kenya since August 1999 to date, I have experienced that ministry is seen as that which the ordained ministers do. The clergy are at the apex of the ladder of authority with the Christians relegated to the benches as mere spectators. The stress of the catholic priesthood is on the kingly function of the ministry and not the servant aspect of the teaching of Jesus. The priests seem to need as helpers only people with the "Ndiyo Padri"[7] mentality. Small Christian Communities (henceforth SCC), which are a characteristic feature of

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[6] E. PADILLA - A. PRIOR, *Raising Awareness*, 20.

[7] By this I mean the "yes father" attitude.

the Kenyan church, are more or less prayer groups for the old, and for women. Many Christians

are comfortable with fulfilling the religious obligations and then going on about their businesses.

Kenya, which is a multi-ethnic state, is divided along ethnic affinities. This does not only

affect the secular, political lives of the people but also creeps into the religious life of the people.

This has led to the situation where people identify with those from their "homes". It affects church

life in the sense that in some places, priests from a particular ethnic group find it almost impossible

to work with people from another ethnic group. And according to Anthony Onyango, a Kenyan

from Eldoret, "many Christians are not ready to work with priests who are not from their areas.

Priests as well, do not make things easy as they are seen to identify most strongly with their own

people. This has led to the situation where the people leave everything to the priest to 'teach him

a lesson'".[8]

This situation does not promote collaboration or situations of collaboration in the parish.

Instead it fuels division and eventually leads to clergy leaning towards a particular ethnic group.

From my interaction with many people, I have come to realise that collaboration scares a lot of

priests who fear losing their grip and authority, without which, in their minds, they become

"useless". I once witnessed an ordination ceremony where the parish priest was the choir master!

This left me wondering whether there was no one able to lead the singing ministry in the whole

parish. In some parishes, the priests are the ones who read the announcements on Sundays and

some priests have developed the attitude of speaking to people in a derogatory manner. Even

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[8]The words of Anthony Onyango, a Kenyan with whom I had a discussion about the church in Kenya.

when they allow people to decide on issues, they often overrule some of the decisions later without any dialogue.

This "Commander - in - Chief"[9] attitude is common in many ordained ministers. Situations like this do not help the *common union* which comes from our baptism. I concur with Norman Cooper that "when we respond to God's call to share responsibility and collaborate in building up the kingdom of God, we experience what it means to be in communion."[10] A Kenyan I was having a chat with, told me that the church here is far from the circular model of church, due to the ignorance of the lay people of their rights and responsibilities in the church.

1.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to present a reflection of my insertion and experiences in the various churches I have been privileged to serve. In these places, I learnt the following in relation to collaborative ministry in the parish:

There is a need for the clergy to motivate and empower the people for team ministry and for the priests to see themselves as shepherds called not "[...]to be served but to serve[...]".[11] In doing this, patience is needed so as to walk at the pace of the people no matter at what speed. Also, there is a need for the priest to identify with the people and to recognise that he is called from among the community to a ministry which is not superior to other ministries in the church.

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[9] A military term used for the president who is in charge of the national army.

[10] N.P. COOPER, *Collaborative Ministry*, 11.

[11] Mark 10:45; Matt 20:28 (AB)

It requires meeting the people where they are, and journeying with them to where God wants the community to be. This is because:

> It is in relationships, in our communion with each other rather than in isolation from others that we will find fulfilment. We will reflect God's life if we live in this spirit of communion and collaboration and if our relations are characterised by equality, mutuality and reciprocity - The vocation of the church is to be a community, a living source of Trinitarian relationships. This is the basis for our equality in dignity as members of the church and for our awareness of the spirit's activity within and between us.[12]

In all, collaborative ministry is a task and a call to live the life of the Trinity of love, mutuality, equality and reciprocity. The Trinity is the model of Christian living as we strive to share in the communion of the Three Persons in the One God. We cannot share in the communion of the Trinity if we do not learn to live in communion with one another. This has to start at the parish level.

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[12]E. PADILLA - A. PRIOR, *Raising Awareness*, 20.

Chapter II

Social Analysis of Embul-bul Parish

2. Introduction

With the preceding chapter on my personal insertion in the countries I served and my learning experience, I now move to the next stage which is the social analysis. This is by undertaking a case study of a particular reality in depth. It is a study of a parish that of Mary, Mother of God, Embul-bul, in the diocese of Ngong.

I made the choice of this parish due to the fact that it is a young parish in an area that is fast developing into an urban area. This parish is experiencing a rapid transformation in terms of raising community awareness and structural development. In this chapter, while I endeavour to study how collaboration is practised in the parish or how this process is being put in place, I will attempt to answer the following questions: Is Embul-bul parish a ministering community where people are encouraged to be involved in the life and activity of the church or not? Is the priest open to collaborative ministry with the people? Do the people understand that collaboration is a necessity in the parish? What is the parish doing to bring all the baptised to participate actively in parish life? Is there a sense of family in the church? If yes, where is it coming from? If no, why?

These and many other questions I will attempt to answer as I study this parish. I will begin with the historical development of the parish, then present the background of the people; where they were, where they are and where they are heading to. I will also see the structures in the parish, the machineries of collaborative ministry being put in place to help the people to feel at

home in the parish. This will eventually lead me to see how the clergy are collaborating with the laity in the parish.

2.1 History of Embul-bul Parish

The parish of Mary, Mother of God, Catholic Church, Embul-bul is in the diocese of Ngong. Its centre, the village of Embul-bul is one of the oldest in Kenya, picturesquely situated at the foot of the Ngong Hills, in Kajiado district of the Rift Valley Province. The Catholic church's presence began at Embul-bul around 1978/9 when it became an outstation of the parish of Ngong. It became a new independent parish on the 1st of June 1997. This new parish of Embul-bul, comprises the villages of Embul-bul, Kerarapon, Nkaimurunya, and Olepolus. It has a total catholic population of between 3000-4000.

In the beginning it was a church where people waited for the priest to do everything. The people did not believe in themselves as ministers called to serve in the church. They waited for the priest to decide what needed to be done. Today, the parish of Embul-bul is growing into a dynamic church where life is seen to be coming up. The people are learning gradually to be actively involved in the church. This is being achieved with training and education of the people on their roles in the development of the church. Gradually, more and more people are empowered to make their own contributions to the church. The people are becoming confident to participate in the life of the church. This dynamism should be fostered so that more people will see the need to be involved since only 10% of the laity are collaborating with the priest. The parish should not be contented with the number of people presently participating in the church but move to

empower more and aim at achieving a maximum number of lay people participating in the church.

2.2 The People of Embul-bul

Embul-bul and the surrounding villages have very large Christian and Moslem population. The ethnic composition is, Kikuyu, Kamba, Maasai, Luo, Luyah. The total population is more than 30,000 with over 90% of the people living on or below the African poverty line which is the minimum level of about 2 dollars per month for survival. Living conditions are most basic. The average house has walls made of mud and the roofs made of broken pieces of tin. There are no major industries or local income generating projects. Most of the land around Embul-bul is covered with black cotton soil, so when it rains activities come to a standstill. There is one underdeveloped primary school (it is poorly staffed with no good infrastructures), but no secondary school. When most of the children complete primary school, their education comes to an end. The girls get married at a tender age and the boys are vulnerable to alcoholism and drug addiction. Life is threatened by AIDS/HIV+, Malaria, TB, Malnutrition and Amebiasis [this disease destroys the intestines and is caused by unclean water and soil. This is worsened due to the frequency of drought and famine]. Other diseases are brought on by unhygienic living conditions.

However, the people of Embul-bul have a unique spirit of survival. Despite having to endure tremendous hardships caused by great physical and emotional sufferings, they are willing to work at anything, as long as it brings food into their homes. According to the parish priest, they are full of untapped talents, crying out for an opportunity to work.

2.3 *Helping the people out of their Situation*

In the beginning, most people expected the priest to start putting up physical structures like the Church, hospital and so on, but this, according to him, would have been a waste of time. There were more pressing needs and difficulties which needed to be tackled first. His priority when he arrived, was to identify some of the root causes of the plight of the people and see what help could be given. In the last three years, he has built the Counselling Centre, School and Dispensary. He has also set up with the help of some people seven important programmes which include; justice and peace, Moslem-Christian dialogue, primary evangelisation, environment, the role and dignity of women, family encounter and youth programmes, to try and address the economic, social, psychological and spiritual dimensions to the problems of the people of Embul-bul.

The programmes are means to empower the people to be able to develop the attitude of working together within and without the parish by appreciating their giftedness and promoting their self confidence.

2.3.1 *Justice and Peace*

This is a programme aimed at actively getting the people of Embul-bul, Moslems and Christians, the letters of allotment (title deeds) for their homes. For years, the people lived in constant fear of being evicted from their homes. They owned the land but had no title deeds. The parish pushed for the title deeds and actually succeeded in getting the necessary document for 70% of the poor and the marginalised people. It was about giving the people a sense of security

and then helping them provide better living conditions for themselves. It has given them rights to their land.

2.3.2 Moslem-Christian Dialogue

The parish, under the guidance of the priest spend a lot of time in building up meaningful relations with the Moslem population through interactions and working together. In Africa, according to the priest, this is a bit easier because the people are Africans first, and Moslems and Christians second. The aim was to promote peaceful co-existence among the people of the two faiths. This helped collaboration in matters that affect the community as a whole.

2.3.3 Primary Evangelisation

Embul-bul parish is making a big effort to help the people develop a spirituality that is suitable for themselves, and to deepen their own spiritual lives in order to overcome the despair and lack of hope they experience. Also, it is trying to help them, through the study of the gospels, to build up confidence in the people and give meaning to their lives. In this way the people become ready to cooperate with the priest and not leave everything to him

2.3.4 Environment

A big effort is being undertaken to educate and to help awaken in the people a new awareness of the local environment in order to make them appreciate what they have and not destroy it. Through its environment awareness programme, the parish is able to stop the destruction of the Ololua Forest, and to stop quarry blasting at Embul-bul. This is in an effort at conserving the environment and at living in harmony with the environment.

2.3.5 The Role and Dignity of Women

The parish of Embul-bul has been trying to build up women's sense of self-esteem, and to help them identify their needs, then work toward meeting these needs. This effort is especially concerned with the plight of widows, who traditionally have no rights. They are normally rejected by their husband's family and their own. This programme is to help restore their dignity and to help them cope with life after the deaths of their spouses. Some women have been sent for training in small scale enterprises like sewing, and are now employed. They now feel they can contribute to the growth of the parish in their own little way by helping other women.

2.3.6 Family Encounter

In Embul-bul, the sense of family, which is being destroyed by alcoholism, AIDS and death is being restored with a special programme for the family referred to as the "Family Encounter". This is a programme where couples are trained to help other couples live a better family life. Workshops are being organised on the role of each family member within the family, stressing their responsibilities and fostering good and healthy living. This is to enhance collaboration in the family as the smallest church and between families.

2.3.7 Youth

There is a determination in Embul-bul to give the youth a meaning and responsibility within the home, Church and the community. Seminars on behavioural change are organised for them during the school holidays to help the youth to make responsible choices, become active in the life of the parish and learn how to collaborate among themselves and with the entire parish.

2.4   The Physical Structures at Embul-bul

There are many physical structures built in the parish of Embul-bul built with the help of the people. These structures are important for the growth of the parish. They are built to cater for the needs of the people and some of the above named programmes are organised in the parish thanks to the structures that are available there. The structures have helped to bring the people closer to the church. The people, who once were lacking in confidence, have now become empowered to stand up and experience giftedness. The important physical structures are the Counselling Centre, the School and the Dispensary.

2.4.1   The Counselling Centre

The Counselling Centre was built in the parish as a facility to provide help for the personal development of the people, taking care of the needs of the individual. It is meant to enable the people to grow in confidence and self-esteem. It caters for the following:

The empowerment of women by helping them take control of their lives through education, confidence building and self-esteem, by encouraging them to exchange ideas and find solutions to their common problems like financial stress, AIDS, widowhood, by organising behavioural change programmes for young women. The centre helps organise workshops or seminars on the importance of women and their role in society and the church. It helps couples in marriage to better understand family problems, parent-child relationships, and tries to enlighten the people about preventing the development of sexual problems, child abuse and child marriages. Early marriage is a practice rampant in the area. It provides 'Para-Legal' workshops where training is

given to the local community leaders in order to make them aware of their rights in law. Drafting

legal documents for the members of the parish is also done, in an effort to empower the people.

2.4.2 The School

In the parish of Embul-bul, there is a Nursery school (Elementary Educational School),

opened to cater for the education of children who are the poorest of the poor. Some of the

children are between the ages of 8 and 13 years, mostly girls, who had never been to school

before this. The school was started in the old church building. It provides the children with the

opportunity to learn how to read and write in English and Kiswahili. This is the first stage in the

process of empowerment of the parishioners so as to become learned and later come to

appreciate the importance of collaboration in the parish by becoming aware of their gifts and

those of others.

2.4.3 The Embul-bul Dispensary

The dispensary was opened on the 18th of April 2001. It was built to help the people who

are poor and cannot afford the high hospital bills which are beyond the reach of the common

person. The workers are from the parish and they are helping to make medical treatment

accessible to the people at affordable cost as only a healthy person can contribute to the parish.

2.5 Development of the Collaborative Process in Embul-bul

Starting collaborative ministry in a young parish according to Fr. McGarry, involves

observing the people and assessing their level of development as well as their most important

needs. It requires "testing their pulse" and encountering them at that level.

In this section, I will outline the interview I had with the parish priest of Embul-bul, Fr. McGarry, on what collaborative ministry means to him in the parish of Embul-bul and what he is doing to promote it in the parish. I will also present the views of Sister Liliana Cremona, the sister in charge of the dispensary, on what is going on in the parish with regards to collaboration. I will also present the views of five parishioners in Embul-bul whose opinion I randomly sought.

2.5.1 The Process of Collaborative Ministry in Embul-bul

Fr Kevin McGarry says that collaborative ministry entails educating the people to discover their hidden talents. This education involves a holistic approach in dealing with them like in the spheres of health, psychology, social and spiritual domains. It is about building up the people. He said that collaboration is a process that begins gradually with a group, then with other different groups until there is complementarity in the groups and they become intertwined. It is about developing a family oriented parish where everyone is a member of one big family united in Christ that will later become missionary, that is, sent out to proclaim the Good News.

In Embul-bul, the priest is trying to empower the people and to make them become confident to discover their talents. The parish is helping the people to move from being afraid and shy to becoming confident to participate in the church as ministers. Fr. McGarry said that, in collaborative ministry, "there is the need for the priest to identify and recognise the people with their gifts, appreciate them as they are, and give them hope, vision, something attainable, a reason to live and work for."[1]

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[1] The words of Fr. McGarry in the Interview I had with him on the 12th of October 2002.

This vision for the parish of Embul-bul is to become missionaries to others outside the parish. Vision, according to him, is going in the direction where God is working through the people. His role in Embul-bul is to build the people to own what is theirs. He is of the opinion that his time in the seminary did not prepare him for the challenge of collaboration and for him, even after many years as a priest who has worked in Lagos, Nigeria, coming to Embul-bul was like going back to school as his first two years were tough.

The parish priest said that the church is community based and so the clergy cannot do without collaborating with the laity. He refers to priests who want to do it alone as "lone ranger" who, in his view, are dictators. In Embul-bul, there is the need for everybody to work together and, himself as a priest, is open to dialogue with the lay people as together they form the parish. He said, collaborative ministry can be efficient only when the clergy identify the leaders from among the people in the parish and place them in the right place so as to encourage the people to be active. It also entails gaining the trust of the people.

Decision making in the parish, according to him, is consultative, in collaboration with the people. This calls for respect for God and the people. He is of the opinion that collaborative ministry is about learning and allowing oneself to be taught. It is in this light that he sees himself as a student priest, always learning from the laity in his parish. Collaboration is about thinking "growth" with the people and learning "to support and be supported" in ministry.

He sees "gift-awareness" in the people as essential to the development of the collaborative process in the parish as this is important to make the people confident and see the

need to collaborate with the priest. This is the priority in the parish now. For him, education helps to produce a mentality shift in the people- from shyness and reservation, to trust and confidence.

In Embul-bul, according to Fr. McGarry, the SCCs (Jumuias as they are known in Kiswahili) are usually places where the people meet to read the Bible, pray the rosary and collect money for helping those in need. This trend for him was not very helpful for collaborative ministry because action is neglected, and in order to make the people understand what these SCCs (which are the churches in the vicinity of the people) need to do, he got couples from the Jumuias and sponsored them to learn about marriage and family living. These couples form the Marriage Encounter ministry in Embul-bul which tries to help other couples learn new ways of looking at one another and working with one another. This is "family outreach" where the family which is the basic parish community is built so that the entire parish becomes a family where everyone is supported and in turn is supportive.

Fr. McGarry emphasised the necessity of training the laity to be skilled in order to get the people become involved and making them self-sufficient. In the parish for example, some youths are sent to Don Bosco at Karen, to learn group dynamics, then share what they have learnt with others and adapt the learning to the situation of the parish. The parish sends people to acquire basic counselling skills to help those in need. At present, in Embul-bul about 354 people have been trained to help other people. The result of the training programme in Embul-bul has led many in the parish to overcome the initial fear of worthlessness and therefore help them become confident to stand and minister to people within and outside the parish.

Fr. McGarry said that there are 3000-4000 baptised Catholics in Embul-bul but only about 10% of the number actively participate in the parish. Shyness, lack of confidence, lack of trust are some of the obstacles to collaborative ministry in Embul-bul. The training programme being embarked on is to make those people active, and to reach out to those who are passive. He would like Embul-bul to become a family community where lay people are empowered to participate and lead the parish. For him, he envisages in Embul-bul, a community where all the people will be active, alive and happy.

2.5.2 Sr. Liliana Cremona on Collaboration in Embul-bul

Sr. Liliana Cremona is a sister in the parish of Embul-bul who is in charge of the dispensary. She spoke with me on how she experiences collaboration in the parish. The interview was held in her office on the 12th of October 2002.

Sr. Liliana Cremona said that Embul-bul is an area of poor people with no rights. The parish is trying to build a sense of family in the people as a way of helping them support one another. As with any project, the beginning is very difficult because it entails trying to restore the people to the understanding that they have rights and so give them back their lost sense of self-esteem. The process of collaboration in the parish is about openness to understanding each other and learning from one another. The people also learn from her as a religious and from the priest, and strive to build up a family relationship where different members are responsible for different things. It also gives the people the place to prove their ability, to understand their gifts and talents, and to help them express these. The learning is reciprocal- the priest and religious are open and

in turn learn from the people.

Embul-bul, she said, is in the process of putting in place a collaborative machinery with the training of the people. This, she said requires investing money on seminars, and expending energy to help the people identify their gifts. She sees collaboration as team work which in her view is when the clergy in humility express their ability to work with the laity in the parish and allow them express their ability to make their contributions. Working in team ministry, she continued, means sharing and not being afraid (i.e. the clergy), to ask for the help of the people. She compared Embul-bul to pieces of a puzzle trying to find how to fit the pieces together for the picture to be complete. This in my view is a powerful imagery on what collaboration is.

The people of Embul-bul are presently more active in terms of participation in the church like prayer groups, decision-making and evangelisation, than ever before, though a lot still needs to be done, she said. What the parish is doing now according to Sr. Cremona, is to develop in the people a sense of family so that the people will feel at home and feel welcome to make their contributions to the growth of the parish. The people are now being trained to become more involved through identifying their abilities and making them resourceful by putting their gifts to good use.

Her experience in the parish is that everyone has the same rights, as decision-making is not confined to the clergy and religious but a process where the lay people are also involved in finding solutions to the problems of the parish. The parish, according to her, is working towards making the laity experience being church by training their consciences to discover something new

in the new church family.

She said that in the church today, the clergy cannot work alone. Team ministry is necessary and it is based on the equality of the baptised. Collaboration is about sharing gifts with others and giving them the opportunity to express these gifts. Sr. Cremona said that one problem in Embul-bul is that the people are afraid to face new situations or to expose themselves to novelty. She said that the seminars organised in the parish have made the people develop self-esteem and have given them the much needed confidence to participate in the life of the church and help them accept the new developments in the parish. This is reflected in the dispensary in the way the workers cooperate and work together.

2.5.3 What the Laity think of Embul-bul parish

In my interviews with the people, I discovered that the people really feel a transformation in the parish. Their mentality, however, is based on the traditional African mentality which attributes power and also respect to the elder. I noticed that the notion of church is still largely the hierarchical one where the priest is expected to do everything in the parish. They, however, seem to be gradually embracing the notion that they are the church and that they are called to participate actively in building up the family of which they are part. The priest is helping to empower the people by involving them in the parish.

In my interview with Mrs Jane[2], a parishioner and a member of the marriage encounter ministry, she said that in the parish, everyone is given the chance to participate in the life of the

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[2]She requested anonymity.

life of the church as the priest encourages the people to contribute actively to the development of the parish. She continued that there are those she referred to as "backbenchers", who are not ready to be actively involved in the parish. Some of these people, according to her, have an unexplained fear of being known as drunkards or people not really practising the faith, by the priest. This makes them keep a distance from the parish. She is of the view that the laity are not exactly equal to the clergy and should not be, because the priest is the chosen one and should be respected by the people. He in turn should also respect the people. She claimed that the parish is like a family and the priest is more of a parent who guides and cares for his children. She said that decision making in the parish is not only made by the priest alone but a community affair where the laity are also involved.

Mr. Bosco Kingate, another lay person who is very involved in the parish, is of the view that there is no "boss" in the parish of Embul-bul, as that word has a negative connotation. In Embul-bul, he said, "we have no boss in the parish."[3] Everyone is equal and in decision making, the priest is a guide and a pastor. He said the priest encourages people to participate in the church by belonging to the jumuias and other groups, and make their own contributions to the parish. Some people, according to him, have risen to the challenge and are well involved in different capacities. Others have decided to remain outside willingly, or are too shy to be active family members. For him, active participation in the parish is a service that all the Christians are called to. In Embul-bul, many groups like Legion of Mary, Family Encounter are created so that each

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[3]Mr. Kingate, in an interview at Embul-bul on the 3rd of November, 2002.

one who is willing is given the chance to participate in the life of the church. He said that collaboration of the clergy and laity in the parish is necessary because "it is actually difficult for any one group to act without the other".[4]

Mrs. N'ganga[5] saw the priest as the boss but held that the clergy and the laity are equal. This equality is needed if both groups are to work together. In the parish, according to her, only a few people participate actively. She said that service is a Christian obligation which is important to the life of the church as a family. This should be given freely and with love for the whole community. She held that collaboration should be encouraged more in the parish, so that more people would appreciate and become more aware of their Christian obligation in order to become more open to air their views in the running of the parish.

Ms. Wambui[6], also a parishioner of Embul-bul, felt that the parish is not really a family but made up of individuals who do not care about the work of the church as long as there are people to be employed and paid. She said that some people actively participate but others do not. For her, the laity are not equal to the priest and cannot ever be equal with the parish priest. She said, "the priest must be above the members."[7]

As for Stella Maris, the parish priest is the boss and the laity are in no way equal to the

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[4]Mr. Kingate.

[5]She requested anonymity.

[6]She requested anonymity.

[7]The words of Ms. Wambui.

priest "because he is holy". She said that in the parish, only a few participate in the parish and she felt that she was never given the opportunity to participate even though she is ready to do that. She believes that collaboration in the parish is necessary, as the church is not for the priests but for the people. She held that the people should be made to own the church and to learn to work for its benefit. The priest is to help them in this regard.

2.6 Synthesis of the Selected Views

In the above represented views of some of the lay people in the parish of Embul-bul, one can say that collaboration is at its early stage of development in the parish. It is, therefore, not surprising to find those who have experienced it taking place and those who feel that they are not given the opportunity to participate. In my interviews, I have come to realise that in a parish, the priest may feel that he is trying to involve the people, but some may feel they are being sidelined. It is the duty of the priest, as it is already being done in the parish of Embul-bul, to embark on organising seminars where leaders can be formed to carry the less active along. This will also go a long way to bring down the barrier that may exist between the priest and the people and to win the trust and confidence of those who do not want to be known.

For collaboration to work, the clergy and religious should be ready to allow the people to come on board in every aspect of church life. I can say that without doubt, this is happening in the parish of Embul-bul where I noticed a lot more effort at cooperation between the clergy and the religious as well as with the laity.

In my opinion, there is a gap in mentality between those who see the need to collaborate

and those who feel the priest is to do everything while they watch from the background. The first group has a fairly developed notion of church as community of service, while the second still has the Pre-Vatican II notion of the church as hierarchical.

In this situation, collaboration will be an effort in trying to narrow and eventually bridge the gap. This brings to light the necessity of education of the people to help them become more involved. This should be the priority of Embul-bul parish.

2.7 Conclusion

In any parish where collaboration is being promoted, education, and training are very important. They are the means by which the people will come to realise the necessity of collaboration in the parish and see the need to become actively involved.

For collaborative ministry to succeed, the priest has to make himself a minister of unity in order to be able to attract people and to help them realise their Christian obligation of service to the body of Christ -the Church. This will require financial investment which some might see as a waste, but is an investment which is essential to the mission of Christ and the Church. This financial investment is sometimes taken to be a waste for priests who would like to go it alo

Chapter III

Theological Reflection

3. Introduction

In order to make collaboration a way of life in the parish as it strives to continue the

mission of Christ, there is need to look into the scriptures, precisely the gospels, to learn from the

deeds and words of Jesus. It is through His words and actions that we are able to find the legacy

left to us by Jesus regarding the way and manner ministry is to be carried out. It is evident that

"from the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus chose to lead others. He gathered people around

him, invited them to join him, listened patiently to them, taught them new ways of approaching

things, and empowered them to carry on with others."[1]

In this third chapter, I present what the scriptures say about collaboration, with emphasis

on Jesus, the collaborative leader. I will look at His words and works as one who involved others

in His mission. I will then present the views of the church on collaboration. This will basically be

a presentation of church documents including those of the Vatican II. Finally, I will outline the

views of some priests, sisters and lay people on the issue of shared ministry in the church. I will

end with my own views on collaboration.

In doing this I intend to highlight the importance of partnership in the parish not merely as

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[1] L. SOFIELD, *The Collaborative Leader*, 94.

an effective system of administration, but as a calling for the Christian community to work together in order "[...], to help every member grow to the fullness of his/her Christian vocation."[2]

3.1 Collaboration in the Bible

The Bible as the inspired word of God, provides the basis for collaboration. It helps us to understand the mind of God and to respond to His will for us as we "[...] pursue what leads to peace and building up one another."[3] This, in my opinion, is a call to collaborative ministry in the community of faith. The church (parish) as a community, is a visible sign of what God wants the whole human society to be, a communion bound together in peace, love and harmony.

3.1.1 Jesus, the Collaborative Leader

Team ministry in the New Testament is as old as the gathering together of a team by Jesus to work with him in his mission. It is a way of service to the community of believers who are called to share their charisms and gifts with all other members of the community. Collaboration stresses a new spirit in which members of the Christian community treat one another equally, with respect and love. The individual charisms of the members of the community are for the service of the community and this does not give any privilege to any individual. This requires that those ordained respect the different gifts and roles of other ministers in the basic equality as ministers through their baptism.[4]

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[2]L. Sofield, *Developing the Parish...*, 5.

[3]Rom. 14:19 (AB).

[4]A. BELLAGAMBA, Mission and Ministry..., 70-74.

Jesus is the collaborative leader par excellence because his life and teaching is tailored

toward team ministry. He engaged others in his ministry and did not wish to carry on alone.

Collaboration as carried out by Jesus, is service that leads to empowerment. Jesus in his ministry

did not work in isolation but with others. He invited people to him and commissioned them to

mission after preparing them for their task.[5] In sending them, he made them go two by two and

not alone (LUKE 10:1-5; MARK 3:13-19). From the action of Jesus it is clear that working

alone is not part of his mission. He teaches us the value and necessity mutual support by his

action.

Jesus was a man of the people. He identified with them all through his life. He mixes with

the poor, the marginalised, the rich and all who accepted him. Jesus leaves for us a powerful

model of collaborative leadership when, in his relations with his disciples, "he affirms them in their

giftedness, receives them back when they return from ministry, and helps them reflect on and learn

from their experiences. Ultimately, Jesus leaves them, believing in their ability and power to carry

on without him because they have the spirit to guide them."[6]

As a collaborative leader, Jesus teaches his disciples what the true meaning of authority

is. His notion of authority sharply contrasts with the notion of the Jewish leaders at that time and

even of the church today. His authority is one of service and he demonstrates this with the

washing of the feet (JOHN 13:1-20). The gospel values that Jesus teaches are in sharp contrast

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[5]MATT. 10:1-14; MARK 3:13-19; 4:1-41; LUKE 10:1-5. (AB).

[6]L. SOFIELD, *The Collaborative Leader*, 95.

with working in isolation as this is the "[...] opposite of the "Gospel values".[7] Collaborative ministry is essential for the inner life of the parish as it enables Christians to respond to their baptismal call and engage in team ministry for the advancement of the work of Christ in the world today. Jesus wished and prayed for unity among his own as a sign of his presence in their lives(JOHN 17). He is the one who serves as a true model of a collaborative leader who brings people together while respecting their differences.

Jesus, the collaborative leader, has left a legacy for all those in authority in the church today. He worked for harmony and communion among his followers. He trusted his disciples and entrusted them with his authority to continue his mission, and empowered them to act in his name in a manner of loving service and cooperation with others. Before he left to return to the Father, he commissioned his disciples to make disciples of all nations and to teach the people to observe what he (Jesus) had commanded them (MATT. 28:19-20). Jesus wants his disciples to do what he had done and taught. This mission, passed on to the disciples, is the Church's mission and that is, to be missionaries in a collaborative manner.

3.1.2 Paul and Collaboration

Paul, in his writings, has a beautiful image of what collaboration is. He uses the image of the body of Christ to illustrate shared ministry. The church's vision is "mission-focus"[8] and this focus is achieved only through generosity of the gifts of the people in developing the parish into

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[7]E. PADILLA - A. PRIOR, *Raising Awareness*, 71.

[8]L. SOFIELD, *The Collaborative Leader*, 82.

a community of service.[9] In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he calls the community the body of Christ with many gifts that are signs of the different forms of service we are called to render. He says, "now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it. Some people God has designated in the church to be, first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then, mighty deeds; then, gifts of healing, assistance, administration, and varieties of tongues."[10] Paul in his letters does not emphasise the church as hierarchical but the church as communion. He makes it clear that our differences make us a people called to mutuality, love and reciprocity in our relationships. The parish then is a community called to unity, but one that respects the diversity of gifts bestowed by God on the individuals who form the community. This diversity is a call to mutual service, collaboration.

Paul sees the body of Christ made up of many parts, as a people called to unity in the one Lord. He enumerates the different qualities that are needed in order to preserve this unity: humility, gentleness, patience, love, peace. The various gifts in the community should lead to the building up of the body of Christ that is the church (parish).[11] This body of Christ is not a dead one but a "living body"[12] that needs the active participation of all the parts for the good functioning of the whole body.

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[9] From the title of Sofield's book "Developing the Parish as a community of service."

[10] 1Cor. 12:27-28

[11] Eph. 4

[12] Rom. 12

In the above, we notice that the purpose of the parish is to help the members to fully grow in the vocation God has given to each one. Collaborative ministry in Paul, is an identification of the giftedness of each individual and putting the giftedness at the service of the community for the growth of the community. This vision of church in Paul is sharply different from what is obtained in many parishes today where the clergy make themselves the sole ministers. The Priest as the apostle in the church, is a steward called to exercise leadership as service, since "authority in the church has to be understood as a gift in the service of unity and communion -for Christ founded on one community."[13] It is only in collaborating with the people that priests are able to do this as Paul in the letter to Timothy 3:2-3, outlines how the elder-in-charge (priest) is to behave when he is dealing with the people "[...] temperate, self-controlled, decent, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not aggressive, but gentle, not contentious, not a lover of money." Collaboration is God's wish for true communion in the parish. The exercise of authority by anyone is to be carried out by encouraging shared ministry, the vision of church in service. For authority which is not carried out with the Holy Spirit can become oppression.[14]

Paul's approach to ministry is collaborative. He worked with people whom he called co-workers with whom he maintained a cooperative relationship. Paul is a model of a pastor who involved others in the work of carrying out the mission of Christ. The church being "mission-focussed" needs leaders who feel uneasy working in isolation and who cherish cooperation with

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[13]C. MCGARRY - R. MEJÍA - V. SHIRIMA, *A Light in our Path*, 107.

[14]C. MCGARRY - R. MEJÍA - V. SHIRIMA, *A Light in our Path*, 15.

the faithful, believing in them and in the gifts of each one, for "the complementarity and variety of gifts is the basis for community and collaboration."[15]

3.1.3 Peter and Collaboration

In the letters of St. Peter, collaboration as the task and call of the church, is a recognition of the ability of each individual to contribute to the kingdom of God. Peter in his first letter stresses this point in his prayer that, "as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace. Whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."[16] Peter's call to service is a call to active participation in the life of the community. In this light, I see a community of passive laity where collaboration is not practised as not a true reflection of the church as communion. In order to arrest this unchristian attitude in the parish, an atmosphere of team ministry needs to be created by the priest as leader of the community. This demands that the priest whose role is not to be in charge of everything, be one who helps the community to discover and recognise its giftedness. He is also to help make the people understand that the ordained ministry is but one among many gifts to the community through which Christ fulfils his mission today.[17] As a shepherd, the priest is called to *tend* God's flock by example.(1Pet. 5:2-3) (emphasis mine).

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[15]L. SOFIELD, *Building Community*, 70.

[16]1Pet. 4:10-11

[17]C. MCGARRY - R. MEJÍA - V. SHIRIMA, *A Light in our Path*, 107.

3.2 Collaboration in the Church Documents (Vatican II Documents)

With Vatican II, a new model of church was proposed. This was the circular model of

church which was a radical turn away from the vision of the church as just the hierarchy.

Church as Hierarchy (Hierarchical Model)   Church as Communion (Circular Model)
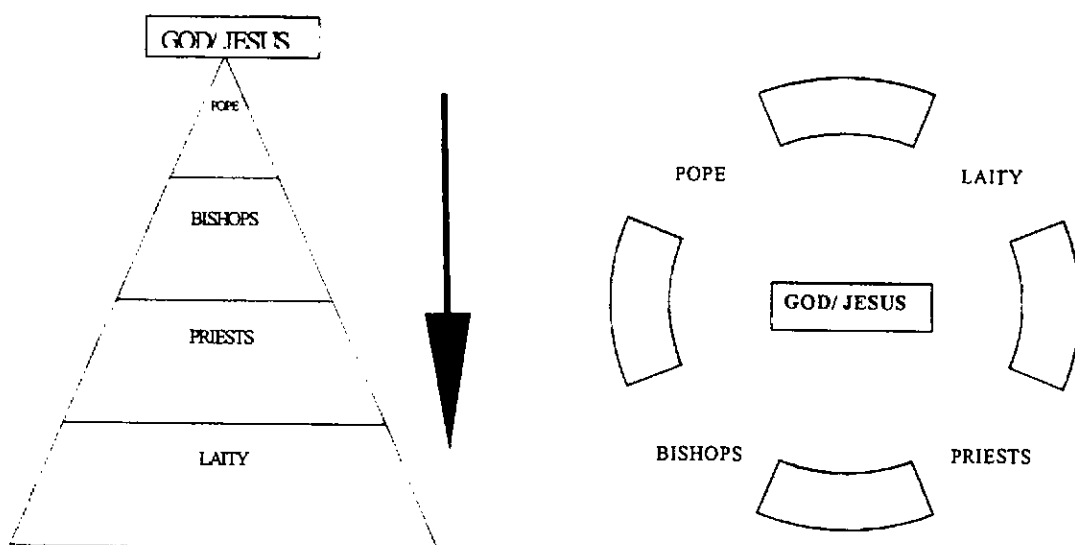
The new vision was of the church as the 'people of God', 'the tillage of God', 'the building of

God', 'the body of Christ'. This signifies a shift from the vision of the church as hierarchy to

church as communion, where all share in the one mission of Christ. Vatican II laid the foundation

of shared ministry in the parish today. This is in keeping with gospel values. It inspired working

together in ministry and of leadership as service of authority. Its shortcoming is that it did not help

"[...], in the practical setting of the parish, to work out systematically what the appropriate

parameters and goals of this leadership were to be."[18]

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[18]E.E. WHITEHEAD,ed.,*The parish in Community and Ministry*, 22.

"Lumen Gentium" which is the document on the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church stresses the call of all the faithful to contribute to building the body of Christ. As members of Christ's body, the church is a communion of Christ's faithful where the different gifts of each individual are harnessed with those of others and strengthened by common sharing.[19] This is the challenge of collaborative ministry. It is a call to unity in diversity for the unity of the people of God in faith, love and service prefigures universal peace.

In "Gaudium et Spes", the constitution on the Church in the Modern World, familyhood is stressed. The church as a community of the faithful is a sign of God's design for the universe. Therefore, as a community of believers in Christ, the church is called to "[...] form one family and deal with each other in the spirit of brotherhood."[20] In this, we see that collaborative ministry is God's desire for all people.

The decree on the Apostolate of the lay people, "Apostolicam Actuositatem", says that "in the church there is diversity of ministry but unity of mission."[21] This means that all are to participate in their own individual capacity and with their own gifts in whatever way they can help in the building of the Body of Christ. This calls for the "active participation in the mission according to the different talents of each individual."[22] The participation of the faithful is to be

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[19]LG 13

[20]GS 24

[21]AA 2

[22]AA 6

carried out in faith, hope and charity as the spirit has been poured into the hearts of all the members of the Church (AA3).

Vatican II calls for shared ministry among the faithful and the clergy. It encourages greater lay participation in the life of the church. It challenges all the baptised to take responsibility for the life and activity in the church in order to overcome passivity in the community. It proposes team ministry as sharing, mutuality and service in the manner of Jesus. Vatican II marks a significant shift from passivity to activity in church ministry today.

3.3 Christifideles Laici[23] and Collaboration

The need for the active and collaborative involvement of all in the life of the church is the essential focus of this document. The beautiful image used in the document to buttress the union and oneness of the Christian community is taken from the gospel of John 15:1-5. It is on the vine and the branches. Jesus is the vine and all the baptised are the branches. This depicts the unity of all in the church. In the church, all are children of the same Father, working together to accomplish the mission of Christ. Baptism and confirmation are the bases of the unity of Christ's faithful. The Spirit given at baptism, confirms us as Christians and it is that "one and the same Spirit [which] is always the dynamic principle of diversity and unity in the Church."[24] Our diversity is the source of our enrichment as people of God. Collaborative ministry is helping each one grow in his/her own way in accordance with the different charisms that he/she is given by the spirit.

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[23]The Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father John Paul II on the vocation and mission of the lay faithful.

[24]CL 20.

Awareness of one's gift is a call to share it with others in the apostolate. This demands developing a strong sense of responsibility for the church's communion. The pastor as well as the laity, are charged with fostering and nourishing the unity, mutuality and collaboration in the community.[25]

In the document, the Pope makes the movement from mission to communion and communion to mission explicit. In this light, mission is not an individual task but is the priority of everyone in the parish and it is only a parish in communion that really undertakes mission in the true sense of the word. This presupposes service, in the sense that a faith community is one living according to the gospel. Collaboration is *communion*, *mission* and *service*. These cannot in fact be separated. In a community of faith, none can be neglected. This is represented in the diagram below.

The Collaborative Circle
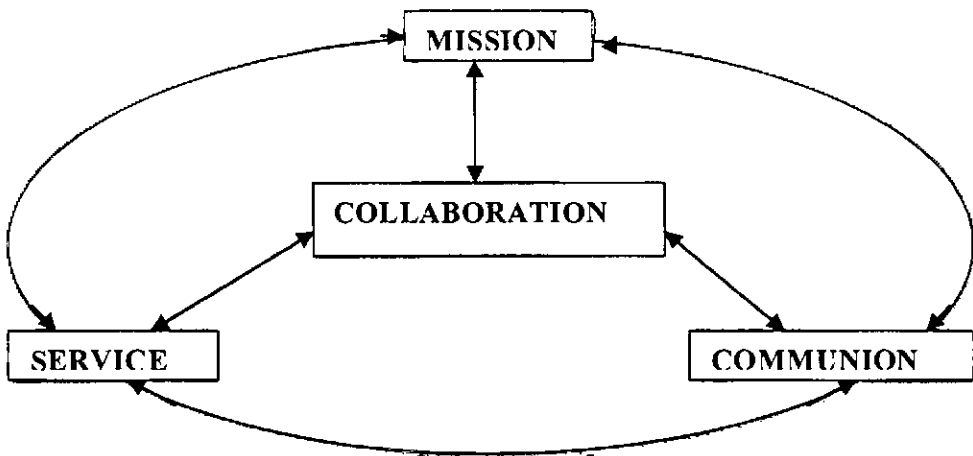
Mission carried out together in service of one another, for the good of the communion of God's people. And all is done in collaboration.

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[25]CL 27-31.

Christian life, according to the Pope, is promoting an authentic communion in the parish

with the active participation of the lay faithful in the mission of Christ. This can be achieved only

by collaboration between the clergy and the faithful. Collaboration does not work on the principle

of exclusion, but on that of inclusion. In this light, the Pope stresses the need of including the laity

in parish life when he says that "the lay faithful ought to be ever more convinced of the special

meaning that their commitment to the apostolate takes on in the parish."[26] Herein lies the task of

the priest -to make the faithful convinced of the need to participate actively in the life and activities

of the parish. Briefly, the call of Christifideles Laici is for the faithful and the clergy to support one

another in carrying out the mission Christ entrusted to the church. A recognition on the part of

both groups, that the notion of church as communion demands the collective participation of all,

is important for collaboration in the parish.

3.4 Other Views on Collaboration, Ministry and Mission

This section will be a presentation of the views of some theology lecturers in Tangaza

College about collaborative ministry and mission in the parish. These views are an expression of

how these individuals see or intend collaborative ministry to be. I chose these individuals based

on their strong beliefs in collaboration.

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[26]CL 27.

3.4.1 Sr. Loretta Brennan

For her, collaboration is shared leadership due to shared principles. This, in her view, implies people coming together with a common vision, sharing tasks and responsibilities. It involves people having a say in the life of the parish. This, she says, can only be possible when there is *trust*. In collaborative ministry, there is the need to train people as facilitators and to take responsibilities. Collaboration for Sr. Loretta is not about the priest making a name for himself, it is about enabling the people to be the church and develop the sense of 'our' church.

The priest, in collaborative ministry is to help educate the people for shared ministry and to make them think communally. He is the servant of collaboration in the parish. She emphasises acceptance of the "equality" of every member as a necessity for collaborative ministry. She says that in her opinion, the church today has lost touch with the original message of Christ and has no vision or paradigm for collaborative ministry. In this light, there is the need for the church to reclaim the vision of the early church which was all-inclusive and not hierarchical, and use it to gain a fresh understanding by reading the scripture.

She says that collaboration is important because it is Jesus' image of salvation and equality. It promotes mutuality and active ownership of the church by all and then leads the faithful and the clergy to contribute to the shaping of the church. It is also about witness to the world, of the possibility of different genders, tribes, races, and ages to live and work together like the early Christians whose love for one another was obvious to the world around them. Sr Loretta admits that collaboration involves a risk, a change of the system and an upsetting of the 'status quo' all

with the goal of making 'salvation happen' in the here and now.

3.4.2 Fr. Patrick Ryan

Fr. Patrick Ryan sees collaboration as the recognition of democracy in the church where everyone's giftedness is recognised and each individual is given the space to exercise his/her own giftedness. For him, ministry is doing something in public in the name of the church as a result of ordination/commission/appointment.

He says collaboration is not working in the church because senior church personnel may feel threatened, unsure of their self worth, and self-esteem. He holds that the sacrament of initiation into the church confers certain rights and responsibilities on the baptised. He says that all other church processes must factor in those rights and responsibilities like the Eucharist has to recognise the baptismal rights of the assembly and so, ministers of the Eucharist have the right to be present regardless of the personal views of the presider. So too, altar girls have a right that is based on their baptism.

For him, the early church is portrayed as democratic, where the leadership listened to the community. The words for ministry, he says, describes responses to community needs: teaching, preaching, prophesying, healing, reconciliation, overseeing. However, when Christianity was legalised within the Roman Empire, the church ceased being persecuted and became a recognised faith of a superpower. Priests from the small communities were now given special social ranking among their new Roman friends. Some would have received pay for their services, along with special privileges in Roman Society. Bishops were occasionally given civil authority and assigned

jurisdiction over the people in their area. Gradually, the impersonal and legalistic attitudes of government must have filtered into the church. An institution emerged mirroring that of the Roman government. A hierarchical structure of rulers and subjects replaced the small communities that were served by a local married priesthood. Ministry then became identified with the ordained leadership.

For Fr. Ryan, catechesis on the theology of baptism is the challenge for priests and laity. He believes that some pastoral workers do not understand what the sacrament of baptism is and what membership of the church involves. He says that, in the church, failure to implement collaboration is a failure in pastoral implications of the sacrament of baptism. In his view, without collaboration, the church is denied the full contribution of priests, brothers, lay people, and sisters.

3.4.3 Aloys Otieno Ojore

He is of the view that collaboration should enable people to take responsibilities in the parish. It is the full participation by the laity in church activities and a call for both priests and laity to learn to become colleagues in ministry. For him, problems like reluctance by the clergy to allow the laity a role in church activities, lack of well trained individuals (laity) to take up responsibilities and lack of good education on ecclesiology, hinder collaborative ministry in the parish.

According to him, the clergy dislike lay control of activities and prefer to work with the few sycophant elites who tell the priests what they want to hear. Some clergy are scared of collaborative ministry, because they might lose power and attention in the parish. Other clergy abhor the critical and inquisitive individuals whom they readily term "hostile" because they

challenge them (Clergy). Many priests are not ready for collaborative ministry due to the fact that they are ill prepared for the fast changes taking place in the church, and they do not continue to study after ordination. In their own estimation seminary education becomes sufficient for them. Hence they often become full of themselves and due to lack of updating their knowledge, they block the empowerment of the laity. They resist conscientisation of the people. There are also problems, on the part of the laity. Many of them lack knowledge of their roles in the church.

He suggested education that is awareness raising of both the priests and laity in order to promote collaborative ministry. For him, seminaries are closed to the extent that seminarians have little or no contact with the laity. He held that lay people should be employed to teach in the seminaries and lay students (males and females) be encouraged to study along side the seminarians.

He suggested that priests remain in the same parish for a maximum of 5 years so that they get to know the people and get them involved in the life of the parish. He said that, there should be a smooth transition in the cases of transfer of priests, so that the in-coming priest may have time to familiarise himself with the working of the parish. He feels that collaborative ministry will be fostered when the clergy allow representatives of the laity (men and women), into their meetings to give their contributions about the church.

For him, collaborative ministry at all levels is a must. It has to start from the family, through the SCC to the whole parish. In this way, the family will strengthen the village church, the sub-parish and finally the parish. Collaborative ministry, he said, is calling for revolution in the

church. The church belongs to all the believers. Where two or three are gathered, (*they do not have to be the clergy*) then the Lord is in their midst. He felt that on-going formation, seminars and annual retreats are needed to help both the priests and the laity develop a collaborative attitude to ministry in the parish. For him, there is the need for capacity building or maximizing the potential of the people to motivate them to give their best to their parish. He admitted it may be expensive but is absolutely necessary to promote collaborative ministry in the parish.

3.4.4 Sr Carmel Powell

Collaboration, for Sr. Powell, is the active spirit and commitment to treasuring the skills and giftedness of the other and welcoming it as part of the team effort. She stresses treasuring the person with his/her weaknesses and strengths. For her, collaboration in a word is complementarity, where according to her, in the words of Saint Francis of Assisi, "one's strength compensates the weakness of the other." She says collaboration is person-centred with one's gifts working in a team of equal participants.

Sr Powell sees ministry as life-giving service where it is carried out *with* the people and not *to* or *for* them. Ministry is a group celebrating the capacity of each person to live out their capacities in the particular group. It involves the whole team taking responsibilities for the failure and successes of the members.

For Sr. Powell, there is an incredible diversity between the church today and the early church in the apostolic times. She said the early church was a dynamic people trying to live out the inclusive and collaborative focus of Jesus and then of Paul. The cause of the present situation

in the parish is the formation in the seminaries and institutes of theology which instills in priests-to-be, the notion of a church which is hierarchical. Also, African cultures, she claimed, 'contribute' to this as they are predominantly patriarchal and patrilineal, with chiefs and elders (normally men) who are respected and followed. This has 'socialised' people to be recipients of service. She thinks that the challenges to priests, is a change in seminary formation to incorporate collaboration in the curriculum. Also, there is a need to have workshops and retreats for the clergy to explore and to pray on the texts of the gospel of Jesus, the collaborative leader.

Her vision of the parish is one where there is a real sense of community with the priest as leader learning to value the functions of the people. The priest as leader, she continues, should encourage real participation of the people and have respect for them. According to her, without collaboration, we are not faithful to Christ. We need to recapture the Spirit of Christ in order to be Spirit-filled people who are centred in Christ, the ground of our equality. For her, the parish should be a place where all feel and want to belong.

3.4.5 Fr. Francesco Pierli

According to Fr. Pierli, collaboration involves contact between people in all the components of the human structure. He sees it as a cooperation within the Christian community and between the Christian community and other institutions. Collaboration, for him, should promote a sense of belonging, being identified with the Christian community. He said that collaboration should not be at the service of the priests. It is about participating in the one mission of Christ in a pluralism of ministry which involves the ordained ministers, the religious ministers and

lay ministers. It is a cooperation that demands a good level of human and Christian maturity as well as recognising the different ministers in the community as all are called to ministry in the Church.

He sees ministry as having a "divine dimension, call and intervention in which the objective is the kingdom of God and ecclesial dimension where the Christian community recognises that each is called to working together to build the Christian community."[27]

3.4.6 Synthesis of the Views

Collaboration is a call to a loving relationship of service, in humility in the parish. This call is one of active involvement in the service of the Christian community. Collaboration in the parish means valuing the other with his/her giftedness and putting the different gifts into partnership. It is the promotion of the spirit of togetherness. It involves a transition from the mentality of individualism to a communitarian mentality where union, mission and service are the watchwords. It is mission carried out in communion and service as represented in the cycle of collaboration. It involves the recognition of the natural differences in the community such as gender and gifts, and respecting them, and at the same time not denying the fundamental equality of everyone baptised Christian.

Ministry is call to partnership in service of the community in the name of God. I see collaborative ministry as the gospel in action. It is a shift of emphasis from the self (selfishness) to others (selflessness). It is about dying to self so that others will find their selves in the community

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[27]Fr Pierli, Class notes on the topic of collaborative ministry on the 12th of April 2002.

ofbelievers. Collaborative ministry is about working together to achieve the parish vision through mutual support.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has been one in which I tried to provide a scriptural basis and theological reflection for collaborative ministry in the parish. This has been through the examples of Jesus and taking a look at ecclesial life in the early church. I also presented the views of the Vatican II document on the subject of collaboration and what the Pope says about it in his exhortation to the lay faithful on their vocation and mission. I outlined the views of some theology lecturers at Tangaza.

All these ideas can be applied to the parish of Embul-bul and to any parish which intends to live according to the Gospel Values of love, unity and service of one another. For collaborative ministry to succeed in any parish, there is the need for a return to scriptures. It requires an intense reflection on the word of God, one that will eventually lead to concrete actions taken in order to make shared ministry a reality.

I conclude by saying that Collaboration is a necessity for any parish which hopes to fulfill the mission of Christ. It is a prophetic sign of the wish of God for the whole world.

Chapter IV

Action Plan

4. Introduction

Beautiful ideas remain at the level of ideas unless concrete measures are taken to make them relevant to people. So far, I have tried to propose the collaborative method in the parish as the option for any Christian community which intends to live by gospel values, and to present the importance of this method in the life of the parish. Collaboration involves the commitment and the will to involve everyone in the parish community in the work of the parish. It is also about the readiness to support and encourage every individual to grow in the gifts he/she has received from God. This means that the lay faithful must be willing to share their different gifts, and to value mutual relationship as the only way to attain the goal of the Christian vocation to which all are called through baptism. It is to become ministers in the Christian community and beyond. It also demands from the priests the obligation to become facilitators of this ministering community towards achieving a maximum degree of participation of the baptised, in the life of the church.

In this section, I intend to make proposals based on my experiences, the on-the-ground study of the parish of Embulbul and theological reflection. These proposals are also drawn from the insights I got from the views of those I interviewed. I do this with the hope that it will help provide a vision for any parish. These proposals include providing a sound catechesis on the theology of the sacraments of initiation; stressing the importance for the education of priests in collaborative ministry, the need for a vision statement for the parish, for the recognition of

giftedness, mutual respect and collaborative dialogue, as well as acknowledging the importance of the SCCs in collaborative ministry. Finally, I see human resource management as vital in collaborative ministry. I will then reflect on the clergy and the laity as partners in the progress of the collaborative venture.

4.1 Practical proposals for Effective Collaboration in the Parish

In order to make collaborative ministry effective in the parish, both the lay ministers and the ordained ministers need to see themselves as builders of the body of Christ. This entails celebrating the power of partnership. This power is that which makes everyone a servant. The parish as the body of Christ is a community in service which should promote the spirit of service in the manner of the early Church and that of Jesus during his ministry. The objective for any parish is collaboration in ministry where clericalism gives way to shared ministry. It also requires that passivity in the community gives way to active participation. It will provide an atmosphere of togetherness where all the baptised become aware of their rights and duties, and see the need to be responsible for the life of the parish.

4.1.1 A Sound Catechesis on the Theology of the Sacraments of Initiation

The necessity for a sound catechesis on the theology of the sacraments of initiation; Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation cannot be overemphasised if collaborative ministry is to make sense to both priests and the lay faithful. It is about helping the baptised to understand better the three stages in the initiation of the candidates into the community of believers. These three sacraments are originally meant to be celebrated as one. They *incorporate* the baptised into the

body of Christ, the Christian Community, in which they are *nourished by the body and blood* of Christ and then *confirmed* or *strengthened* in responsibility as fully mature persons. A better understanding of these sacraments is not in the area of memorisation of formulas and doctrines but a formation in good Christian living. The importance of catechesis is reflected in the need for Christians to understand better the sacraments of initiation, and the rights and responsibilities which come with being a Christian. I also see the need for ongoing formation after the reception of the sacrament. This is the process in which "[...] the gift of 'communion' and the task of 'mission' are deepened and lived in an increasingly intense way."[1]

(A) Baptism

The misconception about the sacrament of baptism makes collaboration a difficult task to accomplish. Baptism, if seen as a sacrament just for cleansing original sin, distorts the true understanding of this sacrament. It should be noted that "baptism is first of all a sacrament of *entry into the christian community, the Church*."[2] A baptised person first becomes a member of his/her christian community. This membership of the body of Christ makes one a new person in Christ and this leads to the cleansing of sins. Through baptism, all the members of the church become equal in Christ. It is [...] the gateway to the sacraments, [...]."[3] Entry into the church makes one a full member with equal rights to any other baptised person in the church.

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[1] *General Directory for Catechesis*, 52.

[2] E. Lyons, *Partnership in Parish*, 20.

[3] Can 849.

(B) Eucharist

With baptism, a person becomes a member of a community which gathers around the table of the Lord to share in the meal that nourishes all who partake in it. This meal is the sign of the common union established in baptism of all the members. For "[...] membership of the church means being part of a community which celebrates the Eucharist, and that full membership involves *full participation in the eucharist.*"[4]

(C) Confirmation

Through this sacrament, the baptised are confirmed as people "[...] commissioned to take on *responsibility for the church's task* and to become actively involved in pursuing it.[5]

A fully initiated member of the church becomes a member of a community who is nourished spiritually, and then commissioned to participate actively in the task of the community, which is to participate in building the body of Christ. A baptised and confirmed Catholic is called to be a minister in his/her own right, called to collaborate with others. To be a Christian and to refuse to collaborate with others, is living contrary to what it means to be one. It is rejecting the very essence of baptism and confirmation.

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[4] E. LYONS, *Partnership in Parish*, 22-23.

[5] E. LYONS, *Partnership in Parish*, 24.

4.1.2 The Need for the Education of Priests

An important area to help in the development of collaborative ministry in the parish is the introduction of the subject of collaborative ministry in the educational curriculum of the seminaries and institutes of theology. This, I believe will go a long way in sensitising and preparing the priests and priests-to-be, of the value and necessity of collaborating with the people in the parish. In some circumstances, the priests, due to ignorance of shared ministry, block the development of team ministry as a result of the clerical atmosphere they were formed in.

It is important to have lay people give inputs in the seminary on their experiences of parish life and if possible, on other issues, theological and pastoral. This can be through the organisation of seminars, where the laity with seminarians and even priests, exchange ideas on parish life. Also, there is the need for joint workshops to be organised for both priests and laity. This is necessary to bring about behavioural change in clergy.

The disappearance of clericalism in the life of the church will surely mark the commencement of shared ministry. The education of priests will prepare them for the task of being collaborative leaders whose role is to 'recognise', 'promote' and 'foster' responsibility in the community.[6] It will also help them change their mentality of Church as the hierarchy(clergy) to Church as Communion(people of God). The priests need formation as facilitators of collaboration in order to appreciate the importance of cooperating with others, and to inspire, coordinate, empower and encourage the lay faithful to greater participation in the parish.

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[6]Can 529, #2.

This calls for a change of mentality in priests so that they may appreciate the different ministries in the church as God-given, and for the growth of the community members who are not mere 'helpers' but collaborators. This is with the aim of making the urban parish a ministering community[7]

4.1.3 The Need for Vision(mission) statements for the Parish

Vision statements are statements made by the members of the parish which give direction and set the goals for that parish. As a community, the parish needs goals to which it strives. This statement needs to be set out by the whole community according to its needs, talents and gifts. It is pertinent that the parish priest, 'as overall leader' realise that "his task is *to inspire* and *to co-ordinate* -to inspire people with a vision for the parish, to encourage, as Paul did, the use of every gift and talent which will help to translate this vision into reality, [...]".[8] This vision, as the objective of the parish, will challenge everyone in the parish.

Vision statements are not made once and for all. They require constant re-evaluation according to the unfolding dynamic situations. These statement must be viable and practical and not an unattainable utopia. Vision statements should foster faith sharing which challenges the people to communion and mission, as well as encourage community response to issues in the parish.[9]

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[7]E.E. WHITEHEAD, ed., *The parish in community and Ministry*, 26.

[8]E. LYONS, *Partnership in Parish*, 87-88.

[9]N.P. COOPER, *Collaborative Ministry*, 202.

The aim of the statements is to identify the spiritual, pastoral and social needs of the parish as a whole, and identify the gifts within the community that can address those needs. This involves a process that begins with reflection on reality, leading to concrete action and back to reflection. This process is important because "unless a parish community reflects on why it chooses certain goals and priorities along the way, the previous vision of the early communities of Jesus slips away in a nearly imperceptible manner. The direction in which the parish moves becomes unsure."[10]

The vision statements need to be rooted in Jesus since parish mission is the continuation of the mission of Jesus in a way and manner appropriate for today. Clear vision statements which stem from shared vision will lead to collaboration.

4.1.4 Identification and Recognition of Giftedness

In collaborative ministry, it is pertinent for people to discern their gifts through the help of the priests as collaborative leaders. The priest is to create a conducive atmosphere where the people will experience their giftedness and appreciate their gifts. It is only when people feel gifted and appreciated for their gifts, no matter how insignificant they may seem, that they come to appreciate their own gifts and feel the need to share these gifts with others. It is impossible for any form of collaboration to develop if the atmosphere does not provide for people to feel freedom to exercise and develop their giftedness. The most important gift is not what one has, but of what one is. There is the need for people to be available for the communion and mission of the parish.

This implies that the parish becomes a parish of ministers where each individual both

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[10] E.E. WHITEHEAD, ed., *The Parish in Community and Ministry*, 27-28.

ministers and he/she is ministered to. Collaboration is the avenue for everyone in the parish to come and "[...] then explore together ways in which their individual gifts can unite in ministry."[11] All gifts come from the Spirit and need to be valued. The priest needs to be the centre of unity and then needs to empower these people by giving them responsibilities based on their giftedness. The gifts, however, need to be identified and developed.

Collaboration grows with the recognition of the giftedness of the baptised in the parish. The giftedness forms the basis for the different ministries in the parish. The faithful need to understand baptism as a call to ministry. Efficient collaboration in the parish entails equality of persons and differences of gifts being put together for the service of the community.

4.1.5 Mutual Respect and Collaborative Dialogue

The acceptance that all gifts are for the purpose of service in the parish leads to mutual respect. This means taking everyone as an equal partner in ministry in order to foster collaborative atmosphere in the parish. Mutual respect is important in collaborative dialogue. Dialogue is not a one way affair. When it ceases to be an exchange among people it becomes monologue. Dialogue involves people who are open, honest and respectful. Dialogue within the parish is initiated only when the priest accepts the faithful as equals, and relates with them as such. He needs to respect them "because the Church is a body," [and] "it would be wrong for any member to regard another member as unimportant."[12] In any dialogue there is an encounter.

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[11] L. SOFIELD, C. JULIANO, *Collaborative Ministry*, 76.

[12] E. LYONS, *Partnership in Parish*, 69.

Likewise in collaborative dialogue, the priest or any one else should not build a 'protective wall' around himself/herself so that he/she cannot be approached. It is about humility and love.

In mutual respect and collaborative dialogue, everyone has the duty to listen and the right be listened to. When this condition is created, people will become free to express themselves and feel part of a parish of equals. It will help those who are shy to become confident. In collaborative dialogue, each one accepts the tasks and responsibilities given him/her based on what he/she can do. In this way, decision making is not seen as an imposition of a particular person or group of persons, but a mutual agreement out of respect of all members. Collaborative dialogue is not selective of persons but takes everyone for what he/she is- a part of the Body of Christ.

4.1.6 Small Christian Communities and Collaborative Ministry

Parishes, due to their size, need the SCCs. These are the church in the midst of the people who know one another. They come together to share their talents, to support one another, reflect on situations, take actions and pray together. The SCCs were formed to foster greater participation in the life of the church within the homes of the people. They are to help Christians to work together in the case where the size of the parish may hinder some from active participation. It is the parish in miniature, and is a more effective unit in the locality of the people. In the SCCs there is contact and familiarity. Everyone knows everyone else and the people are united in rendering service to one another; and to others.

SCCs are avenues where the people are encouraged to engage in shared ministry. Individuals in the SCCs take on roles and responsibilities that will help in extending the kingdom

of God. In creating them, the church is trying to encourage participation among the people. They are places where the people celebrate togetherness and foster complementarity, not competition. It is from these SCCs that people then celebrate companionship within the larger parish community.

Parishes need the SCCs in order to foster shared ministry as they "[...] are an excellent way of making co-responsibility a reality."[13] It is a concrete way in which to achieve maximum participation by the baptised in the parish.

4.2 Delegating Roles and Tasks in Collaborative Ministry

Delegating roles and tasks is very important in collaborative ministry. This involves delegating responsibility to individuals based on their giftedness. It is important because ministry cannot be left at the mercy of any one in particular because "evangelisation is the common task of all the faithful."[14]

The different tasks need to be clearly outlined to the people, and be in line with the vision of the parish. The tasks need to be shared by the people according to the call for effective cooperation "[...] when the role required of them is compatible with their natural and acquired gifts, talents, and skills."[15] The people need to understand the tasks and the roles and be ready to mutually support one another in team ministry.

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[13]Southern African Catholic Bishop's Conference, *We are the Church*, 36.

[14]Southern African Catholic Bishop's Conference, *We are the Church*, 18.

[15]L. SOFIELD, C. JULIANO, *Collaborative Ministry*, 76.

4.3 Human Resource Management

Collaborative ministry is basically about the management of the human resources in the parish. This is the readily available resource in the parish that needs to be well managed for the parish to progress. Every other resource comes from this unpaid and free gift to the parish. What is needed is the ability to foster capacity building in the people through the development of gifts and talents in the baptised. It also entails helping the others realise their own gifts, and conscientising the people to support each other in the process of gift development. Human resource management is about identifying the gifts in the people and putting those gifts into purposeful use.

It needs interpersonal contact among the people. It is only in this way that people can help each other to realise their gifts and how these gifts can be put at the service of the parish community. Human resource management deals with the organisation of the people in order to foster greater interaction and experience of common union. It is the skill to help the people to have a sense of appropriateness, and how disintegration can be forestalled in the parish by putting the diverse talents of each individual at the service of the community.[16]

Human resource management is the promotion and development of the working skills needed to carry on the mission of the parish through training and seminars. It deals also with the faithful being able to perceive whatever resources are required, and making such resources available. It is about educating and training the people to learn to share and support one another

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[16]E.E. WHITEHEAD, *The Parish in Community*, 49.

in respect and love for effective service.

4.3.1 The Clergy and Collaborative Ministry

The clergy form the ordained ministers in the church. By this fact, they are leaders, as their ordination makes them leaders of the community. Their leadership flows from Christ. As representatives of Christ, the clergy are called to become the central point of convergence -the visible sign of the unity of the faithful in the parish. Their role, therefore, is to preserve the unity of the parish community by gathering the people around them and empowering them to minister to one another in love and service.

The ordained ministry is not a right of the priest but it is "[...] a gift to the community in one of its members so that Christ may continue to be among the community 'as one who serves.'"[17] The priest is one chosen from the community to act on behalf of the community. His ministry is one of service to the people. As the chief servant, he is called to promote partnership in the community. The clergy have to challenge and motivate the people to become active and to participate fully in preserving their unity. This can be realised through collaborative ministry.

The clergy is called to help coordinate the parish community activities in order to help the people discern, discover and promote the gifts God has given them. This group needs to become open to welcoming effective participation in the parish. It is not a call for the priest alone to do everything in the parish, but to encourage the new understanding of church in which all are called to service based on the grace received by all, to be good stewards of the varied gifts of God,

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[17]C. MCGARRY - R. MEJÍA - V. SHIRIMA, *A Light in our Path*, 108.

made available for the up-building of the whole body in charity.[18] Collaboration can only be effective in the parish when the clergy see themselves, as well as the laity, as stewards of creation. This will no doubt lead to the unity of *wills* and *gifts* for the good of the community. The clergy can be the source of motivation for shared ministry.

To really become collaborative leaders, the clergy need to look to Jesus. It is worthy to note that collaborative ministry in the parish will only succeed if the clergy take on the humility, compassion, patience, love and gentleness of Jesus. As other Christs, the priests are to emulate the leadership style of Jesus and make it theirs. For the clergy to succeed in promoting the collaborative spirit in the parish, they need to understand the priesthood in the light of Jesus' washing the feet of his disciples. This is the foundation of collaborative ministry- accepting one's feet to be washed and to be ready to wash the feet of others.

4.3.2 The Laity and Collaborative Ministry

In collaborative ministry, the laity have a great role to play. In the present dispensation, the desire for the active participation of the laity in the church, is the reason collaborative ministry is stressed. The laity, in collaborative ministry, are challenged to be engaged in the running of the parish by becoming active participants. The era of passive laity has passed. In order to be involved effectively, they need to see their contribution to the parish, no matter how little like cleaning the church, being an usher, as worthwhile. They do not need to wait for the clergy to hand them responsibilities; they are required to offer themselves in generosity to the church. In this

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[18]AA3

way, they are bringing to fruition the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The laity must see themselves as

partners working together to build up the kingdom of God here on earth.[19]

As God's faithful servants, they are called to share in the work of the church by putting

their different gifts at the service of God and the church. The parable of the sower is one that

challenges all to bear fruit, each according to his/her ability. So, refusal to become involved in

cooperation with the clergy in the church, is refusal to be fruitful. They need to become builders

of the church and not mere spectators.

They can become more engaged in the life of the church when they understand the church

as a community of ministers where each has his/her role. They need to be well informed in the life

and activities of the church and that the 'people are the Church'. This will involve an in-depth

study of scriptures and of the different church documents which, to a great extent, are taken to

be for the clergy alone. They need to support one another and not try to foster a spirit of

competition among themselves, but to engage in dialogue with the clergy in order to come to

understanding better their roles and responsibilities in the parish.

Collaborative ministry cannot be effective in any parish unless the laity rise to the challenge

and claim ownership of the church. So long as they identify the church with the hierarchy, they will

not see any reason to be engaged in its activities.

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[19] 1Cor. 3:9 (AB).

4.4 Conclusion

For collaborative ministry to succeed in an urban parish, it is important that laity and clergy appreciate each other and see the mission of Christ as their own mission and not belonging to a particular group. Collaborative ministry will only become a reality when the laity and clergy embrace the new understanding of the church as communion, family. There is also the need for both groups to see themselves as ministers in the church.

It is pertinent for the laity and clergy to rediscover the lost vision of the church through a thorough search of the scriptures by having bible study group and inviting bible scholars, priests and lay to help them understand the scriptures. This will help them not to lose the vision of Christ for the church which is a collaborative vision. Collaboration is about being one just as the Father and the Son are one.[20] It is promoting communion by forming a new attitude that will make Christ's vision a reality in today's parish.

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[20]Jn 17:11 (AB).

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In this work so far, I have tried to present what collaboration is, and to show how it

should be the way ministry should be carried out in the church. In the parish today, there is the

need for more lay participation, and also the willingness on the part of the clergy to involve the

laity in church (parish) ministry. Collaboration is necessary because it is the vocation of the

Christian. I have endeavoured to show that collaboration is the option for the parish. It is the way

in which the parish can become the sign of the will of God for humanity in society. This sign is

prophetic as it is a sign to teach the world the beauty of team work for mutual up-building.

Collaboration involves the willingness, on the part of the clergy and the laity to become

partners in ministry. It is about sharing responsibility in solidarity. This solidarity is expressed in

the unity of the community under Christ- the Head of the Body. Collaborative ministry in the

parish is a call to service which demands working harmoniously as witnesses to the fellowship and

unity of the Three Persons in the One God.

The Challenge to Collaborative ministry

Collaborative ministry is not without challenges. It challenges the inadequate training and

education of the laity and even of the clergy. For the collaborative process to be initiated in the

parish, there is the need for adequate training, to help prepare the people for the dynamics of

cooperation. This is to help them work for others and themselves, be facilitators of unity and

communion among the people and between the people and the priest.

The laity need to be trained to accept their role in the church, and to actively carry out

their task in the church. Inadequate training is a setback to the process of mutual up-building in the parish and the development of their gifts. Training, therefore, requires a good understanding of personal development, a firm grasp of interpersonal dynamics, such as trust, cooperation, and justice, the ability to reflect theologically, and the ability to discern the different roles of colleagues.[1]

The problem of ethnicity which divides people in the parish, the social class factor where people are grouped according to what they have are 'enemies' of collaborative ministry. In a Christian community all these should give way to love and unity in Christ. This can be achieved through promoting brotherhood and sisterhood in the community.

Collaborative ministry therefore enhances the better preparation of the people and the priest towards a good understanding and appreciation of their roles and tasks in team ministry in the parish.

Is Collaborative Ministry Possible?

Collaborative ministry is a way of service in the church. It is the vocation of the baptised members of the community. It is the recognition of the different gifts of the members of the church, and the effort to put those gifts into profitable use in the church. It is giving up of power and control by the clergy, and empowering the laity to become conscious of itself as an 'Easter People'[2], aware of the joy of being called together to cooperate as a family.

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[1]B. SWAIN, *Liberating Leadership*, 61-62.

[2]E. LYONS, *Partnership in Parish*, 100.

The collaborative vision of church is not only a reality and a possibility, it is a necessity if the church is to be faithful to Jesus. If I do not belief in achieving maximum participation of the laity in the church, I would not have embarked on this work. I do not however, down play the initial difficulty starting the process of collaboration in a parish.

Challenge of Collaborative Ministry for the individual

As a reader of this work, what do you think of collaborative ministry in the parish? Is your attitude in the parish as a priest or lay person a collaborative one or not? What role are you playing in promoting the collaborative spirit of service in your community? It is hoped that this work will help you appreciate the necessity for collaboration in the church and also between the church and other institutions. It is not meant to give a final answer to the issue of collaboration in the church, but meant to awaken a desire in all who read it to get involved in undertaking collaborative ministry in the parish in the way of Jesus.

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Apostolicam Actuositam
AB	African Bible
AIDS/HIV	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome/Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
CL	Christifideles Laici
Can	Canon
1Cor	First letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians
ed.	Edited by, Edition, Editor
Fr.	Father
GS	Gaudium et Spes
Jn	John
Mk	Mark
Matt	Matthew
SCC	Small Christian Community
Sr.	Sister
TB	Tuberculosis
n.d.	No date
n.p.	No Place

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